

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.*

VOL. VIII.

LONDON:
JAMES E. HAWKINS, 36, BAKER STREET, W.;
AND 12, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

1877.

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THE GOLDEN LAMP.

“EBENEZER.”

(1 SAM. vii. 12.)

IF we contemplate the Church of God, and think of ourselves and our fellow-believers as associated with the Lord Jesus Christ, and as seated in the heavenlies in Him, we are carried beyond the question of *time*, of days, months, and years, and are borne far above the region of “vanity and vexation of spirit” in which Solomon searched and wearied himself; that is, the region “*under the sun.*”

Faith places us already where we shall shortly be in person at the coming of the Lord, and as being now before God what we then shall be; this is our strength and joy. The future made present by faith is real power.

Although this our elevation and perfection be true as in the sight of God—doctrinally true, and true to faith—nevertheless we are really in the body here below, and have to do with men and things pertaining to time, and to pass through our hours, days, months, and years with others, dating the year as they do.

Most important too is this our spiritual infancy spent below, and all that is connected with it.

Things of time viewed in the light of eternity, when their use shall have ceased, appear trivial; but they are *now* important, and doubtless all have their bearing on eternity. With a Christian everything should be important, as connected both with the great end of his being here, the glory of God, and also with his eternal future.

Who of us can duly estimate the importance, and therefore the value of time? We could not purchase it; it is freely given to us. Let us then, beloved, redeem it, for it "is short;" redeem it, "because the days are evil."

A believing review of the past, even of the past year, may help us to this. Let us look back, and gratefully set up *our* "EBENEZER," saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." If we do this we shall not fail to sing by faith, "Surely goodness and mercy *shall* follow me all the days of my life," and therefore through the year before us, if it be our Father's pleasure that we live it here.

The stone bearing the title "Ebenezer" was raised between "Mizpeh" and "Shen," in memory of a deliverance wrought for Israel from the Philistines—wrought by Jehovah their God,* and that at a remarkable time, acknowledging help vouchsafed between the "watch-tower" and the "tooth;" for such is the meaning of the words Mizpeh and Shen.

I would not vainly speculate on these titles or names, but to me they have a voice.

"Mizpeh," the watch-tower, where Jehovah guarded

* Israel had gone back from God, and were corrected through the Philistines. After the first defeat they fetched the ark from its place (instead of going to God before it), saying "that *it* may save us," and they shouted on its arrival; but their confidence was vain, and their shout was an empty sound, only tending to provoke their enemies to a determination to conquer. This they did, and captured the ark. At length, after many years, Israel with Samuel, in the absence of the ark, go back to Jehovah with weeping and supplication—they put away their idols, and poured out water before the Lord, in acknowledgment of weakness because of sinfulness—and when their enemies drew near, Samuel prayed, and offered a sucking lamb a burnt-offering wholly unto the Lord. The Lord heard, and while as yet the ascending offering was burning, Jehovah thundered and discomfited the Philistines. Israel pursued them and smote them, and "Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh (where they had sacrificed) and Shen."

the covenant intact; “Shen,” the tooth-like rock, a figure of Israel’s enemies and difficulties; “Ebenezer,” the stone of help, celebrating Jehovah’s help on the ground of the *covenant*, and against their enemies ready to *devour* them.

Israel’s deliverance was as the bow, set off by the cloud of their difficulties and their sins, and Ebenezer points to both.

This title, read by faith, is both a record and a promise; therefore it suits well the opening of the new year, and standing before it we may contemplate both Mizpeh and Shen.

We are God’s object now as Israel was then, His choice, His portion, His crown of glory, His diadem of beauty, His centre on the earth. All things are for the Church’s sake, and to the Church Christ, who is the Head over all things, was given by God when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies. All things are working together for good. Our Father’s eyes are upon us for good from the beginning of the year to the end thereof, and whoever touches the believer, touches the apple of His eye. He *watches* ever between us and our enemies without slumbering or sleeping, the God of Mizpeh.

We have had through the past year (and shall again have) enemies, conflicts, sorrows, and troubles—our *tooth-like* difficulties; wrestling with principalities and powers, with wicked spirits in the heavenlies, while seeking to walk with God, maintain the truth, continue in service with its trials of faith and patience—formidable indeed as Shen.

Yet we are through them all. We have been enabled to endure, even if not so patiently as we ought. The year has passed into eternity; not a moment can we recall—not a word; neither can we alter the wrong deed of the past. But we can, and will judge ourselves for such, and seek grace to avoid the repetition of them. Let us review the past in the light of present

communion with the Father and His beloved Son, and we shall find that wherever the cloud is seen there will appear the bow, shining brightest where the cloud is darkest.

But why are we safe? How was it we endured? Why did not our difficulties overwhelm? our enemies devour us as "prey to their *teeth*"? (Ps. cxxiv. 6.)

Beloved in Christ, surely we can readily give the answer. Our God, faithful to His word, true to His Christ, and consistent with Himself, has guided, guarded, delivered, and given us the victory. All this is in character—it is Mizpeh.

Raise we then our stone of help, and sing, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us." Yes, we will do so, although with mingled feelings of humiliation and triumph, binding in our booths, as Israel bound in theirs, the willow branch of weeping with the palm branch of triumph. Like Jacob, who joined the names "El-beth-el"—"the God of Bethel"—and "Allon-bachuth"—"the oak of weeping"—we have cause for both triumph and sorrow; we sorrow for our own failings, and for those of others; for the Church's low condition, and the world's misery; but we triumph in grace, in the God of all grace, and in thankfulness for all His goodness to us and to others.

I have said that faith reads the inscription as a *promise*. It does so on the simple ground of God's unchangeable love; that "Jesus Christ is to-day as yesterday the same, and for ever;" that God's Spirit remains with us and in us; and that His promises are still all "Yea and Amen" in Christ Jesus as risen from the dead. We view His past and present goodness and grace as pledges of the future, believing that what He *has* been that He *will* be, and much more abundantly even to the end.

Of change or failure in Him we need have no fear, nor by grace will we have; rather we will be concerned not to repeat that for which we judge ourselves

before Him, and seek to walk more closely with Him in imitation of Christ, by the power of the ungrieved Spirit of God. Yes, beloved, I desire for myself and for you that we may be the subjects of but one fear and one care: care to please God, and fear of grieving Him. These will displace other cares and fears; and if still below at the end of the year, we shall with increased intelligence, gratitude, faith, and love, again raise our Ebenezer to His praise. But let us remember the nearness of our Lord's return—

“With His reward
He comes; He tarries not; His day is near;
When men least look for Him will He be here:
Prepare for Him!”

H. H.

A LIVING SACRIFICE.

ROM. xii. 1, 2.

A “LIVING sacrifice” to God
E'en now by grace I'd be,
Completely given up to Him
Who gave Himself for me.

O Saviour Lord, do Thou remove
Each barrier 'twixt Thyself and me,
And let me know the blessedness
Of being *all for Thee*.

Yes, all for Thee, my blessed Lord,
My little while be spent;
The longings of my heart fulfil,
Use, Lord, the talents lent.

My every member take and use,
Oh claim Thy purchase, Lord,
That so my daily life may prove
The beauty of Thy Word!

So shall Thy grace and power be seen
In such a worm as I,
And others then be drawn to Thee,
For whom Thou, Lord, didst die.

B.

JOY IN GOD.

WHEN a shipwrecked mariner at length reaches a place of safety, he rejoices in the thought that he is saved. When the captive has escaped from his dungeon, and is beyond the reach of his pursuers, he rejoices that he is free. When the sinner has fled for refuge, and laid hold on the hope set before him, he rejoices that he has found, through faith in Christ, deliverance from the wrath to come.

This joy is very real; it is the joy of salvation, that tells of sin forgiven, of hell escaped, of peace with God, and of a hope full of immortality. Who of us has not experienced this more or less, and has not witnessed it in others? But this is not the Christian's highest joy, though it opens the door to it; and many need a word of warning and of counsel in this matter. Some are satisfied with it, and never rise higher; many are deceived by it, and it withers in the hour of temptation.

The joy of the true believer rests not simply in the knowledge that he is saved, but rises from that blessed assurance to the knowledge of the One who saved him, and in Him he finds his joy. This is the aspiration of a living faith, for it stops not short of the living Person who is its object. It believes in a *Person* rather than in a thing; in God Himself rather than in facts; and when this is the case, circumstances may change and experiences may alter, but faith wavers not, because it rests immovably on Him who changes not. To this our blessed Lord directs His sorrowing disciples when His removal from them was so materially to alter their circumstances, and He tells them amidst it all, "Believe in God; believe also in me." God Himself and His Son must be their only stay in the dark hour that was to see their Lord led as a lamb to the

slaughter. And there are dark hours in the experiences of all saints wherein God is searching in their inmost soul the secret of their hearts' joy, and making them see whether it is in God or in His acts, in Himself or in His salvation only. These are testing times that bring us down to the lowest depths, and are allowed of God, not necessarily to rob us of our joy, but to test its reality, and to show the foundation on which it rests. How often we fail under this proving God and our hearts only know.

This proving of God must not be regarded as a strange thing; nay, rather is it the very life of our souls; and for our encouragement we will consider the working of it in the lives of some of God's people, as recorded in the Word.

Let us turn to the life of Abraham, the father of the faithful. He had waited long, and Isaac had been given, and had become the joy of his old age. He had grown up to manhood, the light of Abraham's tent, and the inheritor of all the mighty promises made to his seed, the one in whom they all centred. But the faith that had long been tried must be further proved, and the joy that swelled up in Abraham's heart had to be tested. God would see whether His servant so feared Him that his faith was in the Promiser rather than in the promise, and that his joy was in his God rather than in his son Isaac.

So the command came to offer up Isaac; but he faltered not. He knew the voice, and he obeyed, rising up early in the morning. He believed in God, and though Isaac were dead and burnt on the altar, he knew that God could give him back, and not another in his stead, when the knife and the fire had done their appointed work; and so we read, "They went both of them together." Who can tell what that three days' journey cost Abraham, strong in faith and mighty in his God though he was! Then, if ever, it was "God only" in the soul of Abraham. Nothing but faith and

joy in God could have led that holy man of God to walk with unfaltering step that journey from Beer-sheba to mount Moriah. How long the journey, how slow the passing hours, as step by step he neared the place that was to see the child of all his hopes and joys consumed upon the altar! There was time to contemplate the strange act, time to weigh its agony; but weighing it all in the presence of God, he found God sufficient, and his soul trusted in Him as the living God. Do we want to know what it is to fear God? Genesis xxii. reveals it to us; for God says, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."

There are these testing moments in our histories, few and far between it may be, on which the character of our after life depends. If faith rises to meet God, the path will be as the light, shining brighter and brighter till the perfect day, when the sun reaches its zenith glory; but if faith does not thus rise, the golden opportunity is lost, and can never be recalled.

Hannah's history unfolds the same truth. Ten years of fretting and of tears had made her see that God must be her only resource; and so she does at last what she might have done at first—she pours out her soul before the Lord. And when the object of her heart's joy came, she called his name Samuel, "heard of God." But the ten years had not been in vain. She had learned deeply what might otherwise have easily been forgotten (for what is easily gotten is easily lost), and we find in her song the deep secret joy she had learned. "My heart rejoiceth IN THE LORD; my horn is exalted IN THE LORD." Jehovah was all in all to her. It was not Samuel, but God; it was not her son, but Jehovah on whom her heart's joy rested, and there could never be any disappointment in Him. The gift gave place to the Giver; and so must it ever be if God is to have His place in our hearts.

Habakkuk teaches the same lesson. His name sig-

nifies the embraced or embosomed one. He is called to see violence and contention on all sides; Israel very low, and the Chaldean power raised up of God—a power “terrible and dreadful.” But he got upon his watch-tower, and there he saw the vision of the coming kingdom and of the coming King. It might tarry long, but it would come; it would not lie, even though meanwhile the proud one might enlarge his desire as hell, and gather unto him all nations, and though at what he heard his belly trembled. Yet faith triumphs over all; and he concludes, “Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail . . . yet I will rejoice IN THE LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.” This is ever the experience of him who knows what it is to recline on the bosom of his God. It was so with the Lord Jesus, “who is in the bosom of the Father” (John i. 18); and it is so when our faith stirs up itself and takes hold on God. Special promises may be misunderstood, isolated Scriptures may be misinterpreted, but God is known by faith through the Holy Ghost; for He who has the anointing knows Him, and this is eternal life.

Paul, when pressing this important point of joy in God, writes: “Rejoice IN THE LORD alway; and again I say, Rejoice.” (Phil. iv. 4.) And he tells the Thessalonians, “Rejoice evermore.” “The fruit of the Spirit is love, *joy*, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” (Gal. v. 22, 23.)

“Rejoice in Him;” again, again,
 The Spirit speaks the word;
 And faith takes up the happy strain—
 Our joy is in the Lord.

Need we be reminded that that book of heart-experience of God, the Book of Psalms, is full of joy, giving songs even in the night? “Let all them that put their trust in Thee rejoice,” says the sweet psalmist of Israel, “let them ever shout for joy, because Thou

defendest them: let them also that love Thy name be joyful in Thee." (Ps. v. 11.) Here, as elsewhere, we find that the joy mounts up from the grace of God experienced to the God of grace Himself. It is this we are so anxious to press upon all God's people, lest failing in their approach to God Himself, they learn but half the Spirit's teaching, which leads into the very presence of God, and into the fulness of joy that His presence alone can give. (See Ps. xvi. 11.)

Our blessed Master makes much of this joy, and says, after speaking of abiding in Himself, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that *your joy might be full.*" (John xv. 11.) And in remembrance of the sorrow His departure was causing, He says: "Ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and *your joy no one taketh from you.* . . . Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, *that your joy may be full.*" (Chap. xvi. 22, 24.) And finally, when praying to the Father for His disciples, He says, "And now come I to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, *that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.*" (Chap. xvii. 13.) Yes, fulfilled even now up to the utmost measure of faith. Who can fathom that of which our Master speaks as "My joy"?—a joy that followed Him all through His weary journey below, in the power of which He once and again could rejoice in spirit, and say, "I thank Thee, O Father; Lord of heaven and earth." And that we might enter into His joy, He adds, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. xi. 29, 30.)

The lowly and subject heart and will is the true secret of rest and joy. This filled the cup of the Holy One of God, making it to overflow from day to day, and enabling Him to say, "I do always those things

that please Him." The Father was well pleased in the Son, and the Son found His joy in the Father—a joy which neither man nor Satan could take away. It was in God, and therefore out of the reach of the vicissitudes of earth.

He who takes the yoke of Christ is ever in a position to obey the word: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee" (Isa. lx. 1); and, responding to God's call, he can say, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." (Isa. lxi. 10.)

Surely "the joy of the Lord" is our strength, as Israel found it to be in the day of their weakness, when they had come out of Babylon, the land of the enemy. (See Neh. viii. 10.) And John, as if to comfort the Church "in the last time," leads the saints into the enjoyment of a living fellowship with the Father and the Son, of which he writes: "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."

There is however, as we have intimated, a joy that falls short of God, and rests in something that has been obtained or attained. This may be real and lasting, as the joy of the babe in Christ, who realizes the forgiveness of sin, but who has not ascended to the joy of the father in Christ, who rejoices in the knowledge of Himself. (1 John ii. 12, 13.) Perhaps the joy of very many never ascends so high; for as in the outer world half die in infancy, so a large proportion in the family of God die in an infancy of experience, that rises not to that fulness of joy which has been under our contemplation; and yet it ought not to be so.

Alas! there is a joy consequent on hearing the Word which is altogether unreal, and therefore only temporary. Such are the stony-ground hearers in the parable of the sower. They receive the word with

joy and gladness. They "believe for a while;" but "have no root in themselves," and in the end they fall away. It is deeply important to ponder this phase of profession; for it is one too often met with. The gospel was presented as something that met a need and a sense of danger, and as such was accepted; but as meeting the claims of God's holiness, and as a divine power against sin, it was never known. Conscience was unexercised, and hence sin was not felt, nor its burden and curse known. The doctrine was easy; for it had no cross attached to it. A salvation was offered, but no discipleship demanded; a Saviour presented who could save, but not a Lord who demanded allegiance and subjection; and the result was, that with such shallow ploughing the stony places remained undisturbed. There was no depth; all lay on the surface; the seed sprang up immediately; but when the sun shone, immediately it withered away.

In contrast with this, it is noticeable that, in the case of those who received seed in the good ground, it is not joy that is given as a prominent feature, but *patience*. We read in Luke's gospel, "That on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, *keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.*" (Luke viii. 15.) Elsewhere we are told that they who endure unto the end shall be saved; and if patience or endurance (the word in the Greek is the same) have its perfect work, those in whom it thus works shall be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Is joy then excluded in those likened to the good ground? Far from it. But let obedience to God be the object, and then joy in God will be the result. Every Christian should be joyous and happy; for who has such well-springs of joy as he? But let God and not joy be the object of his pursuit, let him follow hard after the Good Shepherd, and he will find good-

ness and mercy following hard after him every step of the way, and the joy of the Lord will then indeed be his strength.

In conclusion we would say, that while many will fall away and be lost who may have manifested much joy in the gospel, no one will ever be lost who really knows what joy in God means. It is one of the most precious features of the fruit of the Spirit, which is the result of the regenerating grace of God, and is the outcome of that eternal life given to those who believe in God's only-begotten Son, whereby they are made partakers of the divine nature. H. G.

WORSHIP.

In Thine own presence, Lord,
 We seek with one accord
 To own Thy goodness, and to worship Thee :
 With heart and voice we raise
 Our gladsome hymn of praise ;
 For Thou art worthy, Thou hast made us free.

To give us peace with God
 Through Thy most precious blood,
 Thou didst endure the cross, despise the shame ;
 And now we humbly bring
 A free-will offering
 Of thanks and praise unto Thy holy name.

Yet what, O Lord, are we
 To render back to Thee
 From out Thy bounty that which is Thine own ?
 Oh, while we thus draw near,
 Still keep us in Thy fear,
 Yea, give us grace to look to Thee alone !

And when in Thine own time
 We reach life's golden prime,
 And drink the new wine of Thy joy *with Thee*,
 Then shall our songs abound,
 Then shall our praise resound,
 Without one discord in its harmony !

“THE LORD’S PRAYER.”

(MATT. vi. 9-13.)

Notes of an Address at Leominster, by T. N.

ATTEMPTS have been made to rob us of this precious prayer, as a thing of the past which we have left behind; but notwithstanding all the misuse of “Pater-noster,” let us hold to these blessed words that fell from the lips of our Lord.

This prayer is both a pattern and a form, and is well adapted to give the key-note to our prayers. It is a marvellous prayer, taught to His disciples by the great Master of prayer, and therefore divinely perfect. We may compare it with the breast-plate of the high priest, containing the Urim and Thummim. These Urim and Thummim, or lights and perfections of the divine mind, are twofold. They may be discovered and learned from the heart of our great High Priest, who is the wisdom as well as the power of God; and they may also be discovered and learned from the *original* Scriptures, which are the counterpart of that heart, and its outward record.

Any translation is able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, but there are innumerable lights and perfections of inestimable preciousness and value which are entirely effaced from its pages.

When the Holy Ghost once put pen to paper, every jot and tittle on the page of inspiration was placed there by the same divine Spirit which garnished the heavens, and heaven and earth may pass sooner than one of these tittles may fail. As the stars of heaven sparkle in the firmament, so these lights and perfections shine and sparkle on the page of inspiration; but as mist and cloud shut out the stars, so an imperfect translation blots out these perfections from the sacred

page. The sorrow of my heart is, that Christians do not appear to care whether they are blotted out or not, and one labour of my life is to put them back on the page of the authorised version.

Let us then consider this precious portion of Scripture, commonly called “The Lord’s Prayer,” with careful attention to some particulars in the original Greek.

“After this manner pray ye”—

“OUR FATHER.” The word “our” is a very large word; it embraces the whole household of faith, and takes in every fellow-believer. It is not only good to enter into our closet, and shut our door; but, says the psalmist, “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go up into the house of Jehovah” to worship in the great congregation of all the redeemed.

“Our Father.” There is no article in the Greek, and God’s fatherly *character* is thus indicated.

“WHICH ART IN THE HEAVENS.” With the article, and in the plural. Heaven is here presented as a locality, and in all its vastness.

It was in this temple Paul bowed his knees when he prayed unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom every family in the heavens and on the earth is named; not only the redeemed family of man, but the angels also, who are styled sons of God, and every intelligent creature throughout the universe.

In our Father’s house are many mansions. In verse 10 we read, “Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.” There heaven is looked at, not as a locality, but characteristically. It is the character of heaven that God’s will is done there, and therefore the word is without the article, and in the singular. There is but one will in heaven. I love to contemplate heaven in this aspect. I would never be left to my own choice. I love to serve, and I love my Master. Oh the repose of soul, when everything is left to the Divine will! Gabriel never asks himself, “What shall

I do next? Where shall I go?" (See Ezekiel i. 19, 20, 21, 24, 25.) "When they stood, they let down their wings. And *there was a voice* from the firmament." So "the angels that excel in strength do His commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word."

Thus we get light to discover one of the perfections of the Word—the distinction between "the heavens" (with the article, and in the plural) and "heaven" (without the article, and in the singular). Having got this light, let us look for further perfections.

Thus interpreted, every clause of this marvellous prayer presents heaven in a distinct aspect.

I. OUR FATHER, WHICH ART IN THE HEAVENS. Here heaven appears as the Father's house, the dwelling-place of God, with its many mansions, and with the secret apartments of the Son. Jesus says, in John xiv., "I go to prepare a place for you"—not many mansions, but one place; no more divisions, and no separations there. We have had enough of this on earth, and too much. "And if I go and prepare for you a place, I come again"—not "I *will* come;" nothing is put between the soul and this blessed hope. Here is another perfection. "For you a place," not "a place for you." "You" is emphatic. This place is the apartment of the Son, where His glory dwells, where He will have His Bride with Himself, in that place which He is gone to prepare. He will show her His secret place also. He has asked permission of His Father for her to be there: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." (John xvii. 24.) There He will show her this glory, which He had with the Father before the world was.

II. "HALLOWED BE THY NAME." This presents heaven as the temple of God, where the seraphim with covered faces cry, "Holy, holy holy, Jehovah

God of hosts.” A temple with only a rent veil between the holy and most holy place, into which the High Priest hath Himself entered, there to appear for us. A temple, not only with its ample floor and many worshippers thereon, but with its galleries above, its white-robed choir, and multitudes beyond; so that when the Lamb leads the song, not only do the elders and living creatures join, but the angels take it up, and every creature joins the chorus.

III. “**THY KINGDOM COME.**” Here heaven appears as the palace and throne of God. “Jehovah is in His holy temple.” “Jehovah’s throne is in heaven.” I hear a voice from heaven. Do you hear it? It is the voice of our beloved, “Come up hither.” Are you ready? Let us go together. Look around, what do you see? A throne set in heaven, and One sitting on the throne, and only One. One will in heaven, and only one.

“Thy kingdom come”—what does this mean? It means “Thy will be done as in heaven” (heaven in the singular shows the kingdom is but one). When God’s will is done in us, the kingdom of God is within us. When God’s will is done on earth as it is in heaven, it will be heaven begun below. If God’s will were done on earth to-day, every sinner would be saved. God seldom swears, except when the importance of the case or the unbelief of our hearts requires it. God wills all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth, and swears it: “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” (Ezekiel xxxiii. 11.) Why are not all saved? Because man has a will of his own. He will die; he will not come to Christ that he might have life.

IV. “**THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.**” Heaven is here the centre and source of

power to the universe, setting and keeping all in motion and in order, the mighty moving central power of the vast machine of universal action. Earth is a revolted portion of the kingdom, a part of the machinery out of gear. There is a screw loose, and mischief is going on; as there was once in a steam-vessel in a storm on the Atlantic; there was something wrong; the engine would not work; a screw was out. Who will put it in? The captain said to the engineer, "You are the fittest person." He goes down among the heat and steam, puts in the missing portion, and now the vessel rights, and goes onward through the storm. Such was the fact, and the application is simple.

V. "GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD." Here heaven appears as the great storehouse of divine bounty to the universe; the "Bethlehem," the house of bread, to the whole kingdom. Every good and perfect gift comes down from thence, and flows forth from thence.

"Our daily bread." "Our" takes in every needy one of the household; "bread" not only for the body, but for the soul. Every spoken word is manna with the dew upon it, if God's voice is heard as speaking from heaven.

VI. "AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS." Here heaven appears as the holiest of all, with its blood-stained mercy-seat, and the blood sprinkled with the finger upon it (pointing to it), and "seven times" before it "eastward," between the eye of Him that sitteth between the cherubim and the worshipper. (Lev. xvi. 14.) The scarlet sins are seen through the crimson blood, and appear white as snow.

VII. "AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS." Here heaven is the school of God, where we learn to forgive, as God in Christ forgave us; becoming thus *sons* (*υιοι*) of our Father which is in heaven, perfect as He is perfect.

VIII. "AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION." Here heaven appears as the paradise of God, with its tree of

life, and river of living water, where the Lamb leads, and God wipes off every tear; but without a tempting serpent. No temptation there, from within or from without. No serpent’s venom within; no serpent’s voice without.

IX. “BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.” Here heaven appears as “the city of the great King,” the heavenly Jerusalem, into which nothing which defiles enters. All is transcendent holiness. Every defilement is outside. *One* sight only is lacking in order to enable us fully to comprehend what heaven is. When we have seen that, then shall we fully know from what we have been delivered, and what heaven is as deliverance from evil. That sight is the lake of fire—a sight too fearful to be seen by mortal man; but once seen, it will stamp on the soul for ever the sense of the evil of sin. The greatness of our deliverance, and what heaven really is, will be seen by contrast.

X. “FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER, AMEN.”* The prayers of the Lord Jesus are progressive, as in John xvii., taking in the whole compass, from everlasting through all time to everlasting; so here. This completes the scene.

In the various petitions we have: 1. The prodigal’s return to the Father’s house. 2. The temple filled with glory. 3. The throne established. 4. Almighty power operating without impediment. 5. The storehouse of divine bounty opened. 6. Sin put away for ever. 7. The children, having completed their education, home for their eternal holiday. 8. Paradise restored. 9. The city shining out in its purity. Sin, death, and Hades cast into the lake of fire. No adversary nor evil occurrent.

* This concluding ascription of praise is not found in the ancient MSS., and was apparently added as a doxology, but it is in substance that which we have in 1 Chron. xxix. 11, and Rev. v. 13.

PAUL'S "FAITHFUL SAYINGS."

1 TIM. i. 15; iii. 1 (see Greek); iv. 9, 10; 2 TIM. ii. 11-13; TITUS iii. 8.

THERE are five of these—four in the epistles to Timothy, and one in the epistle to Titus. "Faithful saying" means an abiding saying—a maxim, a saying that may be thoroughly received and trusted; and the apostle seems to leave these with Timothy and Titus as great pillar-truths for the Church of God, to be maintained after his own departure, and to be inculcated all the days of the Church's sojourn here below.

Let us then consider them. May their definite meaning be given us, and may they have the firm and abiding place in our hearts and in our lives which as "faithful sayings" they were meant to have.

To the first of them, and also to the third of the five, this emphatic clause is added by the apostle: "Worthy of all acceptance." These two therefore stand specially distinguished, and may well claim our special attention.

The first is the one oftenest quoted, and runs thus: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (1 Tim. i. 15.)

These words have very often been understood to mean that the gospel, which publishes salvation by Christ, is worthy of acceptance by all mankind; and verily it is worthy of reception by all who hear it, even at the very first sound of it that reaches them; for is it not Jesus, now at God's right hand, whom it preaches, "the Lamb of God, the taker away of the sin of *the world*"?

But the context of these memorable words shows that Paul is here speaking of the doctrine that Timothy should as a bishop see to it was stedfastly taught *within the Church*, rather than the message of salvation to the

unsaved; this last would be his business when he was doing "the work of an evangelist," or others with him.

The whole chapter from verse 5 shows this. "Now the end of the commandment," *i.e.* the whole object of the divine command to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, which all in the Church have by grace obeyed, is to beget "LOVE"—a true divine love in our hearts, both to Him in whom we have believed, and to others around us, whether the saved or the unsaved. (Compare Luke vii. 37-50, where the whole object or "end" of the forgiving much is in order that we, the forgiven, may love much.)

But there was another kind of teaching, which sought to usurp a place for itself in the assembly of the saved, precisely opposite to that of simple faith and heavenly love—"love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience and faith unfeigned"—which was the divine object of the commandment.

Law-teaching would fain spoil the grace of God in the saints at Ephesus, as it had in the churches of Galatia, and by bringing in a Judaizing and carnal commandment puff up the carnal mind in the saints, who were saved by grace, and thus lower them from their place in the heavenlies in "Christ Jesus."

Paul contends against the entrance of this law-teaching into the church at Ephesus as earnestly as he had against Peter's slipping into Judaism at Antioch. (See Gal. ii.) He owns the value of the law—"The law is good" (v. 5)—but shows that it was made for the unregenerate, in all their lawlessness and disobedience, and not for God's law-loving and law-obeying children. He shows that both in his own case, and in that of all others of God's saved ones, it was by "the gospel of the glory of the blessed God," seen and learned in "Christ Jesus our Lord," and not by law and penal commandment, that they had been brought to God, and that too with "abundance of grace" for

ministry of the word, as well as for personal salvation; and that therefore the "sound doctrine," *i.e.* the wholesome teaching, and the *only* wholesome teaching for the saints of God, was that which was according to this glorious gospel, and grew out of it.

The Church of God, therefore, was the company of saved sinners, for whom Christ Jesus, now at God's right hand, had come into the world, and whom He had saved, not only apart from any works of law, but also in spite of all that helpless, hopeless condemnation to which as sinners the just and holy law had doomed them.

Observe also, it is "Christ Jesus" who had saved them, the anointed Jesus, with all the Holy Ghost's unction for them, to save as fully from the power of indwelling sin as He had delivered them from its deserved hell.

What room then was there in the Church for any other teaching than the "wholesome doctrine" of the glorious gospel of the blessed God? This "faithful saying" brings both the news that saves from hell, and also that which is still true of Him at God's right hand—"Call His name JESUS; for He shall save His people from their sins."

Let this teaching therefore have "all acceptation" in God's Church; for it is worthy of it. The *least* acceptance of it by divine teaching in the heart saves from hell; but it is "worthy of ALL acceptation," to the displacement of all doctrine of a contrary kind. It may be trusted to do everything of sanctifying work in the saints.

But the Pharisaism of our hearts—always lurking in us and ready to work—is slow to give it this "ALL acceptation." The *sense* of debtorship to grace is always prone to decrease in such busy and self-esteeming hearts as ours. The prodigal when first received would not be tempted to think of anything meritorious in himself; but after he had been some years brought in,

unless he kept in mind the fatted calf, and robe, and ring, and walked softly in the shoes which abounding grace had shod him with, might he not begin to *feel* something similar to the elder brother's words: "Lo, these many years do I serve thee," even if he did not utter it?

And what shall kill these weeds of pride in our hearts, as God's children, but the giving of "ALL acceptance"—acceptation *i.e.* to the very depth of the solemn truth contained in it, to this faithful saying; viz., "that Christ Jesus came into the world to SAVE SINNERS"?

And what is there like this "faithful saying" for silencing all such rules and commandments of men in God's Church as do but puff up the teachers of them and their disciples, even though sanction be sought for them by a misplacing and an abuse of Old Testament commandment and law?

The truth is, this faithful saying has in it the depth of the sin and the hell from which we have been saved, as well as the height of Christ Jesus above, in whom we are raised up and anointed. All the fulness of our salvation is in its mighty truth. Let it but increase then in our acceptance of it, and it will work in us accordingly. It will abase us in our own eyes, yet will also lift us up, and will anoint our souls with heavenly power; and its increased acceptance will wonderfully enrich our individual and united worship as assembled saints.

Our praise to God our Saviour will be as solemn as it is glad; for it will ascend from the depths of hearts that increasingly realize what we have been redeemed from, as well as to Whom, in redemption, we are brought.

There is precious truth for us in the hymn we sometimes sing—

"When this passing world is done,
When has sunk yon radiant sun,

When I stand with Christ in glory,
 Looking o'er life's finished story,
 Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
 Not till then—how much I owe.

“When the praise of heaven I hear,
 Loud as thunders to the ear,
 Loud as many waters' noise,
 Sweet as harp's melodious voice,
 Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
 Not till then—how much I owe.”

We sing these and others of its verses, and enjoy them; but beloved M'Cheyne added another verse, which we read, but, I suppose, seldom *sing* :

“When I hear the wicked call
 On the rocks and hills to fall,
 When I see them start and shrink
 On the fiery deluge brink,
 Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
 Not till then—how much I owe.”

For it solemnly tells us that the saints before the throne of God and of the Lamb will own they were as much “by nature children of wrath” as those whom they will see “depart” as cursed ones “into everlasting fire.”

Before that throne, then, this mighty truth will have ALL acceptation in the hearts of all the redeemed, “that Christ Jesus came into the world to SAVE SINNERS;” for every note of our worship before the throne will have in it this depth, and not a thought of busy self, with its eyes and its feelings of self-esteem, will ever mingle with our worship to mar it or make it shallow.

Hence, in our assemblies now, he who sees himself the “chief” of sinners, as Paul did, becomes the deepest and the richest worshipper, and a true leader of the praises of fellow-saved ones; his lips become a well-spring of blessing, springing first upwards to his God and Saviour, and flowing out to his fellows around him; and the deep evil of his flesh within,

though such a grief and sorrow to himself, is not suffered to grow and become a trouble to his fellow-saints.

Oh for an increase of such worship, both in our hearts and in our assemblies!

And while thus drinking "waters out of our own cistern" (see Prov. v. 15; "cistern" should be "pit," the same word as in Gen. xxxvii. 24, the deep pit of Jesus' death for us), and "running waters out of our own well," another blessing would follow; viz., "our fountains would be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets."

The outflow, that is, of our gospel testimony to the unsaved would be fuller and with more power. And this is Paul's first use of his faithful saying (see v. 16): "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting." And then the united ascription of all thus worshipping and thus testifying to the unsaved would be—"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Be it so, for His name's sake.

H. D.

(To be continued.)

FRAGMENTS.

THE rent vail, the resurrection of Jesus, and the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, are three witnesses of God's power for us, and of Christ's acceptance for us.

Three things are necessary for fellowship: (1.) We must know our sins forgiven, the certainty that faith imparts that we are righteous before God. Doubt or fear will hinder fellowship. (2.) There must be a new nature in which to enjoy God; flesh cannot; it is by the life of Christ that we enjoy God. (3.) The *new*

nature must be strengthened, made active, by the power of the Spirit of God, to enter into such communion.

Christ brings us into fellowship, and for any breach of it we are responsible; yet He is ever ready to restore it to us.

Our experience of God's faithfulness in the past is a reason for trusting Him now; but the great reason for trusting God is, that Christ is now at His right hand.

What might be *advance* to some might be *falling-back* in others. Our perfection consists in pressing after Christ.

If we use the word as *meat* to the new man, we shall find it to be a *sword* against the flesh.

"If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth." The order is important. It is not taking forth the vile from the precious, for that would occupy us with the *vile*; but in taking the precious from the vile, the *precious* is our *object*.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

WHAT is meant by the "*gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble,*" in 1 Cor. iii. 12?

This chapter has specially to do with ministry in the Church, whether in evangelistic work in gathering stones and materials for the building, or in pastoral and teaching work, in fitting the stones into the building. Of these two classes of workmen, Paul and Apollos are representatives. The Church is God's husbandry, and God's building. Paul had laid the foundation, which was Jesus Christ, and had been gathering living stones on that foundation, and Apollos had followed and helped on the work. Sectarianism was beginning to come in, and other centres were

beginning to be formed. Other foundation can no man lay, but he may add to it something else, or take something away from it, and in either case he mars God's only foundation. God's Christ can neither be added to, nor taken from. But in the superstructure care has to be taken as well. The building is to be of living stones, and if dead stones are brought in, they are as wood, hay, and stubble, that the day of God will burn up. But not only are the persons brought into the Church to be looked on as the material for the building, but the doctrine and teaching also form a most important element in the building. What is it that is to make the stones grow into their place, and be fitted for it, but the doctrine of Christ, held and taught? Hence, it would appear, we are to regard the whole of the work of the servants of the Church as described in the various materials specified, each material giving the relative value of the work in the estimate of the Spirit of God. Truly it is a solemn word to preachers and teachers; but it finds its application also to the feeblest member of the body of Christ (see this wider use in 2 Cor. v. and vi.); for each has his appointed work to perform, to the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come into the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. We think it important in the present day to connect men and doctrine together. The day was when doctrine occupied an undue place, but now doctrine is made too little of; and if men are thought to be Christians, their creed is too often held to be of little consequence.

What do the parables in Matt. xiii. 44-46 teach?

They unfold the value put on the objects of God's redeeming grace, and the costliness of Christ's redeeming love. He was seeking that which He alone knew how to value, and when He had found it, He went and sold all and bought it. We would connect with these parables what we read in Phil. ii. 6-8, where we learn

what the selling all really meant in the Lord's case. Each step from the throne to the cross was an unrobing, yet so that He knew the value of all He laid aside; for He sold each costly robe as it was put off, and on the cross, with the "It is finished," sold all that remained—His life, and thus consummated the wonderful thought in the parable, "*He sold all.*" It is thus we are taught what we have cost Christ, and gather therefrom strength to carry out the command contained in the words, "Go sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, and take up the cross, and follow me." (Read Mark x. 21-31.) Herein, as elsewhere, the word is, "Be ye followers of God, as dear children."

Who are we to understand by the "host" in Luke x. 35?

We reply, the Church collectively, and the individual believer who for Christ occupies the place of an inn-keeper (*πανδοχευς*). The word "inn" (*πανδοχειον*) has an important signification, which it may be well to note in these days. It signifies a place where every one is received who comes; and what is wanted in a world of sick and suffering humanity is, those who will act as Christ's hosts. In the twopence (or denarii) given to the host there was sufficient to meet the need of the wounded man till the Good Samaritan's return, and so now we receive from the Master all that is needed till He comes again; but there will be much expended besides in toil and care, for all which the Lord will repay with an infinite recompence when He comes, to those who have obeyed the command, "Go, and do thou likewise." One of the many relations which the Church is called to fulfil is that of being a home for the sick and wounded. The Lord make us good nurses and caretakers, to His glory and the good of souls; for He has set us an example.

THE DISCIPLINE OF GOD.

FOR mutual help and comfort we would write a little on this subject, for it is one of deep importance, and one around which much perplexity often gathers in the minds of many of God's people. To most perhaps *discipline, chastening,* and similar words, only imply *punishment* as the result of sin. Whatever may be the meaning usually attached to the English words, the Greek word of which they are the translation does not at all necessarily imply this. The word is *παιδεία, paideia*, derived from *pais*, "a child," and means the *training* which a child needs to fit him for the position he has to fill in the purpose of the father. The bullock is trained to bear the yoke it will have to wear, the vine branch is trained up against the wall on which it will have to grow; and so the child of God is trained for his heavenly service here, and for his heavenly home above.

We find the same word used by the apostle Paul in Titus ii. 11, 12: "The grace of God hath appeared *teaching*" (that is, disciplining or training) "us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for the blessed hope," even the coming of the Lord. He who knows much of himself knows how much the training of God's grace is needed, either to live worthy of our calling on earth or to look forward to its glorious consummation.

We do not say that this training does not involve and include punishment; but it does so only when the will of the Christian rises up in rebellion against the will of God. Till then all is harmony between the soul and its God; and he who seeks to do the will of God will be thankful for all that gracious training which ultimately makes obedience a delight, and the doing of His will a pleasure.

Thus was the Man Christ Jesus under the daily training of God; and He who awoke Him morning by morning to hear as the learned opened His ear, and He could say, "I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my face from shame and spitting." Thus was the training of Christ a submitting and a suffering; and thus He "learned obedience by the things that He suffered." (Compare Isa. l. 4-6 with Heb. v. 7, 8.) But of this who can write?

We will now turn to Heb. xii., and there we shall find encouragement to afflicted and sorrowing saints, and see how the Lord would comfort those who are cast down under His chastening hand with the remembrance of that Fatherly love and care which watches over the individual growth of each child, seeking in all things, small and great, to mould the character, temper, will, and whole being, into the likeness of His holiness, and into conformity with Himself.

Chapter xi. had already told the Hebrews what the pathway of faith had ever been, and how the worthies named in it were borne witness to by God (or, as it is rendered, "obtained a good report"), and thus also became a mighty cloud of witnesses for God to us. What mighty discipline, what blessed training, that thus enabled Abel, Enoch, and Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and those others, to obtain and to give so bright a testimony! But while thus contemplating their witness for God, our eyes are taken away from them, and directed to the yet far higher witness of Him who is emphatically "the Amen, the faithful and true witness"—as the apostle says, "Looking off unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith." In Him we see faith in the living God begun, and that faith and trust triumphant. This feature in the life of Christ God's saints are called to consider, lest they become "weary and faint in their minds" when called

to resist unto blood, "striving against sin." Carrying about as we do a body of sin and death, there will be a daily martyrdom to those who seek to resist sin, not only in its outcomings, but in its indwelling; and in proportion as sin in the flesh is triumphed over will the one thus triumphing become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. He will become an object of enmity to the world around, and a mark for the sharper arrows of Satan, which the shield of faith alone can turn aside, and the fire of which that faith alone can quench.

These Hebrew Christians had forgotten God's exhortation in the book of Proverbs, speaking to them (and to us) "as unto *children*." Yet this is the secret spring of comfort in all the training and discipline of the way. It is because we are children, because we are loved, because God's honour is connected with our walk, and because the measure of our happiness and glory hangs on our likeness to our heavenly Father, that all this helpful training is daily brought to bear upon us. In every turn it may take we learn that we are loved with an everlasting love, and may discover that all this loving care is expended on us to produce in us by the Holy Ghost that which we have already received in Christ, and to stir us up to pursue after it, and never to be satisfied till we awake in His likeness.

Again and again, in the first nine chapters of Proverbs, does God use that loving title, "My son," as in the verse quoted here, "My son, despise not thou the chastening" (or training) "of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth" (traineth), "and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."*

* In the book of Proverbs we have "as a father" (כִּנְיָ) as it stands pointed in the Hebrew Bible. The Septuagint Greek apparently read the Hebrew as if pointed כִּנְיָ ("scourgeth"), whence we derive the reading in Heb. xii. 5.

Men are ever disposed to despise that which comes frequently and little by little. But it is just in this way that the training of God comes to us. It is not often by some great matter, some mighty thunder, some terrible calamity, but "here a little and there a little." It is thus He teaches, weaning us from the breast of nature's supply, and setting His weaned ones freer and freer from the will of the flesh and from the will of man. Thus does the vine-dresser take the little tender branch and fasten it to the wall, and so does God, who is the husbandman of the True Vine, by the power of the Holy Spirit, bend the boughs and prune the branches, so as to secure the greatest amount of that fruit of the Spirit, which is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." (Gal. v. 22, 23.)

God's discipline is designed to produce such an exercise of soul that His dealing shall be gratefully accepted, and not merely borne. Thus Job, when tempted to dishonour God in his terrible calamity, said, "Shall we accept the good at the hand of God, and shall we not accept the evil?"

As we know, to our bitter sorrow, this heavenly training may be frustrated by our self-will, and this discipline of love that would make the child a disciple may be resisted. It is then that God's rebukes and scourgings come on us. Scourging implies that there has been rebellion. This surely there should not be, and yet in the life of all God's sons save One this rebellion has been found. He only could say, "I was not rebellious."

It is a deeply important thing for the Christian to know the why and the wherefore of God's dealings. Nothing but close fellowship with God can teach us this; and may we, as God's children, ponder over the trainings and punishments of God to this end more than we do. Were this the case, many shortcomings would be corrected, and many evils become known, of which

now each of us is unconscious, because so little exercised therein before God. To many the *endurance* of an affliction seems everything; but while it is a necessary preliminary to all ultimate blessing, it is only a means to an end; and therefore we are told, that while tribulation worketh patience, or endurance, it is patience that works experience. This experience of faith, this proving of the ways and dealings of God, whereby God is known to us, and His ways apprehended by us, is of the greatest moment; for it is after all the point to which the heavenly discipline through which we pass is leading us, and its result is an assured hope that makes not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts; that is, a love realised, known, and rejoiced in, and which is the very highest and holiest experience of the soul. He who has it can set to his own seal that God is true; for he has found God to be all that He has revealed Himself in the Word.

How beautiful is the contrast given between man's training and God's. The one is, as it pleaseth the parent; the other, as it profiteth the child. Oh that our hearts could ponder this more! It would give a sweetness to the most trying training, and a joy to the most constant discipline. We need remember that the glory of God and the profit of the believer can never be separated; and as the identity of the two is realized by us, we shall be able to accept the discipline with joy, and bow beneath the rebuke, remembering that the Lord deals with us as with sons in whom He delighteth.

We are not left in ignorance as to what our profit consists in. It is in being made partakers of His holiness. This partaking is not a thing imputed to us, and is not to be confounded with that imputation of Christ to us, of which we read in 1 Cor. i. 30, "Who of God is made unto us . . . righteousness and sanctification" (holiness). What we are in Christ we are at the first moment of conversion—"complete in Him;" what

we become by the forming of Christ in us is the result of the communicating grace and power of the Holy Spirit, who works in us to will and to do of God's good pleasure. It is to this that our training is directed. The perfect holiness of a new nature we have in Christ, but the holiness of a new *life* is wrought by the Holy Ghost amidst the strivings and strugglings of the old and the new, whence arise the conflicts of Rom. vii., which often lead to the bitter cry, "Oh wretched man that I am!" a cry that finds its relief only in the assured triumph of Christ, in whom we triumph too. Hence is the believer "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; having nothing, and yet possessing all things." It is to this participation in holiness that the beatitude points, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Those who know most of what holiness is will know most of what sin is; and in the present day we need perhaps more than ever a deeper knowledge of sin and a higher conception of holiness. If this were attained, there would be a humbler, lowlier tone in the life and words of the people of God, a softness and a gentleness which the sense of what the holiness of God demands would give; and Christ in the soul, the hope of glory, would unfold the deeper purposes of God, and lead into a heavenly-mindedness and a spiritual-mindedness to which most are comparatively strangers.

True holiness is found only in the presence of God, and is taught by that "light of life" in which those walk who fulfil the command given to Abraham—"Walk thou before Me, and be thou perfect;" *i. e.* upright.

This was said to Abraham fifteen years after God had made the covenant with him (Gen. xv.) of multiplying his seed. The seal of that covenant was now to be given him in the typical rite of circumcision, the antitype and fulness of which was made ours in Christ the moment we believed in Him. (See Col. ii.)

But the discipline and training of God are ever leading us into an eighth-day resurrection apprehension of all that in which we have believed, and by which we are already saved; and this is the increasing formation of Christ in us by the Holy Spirit, of which Isaac's birth is the figure and allegory, even as the birth of Ishmael is an allegory representing the workings of the will of the flesh in the believer.

Upon all the workings of the flesh the rebuke of God comes, as in the solemnly painful command to Abraham, "Cast out the bond-woman and her son." Unbelief brought Ishmael into the house—a figure, as used by Paul in the epistle to the Galatians, whereby God would warn us all against seeking to perfect by the flesh what has been begun in the Spirit, and seeking a holiness and consecration in the flesh instead of in the Spirit, wrought inwardly by "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," which alone can please God. Hence it is "*His* holiness" which God would have us to be partakers of. There is much professed sanctity that has only "a shew of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body," that gains no end, and has no honour, but "to the satisfying of the flesh," which is one of the very things which all divine discipline seeks to crucify. How profoundly the apostle in these verses in Colossians warns us against anything short of the holiness of God, whether it be something intended as a help to it, or as a substitute for it; for in either case it can only be a hindrance and a snare.

But "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby." There is a present grievousness and pain in it which we can only rise above as the end is kept in view. It was very grievous to Abraham to cast out Ishmael, and God's command cost him many a pang; but he did not allow himself

time to dwell on it; for when God commanded, "he rose up early in the morning," and did it; and this prepared him for the greater sacrifice of Isaac. These two events in Abraham's life illustrate the two parts of God's training of us as His children. The command to cast out Ishmael was a rebuke and a scourging to unbelief; while the command to offer up Isaac was a discipline to faith, and it failed not; for again we read, "Abraham rose up early in the morning," and took Isaac, and went.

One point of the greatest value to us in the Old Testament biographies is the truth contained, typically sometimes, and spiritually always, in the discipline and scourgings of God's dealings with His people. In these will be found much depth of teaching, and an unfolding of God's ways with us, which, if prayerfully pondered, might solve many a mystery in the history of God's children, and cast a flood of light on many of the dark pages of their lives; for in these things God has not left Himself without witness to the seeing eye and to the listening ear of the instructed and obedient heart.

Connected with and flowing out of all this divine discipline, of which Hebrews xii. treats, are five commands, which we will enumerate:

1. To lift up the hands which hang down and the feeble knees.

2. To make straight paths in which to walk, lest others be turned aside.

3. To follow after peace with all men, as followers of Him who sought not His own.

4. To follow after holiness, remembering it is the end of the discipline of God's love.

5. To look diligently lest any fail and come short of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness spring up, and lest there be a profane person, as Esau, who sold his birthright.

The discipline of God is designed to be a help and a

preservation in all these things, and to them our attention is particularly turned, that the training grace of God be not expended on us in vain, and that like unprofitable servants and unfruitful branches we be not cut off as cumberers of the ground.

The allusion to Esau here is peculiarly solemn in reference to what has gone before about discipline. He, like Ishmael, was a wild-ass man,* untrained and undisciplined, and in this respect the opposite of Jacob, who with all the crookedness of his natural character became under the trainings and scourgings of God's grace a true Israelite, one who as a prince had power with God. May all the Jacobs of the family of God take comfort, notwithstanding all their conscious failings, in the loving care of "the God of Jacob," who has said for our comfort, "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated."

"WE thank Thee, Lord, for weary days,
When desert springs were dry,
And first we knew what depth of need
Thy love can satisfy ;

"The joy no desolations here
Can reach, or cloud, or dim ;
The present Lord, the living God,
And we alone with Him.

"The touch that heals the broken heart
Is never felt above ;
His angels know His blessedness,
His wayworn saints His love."

H. G..

* See Hebrew of Genesis xvi. 12, "He shall be a wild-ass man ;" compare with Job xi. 12, "For vain" (or empty) "man would be wise, though man be born as a wild-ass's colt," and Job xxxix. 5, "Who sent out the wild-ass free? . . . whose house I have made the wilderness." Jer. ii. 24 and Hosea viii. 9, show us Israel standing in Ishmael's place ; and this accords with Paul's teaching in Gal. iv. 25 : "This Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children."

EXPEDIENCY.

1 KINGS xii. - xiv.

JEROBOAM, king of Israel, when seated on the throne, began to consider how his authority might be secured; for not being of the seed royal, he felt uncertain as to its stability. Especially was he troubled on this point. The house which Solomon had built for the God of Israel, and of which God had taken possession, was at Jerusalem, in the territory remaining to Solomon's son, Rehoboam. And he reasoned thus: If my people continue to go up to that place to worship they will naturally become more and more associated with their brother Israelites, will recollect that they are all of one family, will become ashamed of the separation, and will be aware of their loss of strength by the partition into two kingdoms; they will then put an end to me, and revert to their hereditary monarch.

This conclusion was very reasonable. It was however defective in one essential feature—a fact of the greatest importance had been overlooked or forgotten; viz., that God had given him his kingdom.

On a previous memorable occasion Jeroboam had met the prophet Ahijah, who was then wearing a new garment. This he took off, and tearing it into twelve pieces, gave ten of the pieces to Jeroboam, with this word from the God of Israel, "Behold I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee." By this act Jeroboam became invested with the kingship over the ten tribes as fully as Saul or David with that over the twelve tribes. Each owed his exaltation to the supreme authority of the God of Israel, and to Him alone. He had been pleased while they were in lowly position to constitute them kings, and it was He who undertook to seat them on the throne, and to maintain them there.

Jeroboam however, like other ungodly men, could

look no further than the instrumental means by which this was in God's wisdom brought about—the revolt of the ten tribes from Rehoboam, in consequence of his conduct at Shechem. As they had revolted once, so he thinks they may again rebel, and he must take measures to prevent this.

It was of no account in his mind that God had pledged Himself to be with him, and to build him a sure house, provided he would obey His commands; nor was it at all laid to heart that his own promotion was occasioned by the disobedience of his predecessor. Commands, warnings, and promises are all thrown to the winds. Human expediency alone governs him, as it does others who live without God in the world.

But the course he adopted became the ruin of himself, of his family, and of his people. Political sagacity devised the scheme, and it was well contrived for the purpose; but legislation is seldom conducted with any reference to the pleasure or command of God. Jeroboam deemed it desirable to establish a new religion, a new object, and a new centre of worship, so to counteract the influence of Jerusalem, and induce his subjects to remain within his own dominions.

There must of course be an altar and a priesthood; for what conscience could be satisfied without these? If they are not forthcoming the mind cannot be at rest. A visible object too before which to bow down must be selected, in accordance with the innate propensity of the human heart. It matters little what that object is, from the sun in the heavens to the beetle crawling on the earth; from the exquisitely sculptured image of the Greek down to the coarsest fabric of the potter; from a doll decked out with elaborate millinery and costly jewelry to the bits of rag and rubbish forming the fetish of the negro; it matters not—any thing and every thing is preferred to the unseen God.

In this instance it was a calf—not a living animal;

for that might grow to be no longer a calf; but made of gold it would not be subject to this and other inconveniences. One of these is set up at Bethel, another at Dan, the extreme limits of his dominions. The royal proclamation went forth, that these were the gods who had brought the people out of Egypt, although they had just issued from the foundry.

In former days the same deliverance had been attributed to another lump of gold, and heavy judgment had befallen their ancestors in consequence (see Exod. xxxii.); nevertheless, now that the thing is done by the king in counsel, no one must question the assertion.

While the king is offering incense to this new idol, and the fat of victims is burning on the altar in front, there comes from Judah a man commissioned by the Most High, who announces with a loud voice impending judgment upon the altar and its priests; in proof of which he declares, that this newly-erected altar shall be torn asunder, and that which is upon it scattered, which immediately comes to pass.

The indignant king commands him to be seized; but the hand which he had stretched out in fury cannot be drawn in again—sinew and muscle, dried up and shrunk, refuse to do their office. The news soon spreads.

Softened, and partly subdued by his personal calamity, the alarmed king now appeals to the prophet whom he had been about to slay—"Intreat now the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again." He offers no prayer himself, nor does he acknowledge the Lord to be *his* God; but neither does he pray to the calf. He knows full well that the God of Israel, who has smitten, alone can heal.

Even for this impious king, though detected in this flagrant idolatry, in breach of the first two of the commandments from mount Sinai, for violation of which the penalty was instant death, even for him was there mercy. It ever rejoices the heart of God

to display this rather than inflict judgment upon the guilty, although convicted of such enormous crimes as these. At the prayer of the man of God the arm is restored. Our poor fallen nature, little knowing the love which fills the heart of God toward the sinner, prefers to make a request to a fellow-creature rather than to Him. The consciousness of obligation to Him it cannot endure until the enmity is slain.

Respect for the man who has been the means of his restoration, and perhaps some compunction of soul, now induce the king to offer him the hospitality of the palace, and to promise him a gift. The prophet boldly and decidedly refuses both. He has been ordered by his God not to eat or drink there, and to return by another road. He is a servant of the Most High, and must obey orders. No compromise, no concession can be allowed. The servant is not to be exposed to the temptation of receiving honour from the enemy of God, or from any subjects of his who may have heard of what has transpired.

Faithful men were these prophets of old! Clad in sheepskin; ready to endure any privation, any hardship; at a moment prepared to set out on any errand, however dangerous; always having at the risk of their lives to confront the potentates of the earth, whenever it pleased God to send them to denounce their conduct. Set apart for God, they were always in a state of antagonism to His enemies, especially to the monarchs, the best of whom often needed rebuke, well knowing all the time that "the king's wrath is as the messenger of death." This faithful servant had just bearded the lion in his den; he had refreshed the soul of his Master (Prov. xxv. 13), and for him the prophet's reward is assured.

He sets out on his return, hungry and weary.

An old prophet, dwelling in Bethel, learning what has happened, overtakes him, and presses him to take refreshment at his house. He decidedly refuses. The

old man persists, fabricating the monstrous falsehood that an angel had commanded him to bring the stranger back. He is beguiled, and goes, not seeking counsel from God whether this recent alleged order was to supersede the former express injunction. Even prophets, apart from the utterances of the Spirit, are but fallible men.

The old prophet, no worshipper of the calf, but, as Lot of old, abiding amongst the wicked, had in some measure lost the brightness of the polished shaft. He wished to cheer the man of God. Perhaps he wished to have his own soul refreshed by his company; perhaps he desired to obtain amongst his townsmen the credit of having as his guest the remarkable man who had refused to become the guest of their king; perhaps he may have desired thus to obtain an implied sanction for remaining where he was among the idolators, in the very focus of their guilt.

Be that as it may, his own lips are made to astound his hearer with the fearful denunciation of death for having thus disobeyed his God. The very mouth that uttered the lie, luring the faithful one from the path of obedience, is made to pronounce his doom. If such be the penalty of a small and an almost involuntary transgression, what must he himself deserve and expect? What must that high-handed rebel, the king, his servants, and his subjects, deserve and expect?

The righteous judgment of God, though suspended, must surely fall upon and crush them all. The very lion that stood in the path after having slain the prophet, hurting no one else, was a testimony to the nation of what the wrath of God could do if once let loose, unrestrained. The day of forbearance was prolonged; a further season for repentance allowed. Judgment begins at the house of God; "and if first at us, what shall be the end of those who obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

An old prophet, however venerable, even dwelling in "God's house" (Bethel) is no safe guide for the child of God. The injunctions of his Father-God, issued to him by Jesus the loving Master, through the Holy Ghost, furnish the test by which his conduct will be judged, and by which it is now to be regulated.

The old prophet goes to bring in the dead body, makes much lamentation over him, and buries him in his own tomb. The sorrow is all too late. To his dying day he bears the reproach and guilt of having caused his death through his own wickedness. This tomb, with its inscription, is again brought to notice about three hundred and fifty years afterwards, recording all the while God's denunciation of the idolatry. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 17, 18.)

After some time the son of Jeroboam becomes dangerously ill. The father, anxious to know the issue, sends his wife to the prophet Ahijah, who had foretold his exaltation to the throne. She does not convey any request for prayer, or for healing, but goes merely to learn the result of the disease. Her husband's right arm might have instructed her better, both as to the wisdom, the goodness, and the power of Israel's God; but their foolish hearts were darkened—so dark indeed as to suppose that the information might be obtained without the party seeking it being known.

God, however, instructs his servant. The deceit is laid bare; the heavy tidings disclosed. She is not to see her son again. As soon as she crosses the threshold of the house he will die, and the rest of the family are to be destroyed, cast out as vile refuse. This boy alone is to come to a grave; for there is some good in him towards the God of Israel. The dead bodies of all the remaining sons are to be devoured by dogs and birds of prey. The nation, too, is to be rooted out, and transported beyond the Euphrates, from whence they originally came, because they had dared to provoke to anger the Lord their God.

And so it came to pass. Time was allowed for repentance, but there was none. The king dies. This is his epitaph, written by the finger of God: "Jero-boam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin." *Such is the result of expediency.* R. N.

PAUL'S "FAITHFUL SAYINGS."

No. II.—1 TIM. iii. 1.

FROM the first of these five "faithful sayings" (1 Tim. i. 15) we have seen the apostle Paul leaving to Timothy and to us the deeply solemn and blessed lesson that the Church of God is to the last to know itself as an assembly of sinners saved by Christ Jesus, and to have no thought in it of merit as law-keepers, nor any room in its assemblies for any setting themselves up as law-teachers. "The glorious gospel of the blessed God," and its grand and wholesome theme of salvation by grace, was by that "faithful saying" to be its one doctrine whereby to bring glory to God in its worship, and to produce depth of soul and fruit to God in its gospel testimony.

We now come to the second of the five. It relates to oversight in this precious Church of saved sinners, and runs thus (see Greek): "It is a faithful saying, if any one longs after overseeing, he desires a good *work*."

On it we remark, first: This saying is "faithful," however deeply it be tested—even though to death itself—that early death by martyrdom to which all guides and overseers in the Church were so exposed in the apostle's time. Stephen had gained to himself a good degree—a good step upward, that is, in blessing—by having done deacon-work so well; and this was true, although the "great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus" that he had gained had in this life only led to his being stoned to death in the streets of Jerusalem. Herod's beheading of the apostle James

(Acts xii.) had left it still true that overseeing in God's Church was a good work; for thus had his mother's request for him been fulfilled (see Matt. xx. 21), and in the service of oversight he had been privileged to drink of the Master's cup. It was in similar work Paul had himself been willing to "die daily;" for when stoned in Lystra, and dragged outside the city, and left for dead, it was to that same Lystra that he returned again, that he might "comfort the souls of the disciples, and exhort them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom." Thus it was that he did not count his life dear to him, that he might finish his course, and the *ministry* he had received of the Lord Jesus. Surely Paul's life shows, as well as his pen, the faithfulness of the saying, that he who aims at oversight desires a good work.

Second. It is a faithful (*i.e.* an abiding) saying; for it remains true to the end of the Church's sojourn below. The Church's condition might change, and instead of a living and united company, as at Pentecost, when great grace was upon them all, and godly oversight was welcomed and would be happy work, coldness might come in, and a turning back toward Judaism by many would make oversight a work of much toil and much sorrow; yet the faithful saying would still remain; viz., that the exercise of godly oversight in the Church was a good work. The guides who watched for the souls of their fellow-saints, as those who must ere long "give account" (Heb. xiii. 17), might have to do it "with grief, and not with joy;" but the tears and toils with which they did it were, and always would be, precious to the Master, "the King eternal," to whom alone all praise in the Church belongs; and hence it was a good work, let the times become ever so evil, even within the Church.

Third. It was a *good* (*i.e.* an honourable) work, however much the work of faithful overseers in the Church

might get overrun by the corrupt doctrines and worldly ways of "false apostles and deceitful workers" (2 Cor. xi.) raised up and sent out by Satan himself, disguised as an "angel of light." And in Paul's own time we know from his own epistles it was so; but the same coming of Christ that will accurately gather out the tares from the wheat will also distinguish between all kinds of service done in the Church, and will out of the very same assembly burn up the wood, and hay, and stubble, while it brings to Himself, as precious for ever, the gold, and silver, and precious stones; hence it remains true to the last, that any brother in Christ who humbly aspires to oversight desires a good work. (Compare 1 Cor. xiv. 1.)

Note here, it is not to an "office" he aspires, but to the *work*. There is no word "office" in the Greek, either in verse 1 respecting overseers, or in verse 10 respecting deacons. "Office," even in spiritual things, is too much linked with superior position in this life, and with emolument; but what the apostle commends is the desire for oversight-work, or deacon-work, in whomsoever it exists, as a godly aim. "He desires a good *work*," not "a good *thing*," as we have it translated.

Nor is there any limit to the *number* that may enter these blessed lines of service, either in the Church as a whole, or in any local assembly. The church at Philippi may not have been large; but he addresses not only the saints in it, but also its "bishops (overseers) and deacons." (Phil. i. 1.) Neither does the apostle specify a special age at which oversight and deacon-work is to be undertaken, as he does in the case of widows to be placed on the church list (see 1 Tim. v. 9), and as the service of priests and Levites was limited in the Old Testament (see Numbers iv. 3), though for the most part it would not be younger men, because it was always to be those of spiritual experience, as it says (v. 6) "not a novice."

But though these orders of ministry in the church

—overseers and deacons—be both of them such good works, and the entering upon them so free to all who are moved of God to desire them, the apostle feels the need of leaving on record for all remaining ages of the church's sojourn the true outlines and lineaments of both the overseer and the deacon; and these he draws with sufficient definiteness to keep out not only all "false apostles," such as Judas and Simon Magus, but also all such worldly ones as Hymenæus and Alexander, Demas and Diotrefes, and yet with qualifications sufficiently moderate not to discourage any godly ones who fain would do such work, and thus express their love to Christ and to His Church.

Surely this chapter, and Titus i. and 1 Peter v., as to the character of elders should be joined in our hearts with Paul's word (Eph. iv.), that the Lord Jesus Christ, as Head of His body the Church, will continue to give such to His Church "till we all come unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;" and we might suitably read them occasionally when assembled together to stir up prayer for such to be raised up in the Church.

But it is the close of the chapter (*vv.* 14–16) which most shows what a truly "good work" is all such godly oversight and deacon work; viz., because all of it is to show forth Christ Jesus, who not only saved us as sinners, but was on earth the perfect embodiment of all godliness. In Eph. iv. the various gifts are in order to the filling up and perfecting of the body, the church, the whole growing up of which is to be into Christ. And here in 1 Tim. iii. the behaviour of labourers in "the house of God, the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth," is to be according to that *godliness* which was seen on earth once in Christ Himself, and is without controversy a great mystery. In HIM it was seen "manifest in the flesh;" *i.e.* in everyday life: so let it be in all overseers and deacons. He was "justified in the

Spirit," as when Peter said to Him (John vi. 68), "Thou hast the words of eternal life:" so let it be with the teachings of all overseers and deacons. "Seen of angels:" Paul elsewhere says, "that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known *by the Church* the manifold wisdom of God." "Preached among the Gentiles:" and the apostle says, "Now then are we ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us: we pray *in Christ's stead*, Be ye reconciled to God." "Received up in glory:" for Christ led them out to Bethany, teaching them till the heavens received Him; and it is for this that all saints, and all the bishops and deacons amongst them, are waiting, and are fulfilling their service as those who have heard the word, "Occupy till I come," and only till then.

Thus as "the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof" characterized Elisha all his days of witness and service (see 2 Kings ii. vii. xiii.), so has our Lord not only said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the age," but He has ordained that all service in His Church shall be so begun, continued, and ended in Himself, and by an abiding in Him, that the apostle may well place this among his faithful sayings, "If any man reaches forth after overseeing, he desires a good work."

May the Lord kindle this desire in yet many more, and keep it alive when kindled. H. D.

PSALM cxvi. 15.—"Precious in Jehovah's sight is the death of His saints." That is, their *lives* are precious; and neither disease nor accident, ignorance nor wickedness of man, is suffered to cause their death one moment sooner, nor in any manner otherwise than God, who so loves and values them, would have it be. "All things are yours . . . the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; ALL ARE YOURS, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

THE MINISTRY.

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath committed to us the *ministry of reconciliation*." "There are differences of *ministris*, but the same Lord." "Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." "He gave some apostles . . . prophets . . . evangelists, pastors, and teachers . . . for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the *ministry*." "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith, or *ministry*, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching." "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom: to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith . . . to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as *He will*. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is (the body of) Christ." "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular, and some (of these members) hath God set in the church, first (as) apostles; secondly (some as) prophets; thirdly, teachers," &c.

EVERY *member* has some business or ministry to fulfil, both individual and relative, for its own health as well as for others' welfare, and for the benefit and usefulness of the whole body.

The injunction to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry that thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it," may well be pondered by every believer and member of the body of Christ, in order that each may know his or her place in the fulfilling of the general ministry incumbent on the whole body.

"Are *all* apostles? are all prophets?" No; "but covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more eminently excellent way," even LOVE, which is the outflow of the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given unto us.

From the above collating of Scriptures it is evident—

1. That there is a *general* ministry or service ("minister" is the Latin word for servant) which is

common to every member of Christ; viz., the fulfilling of the mind of Him who is the Head in His purpose towards this world, either as an active or passive witness. (2 Cor. v. 17, 18.)

2. That there is a *particular* ministry, according as God has set the members in their place in the body. (1 Cor. xii. 27, 28.)

3. That there was a *dispensational* ministry, the necessity for which has passed away, seeing that revelation from God has been closed up (Rev. xxii. 18, 19), "apostles" being no longer among the gifts given.

4. That the possession of gift does not confer official power on its possessor, but should tend to create care for others and humility. (1 Cor. xii. 15-25; 1 Peter v. 3; 1 Thess. ii. 7, 8.)

5. That by the harmony of the several parts the excellency of the whole is seen, and God is glorified. (John xv. 8.)

6. That the isolation of any part or parts of the body tends to hinder the usefulness of the whole. (1 Cor. xii. 22-25.)

7. That it is God (not man) who hath set the members in the body as it hath pleased Him to fulfil the office, or ministry, or business, He in His wisdom fitteth them for. (1 Cor. xii. 18.)

8. Therefore *ministry* is the fulfilling, by each part or member of the body of Christ, of that specific object for which God has placed it in the body. And we each learn our own specific place by "abiding in Him."

A. O. M.

THE HAIRS OF THE HEAD (Ps. xl. 12; Matt. x. 30). These two passages link together the depth of a Saviour's love in bearing all our sins with the minuteness of His loving care for us. The former humbles us as we think of the number of our iniquities; the latter comforts us in a world of danger and fear and sorrow. Rom. v. 10 combines both these things.

ABRAHAM'S RETURN TO BETHEL.

THE friend of God was sadly out of communion in Egypt; for he had left the place of dependence and of trust. Taking his eye from the Lord to look at his circumstances, he was as weak as other men, and did not hesitate to utter a falsehood, and to expose his wife to fearful peril, until cast out by the world itself. There is no telling what the flesh in a Christian will not do, unless it is held under the more powerful restraint of the indwelling Spirit. (Gal. v. 17.) The most devoted saints whose lives are recorded in the Bible failed at some period, just as Abraham failed, by following the counsel of a deceitful heart, instead of always listening to the word of the Lord.

There was no way, therefore, of restoration to lost fellowship, except by a return to his starting-point; "And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the Lord." He ought not to have removed from Bethel on account of the famine, or for any other reason; but having gone astray through unbelief, the best thing to do was to return there as soon as possible. "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." The fall of a Christian by iniquity does not justify him in staying away from the Lord his God, but on the other hand presents the most urgent motive for his immediate return.

But if he complains that he does not know how to return, God kindly tells him: "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord." He does not say, Take with you feelings, and tears, and repentings, and resolutions, and ecclesiastical ordinances, and vows; but, "Take with you words." If the backslider still

complains that he does not know what words he should utter, God mercifully tells him this also: "Say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips." (*Hosea xiv. 1, 2.*) Hence there is no excuse for those who have fallen by iniquity to remain away from their entreating God; but they should hasten to His feet with the words He Himself puts in their mouths, "Take away all" (not some) "iniquity, and receive us graciously;" and then believing that He is faithful and just to forgive their sins for the sake of Christ, by Him they can "offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name." (*Heb. xiii. 15.*)

Thus Abraham returned unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, having Bethel, the "house of God," on one side, and Hai, "a heap of ruins," on the other; and he stood beside the altar he had made there at the first, accepted through the sacrifice upon which the fire had kindled; and then in happy fellowship he called on the name of the Lord. So it must ever be with the saints who have wandered away into Egypt, and found themselves *straitened*, as the word implies. Like fallen Peter, they must get back to the feet of Jesus, and then dine with Him, and then hear the sweet word which to him and to us is not only the first, but the last, "Follow thou Me." (*John i. 42, 43, and xxi. 22.*)

No sooner was Abraham in communion again than he was separated from Lot, the meaning of whose name is *wrapped up, hidden, concealed*. Of course it is not intimated that the latter was not a saved person; he was saved, yet so as by fire; and he was a poor companion for one who wished to maintain fellowship with God. "And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord."

It is good to return to Bethel, *the house of God*; for the next experience is to dwell in the plain of Mamre, meaning *to be full, well fed*; and Mamre is in Hebron, meaning *association or communion*. When the wanderer went back to the place of the tent and the altar, he knew the joy of the saints concerning whom it is written, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." (Psalm xxxvi. 8.) He had been hindered on his journey to Canaan by the presence of Terah, *delay*; and now he must get rid of Lot, in whose heart there was something *concealed*, that he might walk forth on the plains of Mamre, well fed, and in the unclouded enjoyment of fellowship with God.

It was at Bethel God appeared to Jacob also, who, like Abraham, wandered away, but to a much greater distance, from Jehovah, and for a much longer time. Even after his return to his native land we find him settling down at Shechem, living near a "city," building him "an house," and buying "a parcel of a field;" and these are not the badges of a pilgrim life. He kept up a form of worship, but he called the altar after his own name, and his testimony, such as it was, could have no power for good. "And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there." (Gen. xxxv. 1.) This solemn call was the turning-point of his checkered history. It led him to say to his household, "Put away the strange gods that are among you, and

be clean, and change your garments. . . . And they gave unto Jacob *all* the strange gods which were in their hand ;” and then indeed as they journeyed, “the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them.” (vv. 2-5.)

Here at Bethel God desires His people to dwell ; for here alone they are safe, and here alone they learn the secret of power. If they never left the place of the tent and the altar, where He first appeared to them in grace, they would never be bruised by a fall, and never want. The place is greatly enriched “with the river of God, which is full of water” (Ps. lxxv. 9); and “the trees of the Lord are full of sap.”—*The Truth*.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

What is the meaning of Proverbs xx. 27 ?

The word here rendered spirit is נִשְׁמָה (*neshamah*), and occurs in Genesis ii. 7, “God breathed into his nostrils the *breath* of life;” and in Genesis vii. 22 man is spoken of as having “the *breath* of the Spirit of life” (see marg.); and in Job xxxiii. 4 we read, “The Spirit of God hath made me, and the *breath* of the Almighty hath given me life.” The *neshamah* of God is therefore the source of life (or rather, “of lives,” as the word life is always in the plural, as if involving more than the mere animal life that meets the eye). Hence man is spoken of as one that breatheth; an expression never used of the lower animals, who, though they breathe as we do, are never said to have *neshamah* in their nostrils, which man is said to possess (see Gen. vii. 22, also Deut. xx. 16, Josh. x. 40, Isa. ii. 22), and which is also spoken of as pertaining to God Himself. (See 2 Sam. xxii. 16; Ps. xviii. 15.) But further, we read in Job xxxii. 8, “There is a spirit in man: and the *inspiration*” (or breath) “of the Almighty giveth him understanding.” This verse

gives us the clue to the right understanding of Prov. xx. 27. It is this inspiration of God given to man that is there called "the spirit of man," which is the candle of Jehovah, searching into the depths of man's being, which none can fathom but God, and giving also an understanding to know the deep things of God. (1 Cor. ii. 10.) The candle is lit by the Holy Spirit. It is not the light of the natural conscience, which, though able to perceive right and wrong, has no illuminating power, and only becomes capable of illumination through the regeneration of the Spirit of God. From Job xxxii. 8 and xxxiii. 4, we infer that the *spirit* and the *neshamah* are identical, as also from Isa. lvii. 16, where it is written, "The *spirit* should fail before me, and the *souls*" (*neshamah*) "which I have made." Besides the passages referred to above, this word only occurs in the following: Josh. xi. 11, 14. 1 Kings xv. 29; xvii. 17; Job iv. 9; xxvi. 4; xxvii. 3; xxxiv. 14; xxxvii. 10; Isa. xxx. 33; xlii. 5. Ps. cl. 6; Dan. v. 23; x. 17.

What is meant by having "*a good report*" in 1 Timothy iii. 7?

The word "report" is very vague, and leads to a misconception of the passage. It should rather be, having *a good witness*; that is, that no truthful testimony could bring a charge of evil. It has nothing to say to the false witness and lying accusations that may at any time be brought up by the malice of the ungodly against a blameless child of God. But when the upright conscience of the worldly man can bring charges on moral matters—on all of which he is able to judge—against one who would come forward in rule or ministry in the Church of God, such an one is not to be owned in that position by his fellow-saints; and if they do own him, they become partakers of his evil, and of its consequences. (See 1 Tim. v. 22.) Every Christian ought to be blameless; but God ex-

cludes from oversight and ministry in His Church by a line and measure, by which He would not exclude from the fellowship of His house and table, on a principle recognised even in the world. But while allowing the unconverted to judge in matters of moral right and wrong, God withholds from them all right (because they have no power) to judge in matters spiritual; for we read, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. ii. 14.)

Did Jonathan act wrongly, and compromise his relation to David, by fighting with Saul against the enemies of Israel?

Saul was God's anointed till God took him away, and this was owned by David again and again, and this justifies Jonathan in fighting under Saul; but how far Jonathan was justified in joining in the battle of mount Gilboa, in 1 Sam. xxxi., is another question, and the answer would probably depend on Jonathan's being made acquainted or not with what God had told Saul in chap. xxviii., when he consulted the witch of Endor. On this point, however, we are not informed. God withholds the data oftentimes on which alone a right judgment can be given, and we need to be watchful against a readiness and a lightness in passing our untutored judgments on the acts and ways of men of God, whose histories are given to humble us by their virtues, and to warn us by their mistakes, which, however, *we* can only call such when contrary to law and command. God may often condemn when we dare not.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE SECOND COMING
IN FIRST THESSALONIANS.

THIS epistle to the Thessalonians is the earliest of the epistles of the apostle Paul, and its characteristic feature is the great prominence given to the subject of the Lord's return. In the Acts we find that the charge made against Paul at Thessalonica was, "These all" (Paul, Jason, and others) "do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus." (Chap. xvii. 7.) This tells us how much the Kingly glory of the rejected Christ was the subject of the preaching of the apostle.

The advent of the King is what the perplexed and troubled world needs, when as the Sun of Righteousness He shall rise with healing in His beams; and the coming of the Bridegroom stands out as the hope of the Church amidst the trials and perplexities and afflictions of her homeward way.

The two epistles to the Thessalonians teach the subject of the advent from two very different points of view. The first treats of it in relation to the Church's expectation, and the second in relation to the doom of Christendom and the Man of sin. The one unfolds the joy of being for ever with the Lord when caught up to meet Him in the air; the other unfolds the everlasting destruction that awaits the Antichrist and his followers when He who is "King of kings" shall take unto Him His great power and reign.

It is with the former we have now to do; and each of the five chapters of this epistle ends with the truth of the coming of the Lord, looked at in a different aspect, according to the various conditions and circumstances of the Church of God. We will take them in the order in which they are given, and point out the connection in which they stand.

I. *In connection with the gospel ministry.* "Ye

turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come." (Chap. i. 9, 10.) From this we learn an important lesson in gospel preaching,—that the salvation of the sinner has to be presented in connection with the appearing of the Lord from heaven; that the doctrine of the second coming is not to be banished into the region of the dark and obscure, as if it were a subject unfit to be taught to any but those who have long had their minds exercised in the things of God. It was in Paul's hands an elementary truth of such vast and vital importance, that when he taught the new converts in Thessalonica, he told them not only what they had turned to, and what they had turned from, but he also taught them that they were to wait for the Son of God from heaven.

Prophecy is a light shining in a dark place until the day-dawn; and as such the doctrine of the advent has to be considered. It is not a dark and difficult subject, which only experienced believers can understand, but a truth which has been revealed, that babes and little children may know for what they, with all believers, are called to wait. Nor is it to be viewed as an uncertain event belonging to the distant future, but as a living expectation of the present time, that rests itself on the thrice-repeated promise in the concluding words of the Revelation, "I COME QUICKLY."

These words give the key-note to all right conceptions of this truth, in opposition to which the thought is ever prone to rise in the carnal heart, "My Lord delayeth His coming." It is true His return may be waiting for purposes and reasons that we shall better understand hereafter; but our hearts can only be right towards our Lord as we are expecting Him to come "quickly." And all preachers of the gospel have to preach this quickly-coming Christ as a Prince and a Saviour—a Prince who claims subjection, and a

Saviour who gives salvation. The hope of the coming is designed to keep alive in all hearts the sense of the lordship of Christ, and our obligations to Him, who has made us unto our God "a kingdom" (see the proper Greek text of Rev. i. 6 and v. 10), "a holy nation," and "a peculiar people." (1 Peter ii. 9.) In Luke xix. 12 the Lord likened Himself to a certain nobleman who went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return; and from the prominence Paul gives to this truth, both in his preaching of the gospel and in his epistles to saints, it would seem as if this parable, and other similar teachings of our Lord, were much in his mind. Maranatha (*i.e.* the Lord is coming) early passed as a watchword among the saints of God, alike for comfort and for warning; and hence this Chaldean phrase became current among the believing Greeks (like the "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani" of the cross), and shows the prominence given to the hope in the apostolic age. Yet how absent is this "blessed hope" from the writings and from many of the hymns of fellow-saints of our own time! Thanks be to God, much has been done of late to bring the expectation of saints to a truer standard, but much is continually needed to be done to prevent the hope of our Lord's return from dwindling down into a cold and lifeless creed; and let us remember that there is nothing so corrupting to the mind as a lifeless orthodoxy. Day by day, like the manna, this blessed hope comes direct from heaven, fresh as oil and sweet as honey; but when retained only as an article of a creed, like that manna, it breeds the worms of pride and stinks.

As surely as Christ came once in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, so has the preaching of the gospel of Christ ever to be associated with the truth of His coming again in glory to gather His people to Himself, and to execute the judgment of God in the coming wrath. (Heb. ix. 26-28.)

II. *In connection with future rewards.* Of this the

apostle writes, at the close of the 2nd chapter, "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy." The whole chapter unfolds much of the labour and zeal of the apostle and his fellow-labourers. To them there was but one resting-place and time of reward for it all; viz., "the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming." To that they looked forward amidst the labours and persecutions of those days. It was then that the crown of rejoicing would be realized. It was then that the faithful labourer would hear the joyful word, "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." It was not individual joy alone that filled the apostle's mind, but the blissful hope that the Thessalonians, among whom he had laboured, and who had suffered with him in the gospel, would then rejoice with him.

It is blessedly true, that to depart and to be with Christ is much better than remaining here to one who has lived Christ, and to whom death is gain. (Phil. i. 21-23.) It is better far to be out of the body, and at home with the Lord, than to be at home in the body and absent from Him. (2 Cor. v. 6-8.) And we hear the word of comfort, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord" (Rev. xiv. 13); and we thank God that it is true; and yet the entire New Testament bears witness that the immediate object of hope is not death, but the coming of the Lord.

Thus then, amidst the labours and sufferings which are appointed here, that which is to make the burden light and the suffering easy is the hope of being with the Lord, whereby the toils and afflictions of the way become "our light affliction, which is but for a moment," and "work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." When Paul speaks of the Thessalonians as his crown and joy, we are reminded of our Saviour's words, "Behold, I come quickly; and

my reward is with me, to give every man as his work shall be." (Rev. xxii. 12.) He comes not empty-handed. He has crowns and rewards,¹ and joys and glories, for each according to his work; for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each may receive his meed of praise. It is this day of the crowning and reward that may well lead us all to be content with Christ's estimate both of us and of our work, because able to say with Paul, "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's day: yea, I judge not my ownself; but he that judgeth me is the Lord." (1 Cor. iv. 3, 4.) That both man and his work would be manifested then the apostle knew, and till then he could afford to wait; for the Master was coming "quickly."

III. *In connection with the progress of the divine life in love and holiness.* The subject here forms part of the apostle's prayer, with which chapter iii. concludes. His words are: "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all [men], even as we do toward you: to the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness in the presence" (as in ii. 19) "of God, even our Father, in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." The expression "in the coming" has probably a double reference—the one present, as grounded on the power of the present hope, whereby the soul is kept advancing onward to its goal; and the other future, referring to the coming of the Lord itself, when the hope shall become fruition, and faith turn to sight.

This prayer of the apostle concerns the present growth of the believer, which manifests itself in love, and is consummated in a holiness unblameable before God, through the hope of the coming of our Lord. It corresponds with the words of John: "He that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." But as faith must be living to be active, so hope must be real to be purifying. It is not as we

hold a statement of Scripture to be true, but as it holds us, and influences our life and ways, that it becomes a living power. It then assumes the command over us, and we instinctively obey its dictates. When this is the case with us concerning the coming of Christ, it will lead to increased love to all saints and toward all men; for we shall see in the one those with whom we shall dwell together for ever, and in the other those for whom our coming Lord was content to suffer death, and concerning whom He gave a commission to go into all the world, "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations."

What a mighty impetus would the assurance of our Lord's speedy return give to our activities in His service! and what a stimulus to our heart's affections!

But not only in the matter of love does the apostle contemplate the effect of the coming of the Lord, but also in the matter of personal holiness. The importance of this cannot be overestimated. It is towards this that the discipline and training of God is directed, and Christ's coming is here brought to bear on it. That which shall be realized absolutely at the coming is now realized in measure, as the Spirit of God brings this glorious hope in living power to our souls. The effect of the revelation of the glory of God has ever been to wither up the flesh, with its corruptions and its unholiness; and this is just what is needed, that holiness may be perfected in the fear of God.

Thus will the divine life in us grow up "into Him in all things, who is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Eph. iv. 15, 16.) Holiness and love will then unite in one common object, and see their aim accomplished at the coming of the Lord.

IV. *In connection with our bereavements and sorrows.* The apostle dwells at large on this precious theme. God knew how many tears would fall ere Jesus came, how many hearts mourning over martyred saints and sleeping friends would have to be comforted, and so the Spirit of God seems to stand where Jesus did at the grave of Lazarus, and sounds again the welcome words of resurrection and of life, pointing to the moment when *He who now gives us His Spirit to dwell within us shall by that same Spirit quicken our mortal body into resurrection glory.* (Rom. viii. 11.)

The apostle writes: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them that are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (ch. iv. 13-18.)

What should we do without these words when the empty seat at the family board, and the opened grave, bear witness that we have been bereaved of one who has just fallen asleep in Christ? It deserves special remark, however, that not one word of comfort is here given this side of the coming of the Lord, and of our gathering together unto Him. That there are such consolations four passages* in the Bible (and four only, that we remember) bear witness; but that towards

* The four passages alluded to are Luke xxiii. 42, 43; 2 Cor. v. 1-9; Phil. ii. 21, 23; Rev. xiv. 13.

which the eye of loving ones is here directed for comfort, when death has bereaved them, is exclusively the coming of Christ. But how far short of this divine comfort do those Christians of our day come, who reach no further in their thoughts than the disembodied state! All allusion to the intermediate state is avoided in this chapter; and while it is far better to depart out of the body and to be with Christ, the only thing put before us here is the resurrection, and the gathering together unto Christ of those who either sleep in the dust or are alive and remain till the appearing.

Our space will not allow us to go into the precious details of this portion of the epistle, but a few points may be noticed; and first the interesting fact, that as on similar important occasions, so here, Paul received a direct revelation from the Lord, which he records (*v.* 15): "For this we say unto you in the word of the Lord." It would appear that verses 15-17 form the subject of this communication, given as a direct message from the Lord to the church at Thessalonica, and thereby investing the subject with a yet deeper importance in the mind of the apostle, and surely also in ours. Let us see to it that our hearts are so exercised and so instructed, that what was divinely given by direct communication may never be removed from the place of comfort and joy assigned to it by the Lord Himself. From this revelation it appears that our Lord considers it of the last importance that His people should not get incorrect thoughts on this subject; and if such be the case, it is not to be wondered at that Satan has striven unceasingly to sow tares among the precious wheat of advent truth.

It is further interesting to notice how Paul linked himself with the saints living and remaining unto the coming. At the close of his life, ten or twelve years later, he wrote: "I am now ready to be offered;" and he then links himself with those who shall sleep in

Christ before the glory dawned; but *now* he still expects to be alive and to remain. This is the true attitude in which every child of God should be found until death appears to be marked out as the path, as it was to Paul and to Peter.

Elsewhere Paul writes: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.) The dead in Christ shall rise first, and then with the living all will be changed, and be made like unto the Lord; for we shall see Him as He is.

Let us further notice the words, "The shout," "the voice of the archangel," "the trump of God." They do not tell of a noiseless coming, as of the thief, to steal in secret, but of the sudden appearing of the Conqueror with a shout, to claim those whom death still holds under its sway. They are sleeping in Christ, and belong not to Satan, on whom the Son of God as an avenger comes, to take the first-fruits of the dead out of his grasp, that they may form "the church of the first-born ones, written in heaven," "the first-fruits of God's creation," whose resurrection is linked with the resurrection of Christ. The taking up of the saints may be unseen by the world; but certainly the shout will not be unheard, though it may be misinterpreted, as was the voice from heaven that spake to Christ, of which some said "it thundered;" or as the voice to Paul from the heavens, which was heard only as a *sound* by those who were with him, but by him as the voice of the ascended Jesus.

Further, how sweet the blessed fellowship couched in the words "caught up *together*." This is a union peculiarly precious to contemplate, when we remember how death had broken in on the sweet companionship of saint with saint. This will be restored at the

advent, and probably not till then. To be "with Christ" is all we know of the intermediate state; but the God who created man to dwell in families, has redeemed His people that they might form a family in heaven, of which the names of the Father and of the Son, named on each (Rev. iii. 12), mark the family character, and to which the added name of the city of God, "New Jerusalem," also named on each, bears witness.

And lastly, as if reserving the highest blessing for the last utterance, that it might linger longest on the ear and in the heart, the object of the gathering in the air is "to meet the Lord;" and the result, "so shall we ever be *with the Lord.*" How these words correspond with our Lord's words to His disciples when telling them not to let their hearts be troubled; for, says He, "I come again, and will receive you *unto Myself*, that where I am, there ye may be also." Then our fellowship will not be spiritual only, as it is with us now, hindered also by a body of sin and death; nor as it is to the disembodied saint, a spiritual fellowship unhindered by the flesh; but a personal communion of which now we can form little conception. What will it be to see the King in His beauty, to enter into His house of wine, and learn the higher lessons of the song of songs in the kingdom of our God, when the Lamb shall lead by living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes!

V. *In connection with the final consummation.* This last allusion we find is at the close of the 5th chapter, where the apostle ends the epistle, with its promises and its precepts, in these words: "The very God of Peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole being (*ολοκληρον*), the spirit, and the soul, and the body, be kept blameless in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." What a marvellous thought! How glorious is that which is here connected with the

coming of the Lord—absolute holiness in spirit, in soul, and in body! And surely nothing short of this could for a moment meet the yearnings of the renewed soul, which can never be satisfied till it awakes in the likeness of its Lord.

It is of importance to connect this prayer for present sanctification with its absolute future realization. It is the same work, carried on by the same mighty Worker that works in us now, who will consummate His work at the coming of Christ. Were this laid more hold on, there would be greater consciousness of the present sanctifying power of the God of Peace to sanctify wholly, and more faith in it. There is nothing more strengthening to the soul than the pledge given to us, that God is faithful, who will fulfil the utmost longing of heart, when the hindrances arising from the spirit, soul, and body shall have passed away, and they shall hinder no more, but shall aid and further the purposes of the love of God towards us in Christ.

It is this which gives to the hope of the coming its moral and spiritual glory. It secures not only our being with Him, but also our being meet for His holiness. It tells us that the *spirit*, unhindered in its aspirations, will in perfect holiness contemplate the thrice holy Lord, and with undimmed eye and unfaltering gaze will see Him as He is; that the *soul*, freed from all its earthliness and sensuality, shall be prepared to expand itself, and show what "the living soul" can attain to of the image of God; and finally, that the *body*, which is now the instrument used by Satan for sin and death, shall be such no longer, but made in resurrection like unto the body of the glory of our risen Lord. It is thus that we are made meet for our citizenship in heaven. The city and its inhabitants must needs be in harmony; for there can be no discordant note there. That city, whose glory is of God, and the Lamb the light thereof—whose gates are pearls, and whose street as transparent gold—must have in-

habitants in unison with itself, and in harmony with that ever-blessed Lord God Almighty, and with the holy Lamb of God, which are the temple thereof.

The Lord says of him who shall overcome: "I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, . . . and my new name." (Rev. iii. 12.) But for one to bear those names in truth, there must be an absolute accord between him and the Names he bears. This is secured in the prayer of the apostle which ends the first epistle to the Thessalonians, and will be realized at the coming of the Lord.

Seeing that we look for such things, may we cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, and be ever crying with the Spirit and the Bride, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

H. G.

ASHER; OR, GOD'S HAPPY ONES.

DEUTERONOMY xxxiii. 24, 25.

THE readers of this paper will remember that the revelation of God, and the communication of His mind, have been made in different *parts*, as well as at sundry times (Heb. i. 1, 2); and that, as time had its beginning, and man his first day, so there was a moment when the first ray of divine revelation shone out from Him.

A comparison of Moses' blessing of Israel with that of Jacob illustrates this.

Jacob had blessed Asher (Gen. xlix. 20); and Moses' blessing was in substance the same, but in greater fulness and minuteness.

The first promise made in Eden contained the substance of all the promises afterwards uttered. The first offering had within it the substance of all the offerings and sacrifices subsequently commanded; and

to God and to faith the one glorious antitypical sacrifice now comprehends all. Thus Moses *unfolds* the blessing pronounced by Jacob on his son Asher; and we have, as it were, a fuller opening of the bud of promise.

Asher was Jacob's son by Zilpah, Leah's maid, given by her to her husband to wife; and he was so called because of Leah's joy and honour in the sight of the daughters. "Happy am I; for the daughters will call me blessed." Hence his name Asher; *i.e.* happy.

Time rolled on—days of toil and sorrow for Jacob—times of fleshly management and circumvention, till at length he who crossed the brook with his staff, a solitary wanderer from his father's home, leaned on it for very age, while he worshipped Jehovah, and blessed his sons. Happy end! He seems by grace to have conquered his besetment, and his setting sun was bright. He utters the counsels of Jehovah in blessing his sons. May our last days be also bright!

Moses also, although dying without entering the promised land because of his unbelief, was honoured to bless the tribes; and guided by the same Spirit who spoke through Jacob, he blessed Asher as follows:

"Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil. Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

It must have given Moses great joy thus to bless. He had given up and suffered so much for Israel, and endured so much from them, and now with his large and tender heart he was permitted to stand in Jehovah's counsel, and under His guidance declare His purpose to bless. This must indeed have gladdened his heart.

Let us now examine the blessing (1) in its direct application to Asher; (2) in its spiritual instruction to believers.

1. The words of the prophet, taken literally, or in their primary application, must be read in the light of the dispensation under which they were uttered, and in relation to the calling of the nation of which the tribe of Asher formed a part.

Israel was Jehovah's nation, chosen in their father Abraham, preserved in Egypt, from whence they were delivered by blood and by power, by grace to them and judgment on their enemies the Egyptians. They were called out of Egypt to Canaan, a land chosen of Jehovah, watched over by Him, and flowing with milk and honey, abounding in corn, wine, and oil, out of whose hills they might dig copper.

Asher's blessing confirmed all these promises, and was also in harmony with the original charge to Adam and Eve—"Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the beast of the field. And He blessed them." They were "Asher"—*happy*.

Moses therefore desired and predicted for this tribe a numerous seed—social favour, olive groves and oil, mines of wealth under his feet, and strength equal to his days. All this came true; for we are told that his lot in the land of Canaan "abounded in oil, the choicest fruits (yielding 'royal dainties'—Gen. xlix. 20), aromatic shrubs, balms," &c.

Doubtless in the mind of Jehovah these blessings had reference to the yet future prosperity of Israel in millennial days, when the land now held by strangers, where praise is silent for Jehovah, shall be again possessed by Israel, and enjoyed in its full freedom, rest, and fruitfulness, and praise shall burst forth and continue to ascend to Him for all His mercies.

2. Meanwhile the Church is God's object, and all fulness of blessing is treasured up in Christ for her; and each believer is "Asher," blessed and happy, blessed with all spiritual blessing in the heavenlies

in Christ. Let us look at some of Asher's blessings in this aspect. "Let Asher be blessed with children;" *i.e.* be fruitful. This was in character with the dispensation under which to die childless was a reproach, whereas children, like olive plants round about the table, betokened obedience and blessing. (Ps. cxxviii.)

Believers now should pray to be fruitful, seeking the salvation of others. Those brought to Christ by their means become their spiritual children, towards whom a peculiar affection exists, such as was known to Paul when he said, "Although ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many *fathers*; for I have *begotten* you;" or, as the aged apostle John wrote, "I have no greater joy than to hear that *my children* walk in truth."

It is an interesting and instructive fact that Peter, the great apostle of the circumcision, was introduced to Christ by his brother Andrew, of whom we read comparatively little afterwards; Nathanael also was brought to Christ by Philip; and the woman of Samaria, by her testimony and invitation to her town-folk, brought many to Jesus.

Fellow-believer, let us covet to be the instruments of bringing souls to Christ, and *ask* of God, who in grace as in nature, gives children to His praise. Let us seek to introduce some one to Christ. It is not necessary for this that we stand in public to preach, nor that we make a fine speech, nor prepare a long address; but with hearts warm with the love of Christ, and beating healthfully for His glory, speak of His love, of His blood, of HIM as the gift of God, to prove His love to sinners; and who shall tell how many in the day of Christ will appear before Him as the fruit of our testimony, constituting us "Asher" in His presence?

Again, "Let him be acceptable to his brethren." A most desirable thing, both for his domestic and yet more for his social comfort. Believers should seek to approve themselves to the Lord (2 Cor. v. 9), and also

by manifestation of the truth to commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God (2 Cor. iv. 9), and to walk in grace and love one towards another, as fellow-members of the same body, having the same mind one towards another, acceptable to each other, whether in joy or in sorrow, for instruction, reproof, sympathy, and consolation.

If this is to be, we must surely dip our "feet in oil;" for it is not by counsel, nor effort of the flesh or of nature, that we shall effect it, but by the Spirit of God. *Him* we have received, and He dwells in us as in His temple. With blood and oil we have been tipped—ear, hand, and foot, that in the power and with the unction of that blessed Spirit we may listen to God, and minister Christ and His grace with tongue, hand, and foot, walking in the Spirit even as we have life in the Spirit. Let us then, beloved, do this, and dip our feet in oil, for it abounds to us.

With regard to the closing words of this blessing I might say a little. Asher's was a goodly lot, and so is ours. "The lines are fallen to us in pleasant places; we have a goodly heritage," a fair and wealthy lot, fruitful on its surface, and rich in its bowels; so that by faith we can walk through it, treading on mines of spiritual wealth at every footstep, and counting on wisdom and power from God to raise and use it to His glory. Yes, we *are* blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ, and have the Holy Ghost to acquaint us with them. The enjoyment of these blessings gives power over the world; for, congratulating ourselves on our riches in Christ, and praising God for them, we look down with pity on the world's brightest, fairest, and most costly things, too satisfied to envy, too happy to love it. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." The Lord Himself make these simple things realities to us.

H. H.

TRAINING AND SCOURGING.

Two portions of the Old Testament throw important light on the subject of God's discipline. The one is the book of Job, and the other is Psalm lxxiii., in both of which *training*, and not punishment, is the characteristic; and in marked contrast with these Scriptures we may refer to the latter part of David's history in 2 Samuel xi. The avengings of God's wrath against sin and His terrible scourgings for iniquity mark every page of that sad history, wherein the guilty penitent had to say, "Thou hast broken all my bones;" whereas Job could say, in the language of Psalm xxxiv. 20, "He keepeth all my bones; not one of them is broken." Scourging breaks; training bends.

The very perfectness of Job's character—for there was none like him on the earth, "a man that was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil"—gives to the discipline of his great afflictions a character of deep importance to us all. His training made him deeply conscious of the exceeding sinfulness of that sin that lies deep down in the heart of the most perfect, the most upright, the most God-fearing man on the earth, and in the end made his experience to accord precisely with that of Rom. vii. The bitter conflict opened up to him springs of evil needing correction, and when brought face to face with God, led him to say, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The training of God leads into dust and ashes, yet sets us on the throne of such fellowship with God as but for the discipline would never have been realized. Job was never so low and never so high as when God turned his captivity, after he had prayed for his friends, and God gave him twice as much as he had before.

The book of Job contains some of the most precious portions of God's word in regard to discipline. Thus

Job says, in regard to it, "What is man that Thou shouldest *magnify* him? and that Thou shouldest *set thine heart upon* him? and that Thou shouldest *visit* him *every morning*, and *try* him *every moment*?" (Chap. vii. 17, 18.) Oh, what precious care! God visiting, setting His heart on, trying, in order to *magnify*; that is, to make us partakers of the divine holiness, which is the only greatness in the eye of God; and all this, not once, nor twice, not in the greater events of life, but "every morning" (compare with Isa. l. 4) and "every moment." Do we believe all this? If we did there could be no room for aught but adoration, even though, like Lazarus, we might have to leave the world as naked as we came into it, and "full of sores." God was there by his side as he lay at the rich man's door, and God's holy angels were watching, awaiting God's command to carry Lazarus into the bosom of covenant rest and blessing. How dark! How bright!

Psalm lxxiii. tells us that our feet may at any time "well-nigh slip," if we seek out of the sanctuary and apart from its holy revelations, to contemplate life's enigmas. We see God's princes walking in their lonely pilgrim path, while by their side we see this world's beggars (for who so poor as he who knows not God?) riding as princes, in all the pomp of self-esteemed greatness. The wise man in Ecclesiastes had often seen this, and so have we, and our foolish feet had perhaps almost gone. But once in the sanctuary, and then, with regard to all the inward and outward discipline of spirit, soul, or body (for each has its sphere of training), we can thankfully say, "Nevertheless, as for me, I am *continually with Thee*: Thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison with Thee." Here is the end of all training—to make God supreme in the soul, in heaven, and on earth. So may it be with us.

PAUL'S "FAITHFUL SAYINGS."

No. III.—1 TIM. iv. 8, 9.

THIS third of the five "faithful sayings" has to do with the daily life and the home relationships of the "Church of the living God," which is called to be not only "the pillar" (*i.e.* the public witness) "of the truth" (see 1 Tim. iii. 15) in its public assemblies, but also the outspread "*ground*" of the truth in its daily house to house life among men.

Man's pride at Babel attempted a lofty "pillar," and an outspread "city" around it, with the twofold object of not being "scattered abroad," and to make himself a "name." (See Gen. xi. 4.) This attempt God justly frustrated by the confusion of tongues, originating afterwards the distinction of Gentile and Jew. But in the calling and the forming of His precious Church in this Babel world, He not only unites all languages and tongues in ONE "Abba, Father" worship, but builds together the most various living stones into ONE pillar of lofty testimony to Himself, with no name inscribed on it but the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (see 1 Cor. i. 10), and spreads us out in family life in ONE godly living, in which all are to seek to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." (Rom. xiii. 14.)

Truly God does "stain the pride of all glory, and bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth" (Isa. xxiii. 9), that He "alone may be exalted in that day," and exalted also even *now* in our hearts.

It is then to this godly living in the daily matters of the saints that this third of Paul's "faithful sayings" refers, and we at once see how fitly it follows the other two. For in what way should the godly worship of the assembly, according to 1 Tim. i. 15-17, bear "good fruit;" or the labours in the Church of its bishops and

deacons, according to 1 Tim. iii. 1, &c., be rewarded, if not by every tie of family life, and every meal-table at which we sit, giving happy proof that we remember whose we are, and of whose precious Church it is that we now form a part?

And because of this its great importance, the same emphatic clause, "worthy of all acceptation," is attached to this third of the "faithful sayings" that was attached to the first. Indeed, so important is the truth of family godliness thus urged on all the saints, that Paul says of Timothy, and of course of all like him, that they would show themselves to be "good ministers of Christ Jesus" in proportion as they "put the brethren in remembrance of these things," teaching them by example as well as by precept.

Merely to give forth, therefore, from the teaching-desk a correct theology, is not the test here supplied of being "a good minister of Christ Jesus," not though that orthodox doctrine be set forth with a clearness or an eloquence that charms the assembly every time they listen to it! It is the *acting out* of all this lofty teaching in every-day life, and the leading on of the saints to do the same, that makes any one to be a really "good minister" (*i.e.* servant) "of Christ Jesus."

Paul gave it as one reason why Timothy was so precious to him in church work, and was his own son (*i.e.* so much like to him) in the faith, that he would be caring for the "state" of the saints (see Phil. ii. 20) rather than taking them just at their outward appearance, when assembled in the decorum of worship and the Lord's Supper. On this point Paul says, "I have no man likeminded."

Oh for more of this godliness, then, amongst us in our every-day "state" and condition as saints in God's Church! and oh for more labourers in word and doctrine who shall, with "integrity of heart" and "skilfulness of hands" (Ps. lxxviii. 72), aim at producing it!

And it is profitable for "the life *which is to come*" as

well as for that "which now is." The approaching judgment-seat of Christ, which will give us our eternal place, relatively both to Himself and to fellow-saints, will not take account of us so much by the hymns we have sung in the assemblies, or the teachings in those assemblies which we have pleased ourselves by either uttering or listening to, as it will by how far we have *lived* Christ, whether as wives and husbands, as children and parents, or servants and masters; and how far we have "exercised ourselves unto godliness" as to our times and manner of food, and sleep, and raiment, and every detail of our blood-bought time and life here below in God's house, which is His Church.

No wonder, then, that Paul was so emphatic on the subject of this his third "faithful saying" that he added to it "worthy of all acceptation." But there is another reason for this last clause being added; viz., the difficulty in getting it thus thoroughly received.

This godliness, which teaches us that in every item of life we are the Lord's, which causes "every creature" of God to be to us "sanctified," and subjects us to Christ in the use of ALL things, has much difficulty in getting "ALL acceptation," even with God's children, because of the self-will and the self-pleasing of our carnal nature, which is ever asking for some place to be allowed it.

Just as the doctrine of our being *only* sinners saved by Christ Jesus is always being more or less resisted by the *Pharisaism* of our hearts, so the truth that Christ Jesus claims us as His alone, in all the details of life, is ever ready to be resisted by the *carnal indulgence* of our hearts.

Nevertheless both these sayings are "faithful," and are "worthy of all acceptation."

Law teachers, who had crept into the assembly, were (perhaps unwittingly) setting themselves against the doctrine of the Church being only sinners saved; and now in this chapter Paul predicts the time when,

under the name of Christ, *fleshly religion* would infect the Church also; and would teach God's children, whether men or women, that by certain abstinences, such as from marriage, or from some kind of food, they would sanctify themselves.

But this is condemned by Paul as a departing from the faith (*i.e.* from living simply according to the faith), and as a doctrine of demons: he insists that godliness sanctifies the *whole* of "the life that now is," and not a part only; nor yet one part of it more than another. He shows that "every creature of God" becomes "good" to us; viz., every tie of life, and every article of food, and that the godly exercises of "the word of God and prayer" are, by simple faith in God and Christ Jesus, linked with all we use and handle in daily life.

And where everything is thus made the Lord's, and we also made His in using it, what room can there be for forbidding at any time, or at any place, the fitting marriage tie, or this or that article of wholesome food, or any other "creature of God"? As Paul says on another subject (1 Cor. iii. 22), "All are yours;" and that because "ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

Away then with the idea of a *partial* sanctification of us in Christ Jesus, which would leave room for our adding to it by the fancied holiness of some self-made penance of our own; as much as in the first "faithful saying" (chap. i. 15) the apostle denies any room whatever for law-teaching to join itself to God's justification of us in Christ Jesus as our righteousness.

In the one case we are seen as wholly and entirely "sinners saved" by grace, and in the other as wholly and entirely sanctified ones in Christ Jesus; and, as such, called by our believing touch of everything to use it for God's glory and to Christ's praise.

Thus then is "godliness" distinguished from that merely man-made abstinence which Paul calls "bodily exercise." Of it the apostle well says "it profiteth

little"—little in amount, and little as to time; for short is its carnal day. Of its devotee Cowper justly says—

“Wearing out life in his religious whim,
Till his religious whimsy wears out him.
His works, his abstinence, his zeal allowed,
You think him humble—God accounts him proud.”

But the godliness which faith in Christ Jesus teaches us makes precious to God and to us every detail and every moment of “the life that now is,” and carries all of it to our eternal account in the life “that is to come.” Well may Paul say it is a saying “worthy of all acceptance.” But he could point to it by his own example as well as by his precept to Timothy; he could show that he lived it as well as taught it. He adds (*v.* 10), “For to this” (see Greek; *i.e.* in order to the fulfilling in our lives of this faithful saying) “we both labour and suffer reproach.” In other words, this doctrine leads us to be servants of Christ Jesus, and to “labour” for Him alone in every item of life; and brings on us “reproach” from all Jewish and all other religionists, who would fain indulge the flesh in some things by inflicting penance upon it in other things.

Thus Peter would have made friends with the Judaizing inclinations in some fellow-saints of his own time, and have eaten with them only such meats as were clean by Levitical law; but Paul laboured against it, and suffered reproach, and gave place to the Jewish innovation, “no; not for an hour;” and finishes his reply to Peter with the words, “The life that I live in the flesh, I live by the FAITH of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” (See Gal. ii. 20.)

One word more. This “faithful saying” brings before us “God our Saviour” as the One to whom all the earth now belongs, by virtue of His precious death. Not a blade of grass for cattle, nor an ear of

corn for man, but grows year by year, and month by month, by virtue of God's acceptance of the death of Christ, which is seen in His resurrection and in His present place at God's right hand. (See Gen. viii. 20-22.)

Thus is He "the living God, who is the Saviour of *all men*;" the Saviour, that is, of their daily lives from famine by securing to men their harvests; but He is the Saviour also "specially of those that believe." And that too in this very matter of their daily food; for He gives them to *know* it as supplied to them by His death, and as sanctified also to their use by the thanksgiving and prayer with which the Holy Ghost moves in them to receive it; and thus He *saves* them from a carnal and sinful use of it.

So Joseph, in the book of Genesis, was a saviour of all the Egyptians through his sorrows in the pit and in the dungeon; for by the path of woe which he trod, and by his subsequent power and wisdom on Pharaoh's throne, he kept all Egypt alive in the seven years of famine; for they eat from Joseph's stores of corn. *Those same corn-stores supplied also the wants of his own brethren, who, unlike the Egyptians, had come to know him, and had confessed their sin against him; but with this marked difference, that Joseph never made them pay for their corn as he did the Egyptians. Thus they had the profitable lesson of trusting in Joseph's love and in his goodness to them for their supplies; and every sack of corn they used all those years of Egypt's famine had a voice in it to humble and to soften their hearts, and to make their sheaves bow yet more and more willingly to Joseph's sheaf in the midst of them, and to teach them also, as "men of activity" (see Gen. xlvii. 6), to yield themselves to the service of that king to whom Joseph also yielded homage and obedience.*

Jesus, the living God our Saviour at God's right hand, is our heavenly Joseph; and if we but more

saw that all the earth is His—its valleys of corn, and the cattle too upon its thousand hills (Ps. 1.)—it would both make our worship more spiritual, and would more sanctify to us all this life's things. It would also more clear for us our view of "the life to come;" for godliness has the promise of this also.

Joseph had a second dream of heavenly as well as a former one of earthly things; and the more his brethren bowed their sheaves around his sheaf, and thus learnt the fulfilment of his first dream, the more would they believe also in his second dream, and would learn to wait for the yet happier day of things glorious above, when sun and moon and eleven stars would all bow to him. Christ Jesus is our "Joseph;" and in that world of light the glorious relationships of all of us to Christ, and of us all to each other, will be fixed and eternal; for earthly corn perishes in the using, however instructive to us God may make its passing use to be; but the sun, and the moon, and the stars of the second dream were things of a more permanent kind, as well as more glorious.

Truly "godliness" in all things is "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance;" for it "has promise both of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

May we, as saints of this present time, thus receive it. Amen.

H. D.

THE HOLY CROWN.—Surely "holiness to the Lord" is true royal dignity and glory. Where that truth is inscribed upon the forehead, there will be no servile subjection to sin or Satan. There will not be the yielding to self, or the indulging of a will contrary to that of the Lord. Neither will there be any cringing to man; but complete unswerving devotedness of heart and mind to Him whose name is "Holy," the unchangeable I AM, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.—*Soltan*.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

Does 1 Tim. i. 15 refer to Paul's estimate of himself before conversion or after?

It appears to have reference to Paul's estimate of himself in regard to his whole life as it passed under review. Paul never forgot what he was before his conversion—"a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious;" and when he was blasphemed, persecuted, or injured, he accepted it as a part of his heavenly training, and as affording opportunity for manifesting the spirit of Christ. "Of whom I **AM** chief," is emphatic in the original (it is not "*I was*"); and it is well to connect it with verse 16, and read, "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me the chief" (*i.e.* of sinners; the words "chief" and "first" are alike in the Greek) "Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering for a pattern." We would call the attention of believers to the apostle's present estimate of the past, as seen in the self-abasement and broken-heartedness of the expression, "Of whom I am chief;" for surely Christ has been much dishonoured by the way many make a jest of their former sins. We have mourned to hear of converted thieves showing off, for the amusement of others, how dexterously they could rob. If sin were looked at in God's light, and in that of Paul's words, "I am chief," tears would flow at the recollection of expertness in sin. Paul never lost sight of his identity with the past of his history; and hence he groaned, being burdened, and magnified the grace that laid him as a sinner in the dust, and kept him there, yet used him in special *ministry to saints and sinners*; and thus he is led on to the outburst of praise in verse 17.

Is the prayer in Matt. vi. 12 in accordance with the gospel dispensation?

The prayer is put into the lips of those who have the power to say "Father," and none else can rightly use it. The sad abuse of its precious sentences has led to its being set aside; and by many it is overlooked that it is here given, not so much as a form of prayer, as indicating *the manner* in which prayer was to be made—brief, direct, and real, the things of God being put first, and ours second; and well would it be if this manner of prayer were more remembered in assemblies; for the Lord here refers to united prayer rather than individual, as the use of the plural indicates. It is not "my" but "our." Christ came to reveal the Father (John xvii. 26), and the sermon on the mount is an especial unfolding of that name, where it occurs no less than seventeen times. It is supposed by some that it is not in gospel harmony to say, "Forgive us as we forgive others." Certainly we cannot stand before God as sinners and claim forgiveness on any other ground than that of the precious blood by which we are forgiven all trespasses, once for all. But that is not the question here. The question here is that of a *Father's* forgiveness to his *children*, and of this our Lord speaks plainly when He says, "*For* if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." All our sins are blotted out from the presence of "God, the Judge of all"—this the gospel preaches to sinners—but before the judgment-seat of Christ all the children of God will be made manifest, that "each one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Cor. v. 10.) And among those will be reckoned all our failures in exhibiting the forgiving grace of the gospel in our dealings with others. How often has an unforgiven injury brought the darkness and sorrow of years, or of a lifetime, upon the unforgiving child of God. There is a righteous retributiveness in God's

dealings with His children which we are prone to forget, to our great loss. Through a misunderstanding of God's ways with us, many think that because we are saved by grace as sinners, righteousness is thereby excluded in God's dealings with us as saints. Far from it; as Jacob's history and David's history fully show. Sin is forgiven, and yet we read, as addressed to the children of God: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John i. 9.) And hence, if sin committed be not confessed to the Father, it will remain as a burden to the conscience that will lead to the experience of Ps. xxxii. 3-5. As showing the retributive dealing of God with us, we read: "With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; with the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward." (Ps. xviii. 25, 26.) Ponder also Matt xviii. 21-35.

How is the latter clause of Acts xix. 2 to be understood?

It would be better to render it, "We have not heard whether the Holy Spirit is come" or "given." See a similar form of expression in John vii. 39. They had heard from John of One who was to baptize with the Holy Ghost, but they had never heard that the baptism had taken place. They had probably left Judæa between John's ministry and the death of Christ. This passage is of importance, as showing that John's water baptism did not render water baptism into the name of Jesus the less needed, or submission to the command, "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," less imperative.

THE SPIRIT'S APPLICATION OF THE CROSS.

“For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.”—MARK ix. 49.

THE connection in which any Scripture statement stands should never be lost sight of by those who reverence the sacred oracles. Lack of care in this respect is a fruitful source of misinterpretation. The remarkable expression in Mark ix. 49, quoted above, is connected by the little word “*for*” with the preceding verses, and these give to it a solemn significance. The section commences at verse 30, where our Lord for the third or fourth time, and evidently in a very special manner, sought to lead His disciples into an understanding of His cross and sufferings; so much so, that He desired no one to know where He was, that He might be alone with them. What hours! what a journey! wherein the Son of man was seeking patiently to unfold a mystery which after all “they understood not,” and of which they “were afraid to ask Him.”

That His teaching here on the subject of His sufferings was no brief utterance we gather from the 31st verse, “For He was teaching* His disciples, and was saying [again the imperfect tense], The Son of man is delivered [or betrayed] into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him; and after that He is killed, He shall rise again the third day.”

CARNAL HOPES.

Thus was He teaching them; but far other thoughts were occupying their minds. The holy mount of transfiguration had raised their carnal hopes and expectations. The witness it gave to the kingdom of the Son

* *εδιδασκε*, the imperfect tense, pointing to what was at that time continuously going on, and not consummated in one brief discourse.

of man was too much for them, though it was but dimly that the eyes of the three who "were heavy with sleep" (Luke ix. 32) saw the glory; and instead of remembering the word, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear Him," or the central truth of the vision, "*Jesus only*," their thoughts were occupied with themselves. Perhaps the honour given to Peter, James, and John, of being with their Lord in the glory of the "holy mount" when the others were excluded, may have caused them to be "exalted above measure," as Paul might have been on account of the revelation made to him, but for the messenger of Satan sent to buffet him. The terrible demoniacal possession witnessed at the foot of the mount was no doubt a similar lesson for the disciples. And do not our brightest visions and our bitterest defeats but too often lie very near each other?

The cross and the sacrifice, therefore, lie as the basis of the section under review, and give the key-note for understanding its solemn teachings. Thereby the unmortified pride of heart of the disciples is made manifest; and little as they understood what the cross was to entail on their Master or on His followers, they felt enough of the power of the life-teaching of Christ to be self-condemned, and to hold their peace when asked the searching question, as they sat in the house, "What was it that ye were disputing [imperfect tense] among yourselves by the way?" For it was not a passing word, but a lengthened discussion, that had marked *much* of their solitary journey from the mount of transfiguration through Galilee.

THE CHILD IN THE MIDST.

Setting a child in their midst, and taking him up in His arms, the Lord said unto them, "Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but Him that sent me." Thus does He carry home the

question at issue among the disciples, giving it a breadth of application, and making it bear upon the wide subject of receiving one another. Reception is to be ($\epsilon\pi\iota$) upon the ground of the name of Christ, *i.e.* because of belonging to Him; and the receiving of one such little one that believes in Him is tantamount to receiving the Father and the Son. This explains Paul's words, "Receive ye one another, as Christ has received you [so best Greek MSS.] to the glory of God." (Rom xv. 7.) To receive a believer is to receive Christ; to reject him is to reject Christ. We are to forgive as we have been forgiven, and to receive as we have been received. No other measure has been given, and we must allow no lower.

How this estimate of the weakest saint casts down every proud thought of personal greatness! The weakest is reckoned as Christ; and what higher than this can the greatest be? Thus in our Lord's own characteristic way does He settle the dispute; and thus, were we wise, should we settle all such disputes, and say with Paul, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers (or servants) by whom ye believed?" (1 Cor. iii. 5.)

The little child is but a symbol of regeneration, and that comes to us through the cross, as resulting from the death and resurrection of Christ. Thus the shadow of the cross falls on our pride and puts it out of view, and our thoughts of greatness are extinguished, like those of the learned teacher Nicodemus, when told he must be born again ere he could see the kingdom. And let us remember that to *live* in the kingdom we must *remain* as little children.

"FORBID HIM NOT."

This view of the matter, though perhaps little understood by John at the time, led him to bring to his Master's notice something that had occurred probably not long before, which he could not fail to see would

be affected by the principle the Lord had laid down. He says, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and *we* forbad him, because he *followeth not us*." In reply to this our Lord says, "Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in *My name*, that can lightly speak evil of *Me*." The Lord here meets their objection that the man followed not *them* by referring to Himself and His name. He alone was to become the centre and the rallying-point of all; and the question should never be whether one is following *us*, but following Christ. The cross is the means by which God draws hearts and thoughts round Christ, and this we must never allow ourselves to lose sight of. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto *ME*." The disciples, who then understood not what the cross was, might easily make much of anyone's following *them*; but it is grievous that those who now have the witness of the Spirit to God's divine centre—"Jesus only"—should still be so prone to esteem more highly the man who walks nearest to them, rather than him who walks nearest to Christ.

While however the cross of Christ gives Him His place in the midst, it associates all the redeemed with Him, and therefore our Lord graciously links His disciples with Himself, and says, "For he that is not against *us* is on *our* part. (v. 40.) The "us" and the "our" are very precious here, after the "my" and the "me" in the previous verse. Thus does the cross of Christ rebuke us and comfort us, not allowing Christ to lose *His* place, but maintaining for us our place in relation to Him; for He is not ashamed to own us.

It is well further to notice here that we have to judge the ways of another on the liberal and large-hearted estimate, that if he is not *against* Christ, he is *for* Christ. Not so however when we judge ourselves and our own ways; then the narrower rule and the

closer test comes in, "He that is *not with me is against me*: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." (Matt. xii. 30.)

Alas! how prone we are to invert this rule, and to judge others by a narrower measure than we use for ourselves. There is deep importance in this principle in the present day, if we would really live in the power of the cross of Christ towards our brethren. "Forbid him not" would be the Lord's word to many a godly Boanerges, who would call down fire from heaven, rather than pass on to another place. (Read Luke ix. 49-56, where the connection between the two incidents will be found; and it is most instructive.) How much easier is it to forbid another, and to abound in fiery zeal, than to realize the place of the little child into which the death and resurrection of Christ *has* brought us, whether we like to own it or not.

SERVING OR STUMBLING.

But while all self-assumption is taken away, and we are lost in the person of our Lord, self-abnegation invests the *child* of God with a glory peculiarly his own; and we read (*vv.* 41, 42), "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. And whosoever shall cause to stumble one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea." What a value is set upon one of the little ones of faith! What a reward for the smallest act of love, and what an estimate of the terribleness of any cause of stumbling! What causes this high estimate? What but the preciousness of redemption's cost? The value of the precious blood attaches to every one redeemed by it, and our estimate of one another must be commensurate with our estimate of the preciousness of Christ.

CUTTING OFF THE HAND.

But our Lord has something further to speak to us about; and may our ears be touched with sacrificial blood and with anointing oil, that we may hear aright as He deals yet more closely with our hearts and consciences. He now comes to what causes us offence, or proves a stumbling-block to us—the *hand*, the *foot*, the *eye*. He touches now that which is most indispensable to us and most prized. Should any such members make us to offend, what is the remedy? “Cut it off;” “Pluck it out.” Nothing else is contemplated; and the reason assigned for such severity is, that it is better to enter maimed into the kingdom of heaven, rather than “to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

Solemn, most solemn words to be addressed by our Lord to His own people; and while we dare not give them an application unwarranted by other Scriptures, we must be careful not to take away the sharpness of the thought contained in them. It does not say that those offended by hand, foot, or eye will be cast into hell, for if partakers of eternal life that is impossible; but it points us to the unsaved, who are preparing for themselves the doom indicated by, “*Their* worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” And the “it is better” comes as a word of warning to His disciples, to raise a wholesome dread, and to exercise the sleeping consciences of many who allow one thing or another to offend them, and turn them away from the cross and path of Jesus. Instead of rising up in obedience to the command, “Cut it off,” they have spared the *flesh as Saul spared Agag, the Amalekite, and thereby lost his kingdom and his life.* What many of Christ’s own lose by the hand spared, and the eye not plucked out, eternity alone will reveal.

The covenant with Abraham was sealed in him by the

knife of circumcision; and the cross of Christ has nails for our flesh and scourges for our backs of which we little think, but of which Paul thought much when he says, "With Christ I have been and am crucified" (*Χριστῷ συνεσταυρωμαι*, Gal. ii. 20); or again, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection. (1 Cor. ix. 27.) The knife was not unused, the sharpness of the nails was not unfelt; the hand, the foot, and the eye, at whatever cost, were not spared. All was accounted dross and dung in comparison with the knowledge of Christ: and that knowledge was a sweet reality, a reality the preciousness of which none can know but they who have lived, like Paul, a life of faith in the Son of God, and who, in order to realize fellowship in His resurrection-life, have entered into the fellowship of His sufferings.

"SALTED WITH FIRE."

We now come to the sentence with which we commenced this paper, "For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." May we be helped of God to understand what this salting with fire means! Our Lord gives us the key to the passage by connecting it with the salt of the offerings on the altar. We read in Lev. ii. 13, "Every oblation of thy meat-offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat-offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt." Thus we find salt was commanded to be used with all the altar-offerings, of which there were three kinds, the burnt-offering, meat-offering, and peace-offering; and typically it signifies the permanency of the covenant of God's grace, of which those sacrifices were the constant expression. It is the figure of that which conserves and preserves from decay. How precious to us is the assurance that it is the altar-fire of covenant-mercy by which we are salted and seasoned as sacrifices upon

God's resurrection-altar! This suggests to our minds the beautiful passage in Rom. xii. 1: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service," &c. We might write out the whole chapter as unfolding the characteristics of this living sacrifice. What an apostolic commentary this affords on the passage under review! Where is boasting? Where is pride? Where is self? They are nowhere in this living sacrifice; but each one, by an inward renewing, is transformed into the likeness of Christ, and thinks of himself as he ought to think, that is, soberly, remembering that he has only what God has dealt to him, and that is according to the measure of faith.

In Rom. xii. it is no longer only the old man crucified, but the body of the saint presented as a sacrifice on God's altar in the power of resurrection, living, holy, and acceptable, that ascends ever to God, as he lives only for God. This is what the cross of Christ is designed of God to produce in us.

In juxtaposition with the salting with fire we find here the fire of hell; and in Matt. iii., where John the Baptist speaks of the Lord as burning up the chaff with *unquenchable fire*, he also speaks of Him as baptizing with the *Holy Ghost and fire* those who believe on Him. We would therefore connect this salting with fire with that baptism of the Spirit and fire which John describes as the prominent feature of our Lord's ministry. Compare also our Lord's words (Luke xii. 49), "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I? Would it were already kindled."

The fire has thus a double significance. It withers up and consumes the flesh; it quickens and elevates the spirit; and this twofold power of the cross of Christ, brought home to us by the Holy Ghost, becomes at one and the same time both death and life to us. Thus the salting fire comes down on the one hand upon

the fleshliness of the carnal heart wherein it is "mighty for God ($\delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\tau\alpha\ \tau\omega\ \Theta\epsilon\omega$) to the pulling down of strongholds bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. x. 4, 5), and on the other it acts like altar fire upon the living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice laid there, kindling it in the power of resurrection to God; and the quickened soul can say with Paul, "Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.)

"HAVE SALT IN YOURSELVES."

Our Lord ends this solemn discourse with a note of warning: "Salt is good: but if the salt have lost its saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another." (v. 50.)

"Salt is good." The manna came down fresh and sweet from heaven; but if laid up it bred worms and stank. And the salt of the covenant of grace, as it comes fresh by the Spirit of God to the soul, is most excellent; but its excellency and goodness depends upon its freshness. If the manna lost its sweetness, it could not be eaten; and if the salt has lost its saltness, it is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill.

Israel was commanded to eat most of their peace-offerings on the day on which they were offered: some only might be eaten on the second day; but if partaken of after the appointed time, they became an abomination, and could not be accepted. Deep is the lesson here taught us as to our communion with God. It must be the realization of a present fellowship, which can never be kept up by recollections of the past, however precious. The sacrifice has to be salted with salt, but not with a salt that has lost its saltness. Probably nothing leads to so much barrenness of soul and coldness of heart as a contentedness with something that is not a present reality. This, when continued in,

leads to Laodiceanism, which says to itself, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;" while the Lord looks on and says, "Thou knowest not, thou wretched and miserable one, that thou art poor, and blind, and naked."

The remedy for this is contained in our Lord's closing words, "Have salt in yourselves;" the salt, that is, of a present communion by the baptism of the Spirit and fire, which leaves a witness for God in the soul, the conscience bearing us "witness in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. ix. 1) as to what we are inwardly. Then as to our mutual intercourse, He adds, "Be at peace one with another." Here our Lord takes a last look at that dispute among His disciples, which had disquieted their journey from the mount of transfiguration, and had no doubt made their minds doubly unable to take in what the cross really was to Christ, or what it implied to themselves.

May we be living under the power of the salting by fire, that our understanding of the cross of Christ may become more deep, more direct, and more personal, to His glory who died for us, and left us an example that we should live in fellowship with His cross. H. G.

THE MORNING STAR.

HAIL star of morning, lamp of God most High,
 Thou movest me Jehovah's name to praise;
 For by His Spirit disciplined I gaze
 On thee in peace, with heavenly wisdom's eye
 That diligently reads in earth and sky
 God's mysteries of love. Thy gentle rays,
 While yet to shew his beams the sun delays,
 Announce to all mankind his rising nigh.
 But to the ransomed saints, the chosen seed,
 Joint-heirs with Christ, who have no city here,
 Thy brightness speaks with God their Father's voice,
 Of Christ enthroned with Him their cause to plead—
 The night far spent—the day of glory near—
 And greatly at thy message I rejoice. R. C. C.

WORSHIP.

If on Sunday morning I join the throng that is passing towards a certain building, and enter with them, I find myself presently seated where all is quiet, order, and solemnity. I am given to understand that this is a place of worship, that the people are worshippers, and are assembled for the purpose of worship. The service begins; music is heard. Exhortation follows; confession of sin, and prayer; hymns are sung; the Scriptures read; an eloquent and stirring address is given, concluding with an invocation of blessing. My soul is refreshed and strengthened. Eternal things are more vividly impressed upon my mind. The thought of God and of His Christ are laid upon my heart; and I come away with the conviction that it has done me good to be there.

As I ponder further upon what has been said and done, a thought flashes across me, and a question arises, *But have I worshipped?* The immediate reply is, Surely. Did not the whole assembly come for that express purpose, and have we not listened to and done all that is customary on such occasions, and do I not feel comfort of heart? Can there be a doubt of it?

But conscience once aroused is not so easily satisfied. The enquiry is started, How is the matter to be ascertained? Is it to be determined by what the wise and godly are doing and have been doing for ages past? This can hardly be a satisfactory test; for human nature is ever liable to make mistakes; and those who have gone before us, however eminent in their day, were just as fallible as ourselves, their descendants.

Besides, I have no reason to conclude that they investigated the subject more than I have done; that is, not at all. Probably they took for granted that all was correct, as I have done hitherto. Moreover, my

personal responsibility towards my God precludes me from adopting their convictions as the basis of my own; for the same authority speaks to me that spoke to them, demanding obedience from myself, whatever their course may have been. And I learn that the tradition of men, far from being concurrent with the commands of God, has generally been found in opposition.

Upon reaching home, therefore, I take down my Bible to see what information I can obtain from the unerring source of wisdom and truth. Wishing to learn how worship is described therein, I open at the scene related in Genesis xxiv. 26, where Abraham's servant, having received a favourable reply to his request, "bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord." Again, I find that in Exodus iv. 31, when Moses and Aaron had told the Israelites God's purposes of favour to them, and did the signs in their sight, "the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that *He had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.*" In Exodus xii. 27, on the orders about the Passover being communicated, "the people bowed the head and worshipped." In Exodus xxxiv. 8, Moses, on hearing the divine proclamation of the character of God, "made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped." In 1 Chron. xxix. 20, "And David said to all the congregation, Now bless the Lord your God. And all the congregation blessed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Lord, and the king."

From these instances I am instructed that the worship was rendered because of the promise or display of divine goodness, and that the mode of offering it was in bowing down in acknowledgment of that goodness.

The first of these occurred in a private house; the

second, third, and last in the open air; one upon mount Sinai.

2 Chron. vii. 3 relates, "And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the Lord, For He is good, for His mercy for ever." On the occasion when God had promised deliverance, in 2 Chron. xx. 18, "Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord."

Both these transactions took place in the court of the temple.

Then we have the Gentile procedure, in Daniel ii. 46, after the prophet had explained the king's dream: "Then king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him." In Daniel iii. 7, at the same king's command, "all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image."

Afterwards, in the New Testament, Matt. ii. 11, "And when they (the Magi) were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary His mother, and fell down, and worshipped Him." In Matt. iv. 9 Satan saith unto our Lord, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."

Here it may be asked, Why was Satan so anxious that our Lord should worship him? The explanation seems to be that the posture of the worshipper is the lowliest which man is capable of taking. Prostrate in the dust, it implies utter helplessness, and self-surrender to the being before whom he lies. It intimates that he holds life and everything he possesses merely by the favour of the superior, his safety and well-being depending wholly upon the good-will of him before

whom he thus casts himself down. The being whom he worships may put his foot upon him and crush him; he will make no resistance or opposition. Or he may raise him up. In either case his future is altogether at the disposal of his thus acknowledged lord. Nothing less than this is involved in the act. No wonder that the proud heart of educated man refuses to make such an acknowledgment, except indeed to a senseless lump of wood, stone, or other material which cannot take notice of failure, though supposed to be capable of bestowing benefits.

But how rarely does such an avowal come, even from the Christian's heart, towards his God! And yet how proper, how necessary that it should be made, indeed that it should be made continuously! For by Him we live, move, and exist! Such is our dependent condition. Does it not become us to acknowledge it? Yet pride revolts; though the perpetual demand upon man is, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

In Matt. xviii. 26 our Lord says: "The servant fell down, and worshipped his master;" and in Acts x. 25, Cornelius meeting Peter, "fell down at his feet, and worshipped him."

All these passages present to us one and the same idea of worship—the universal mode, followed on earth in all ages, by whomsoever rendered and to whomsoever.

In the early church the same practice is mentioned 1 Cor. xiv. 25: "And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God," &c.

But it is not limited to earth. In Rev. v. 14 "the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever." Rev. vii. 11 tells us "the angels fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God." Rev. xi. 16, "The four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats (thrones), fell upon their faces, and worshipped God." And

again, in xix. 4, "The four and twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne."

From these instances I seem to gain an insight into the nature of worship which in these modern days has been lost. Not entirely lost however; for Orientals still retain the observance which western civilization has discontinued, and more particularly Protestantism. But with the reverential posture of the body have we not also lost the reverence of soul which that indicated? or have we retained the reverence while refusing the ignominious attitude? or has the intention of bowing the heart down before the holy and blessed God departed along with it?

It is true that our God desires the surrender of the heart. The position of the body is of inferior moment; yet if we are influenced by the conduct of the only One who ever gave the whole heart to God, we shall not think lightly of what He did as recorded in Matt. xxvi. 39.

A question may arise whether as free sons, accepted in Christ Jesus, we are not exonerated from the prostration of soul before our Father-God.

Believers in the Lord Jesus are indeed accepted of God in the Beloved, made one with Him. But do we then cease to be creatures of His hand? Are we not still sinners, though saved by His grace? Are we not now become His servants?

I apprehend that not one of these conditions can be lost sight of in approaching our God, but that each of them should be present to the heart. Not one of them can merge into another. The higher distinction of sonship cannot swallow up the facts that by Him we are retained in life, and as His servants owe to Him implicit obedience, and that being still sinners we have constant need to present before Him the costly sacrifice, the propitiatory offering, which, already offered, is the basis of our pardon and acceptance. I

do not apprehend that we shall ever lose sight of any of these marvellous subjects, even when in the ages to come we are dwelling in the midst of the glory in our Father's house above. How much more prominent should they be while we yet dwell in our present houses of clay!

These considerations assist me in resolving the question whether I have worshipped. I take the points as they arise. Listening to music, to exhortation, are either of these worship? In both of these I am passive, not in action like the worshippers before noticed. Listening to the Scriptures, to an address? Still the same; passive, not active. Prayer and confession of sin? Here there is activity; yet not of the nature evinced by the worshippers of old. Prayer is asking for something; and they were not asking when they worshipped, neither were they then confessing sin. This does indeed become us, full of iniquity as we are; and our God encourages us "by prayer and supplication" to make our requests known unto Him. But worship goes far beyond these things. Singing hymns more nearly approaches it; but here discrimination is wanted. Many of the hymns are prayers; others are exhortations, descriptions, addresses to one's own soul, to other people, angels, &c.; some are aspirations, meditations, &c. Do any of these come under the definition of worship? Many of them are serviceable to the soul, as we all experience; yet none of these can be classed as worship, being deficient in the essential element, the prostration of the soul before and unto God! There are hymns of addresses to God and to His Christ, some very beautiful. These belong to a branch of the subject I hope to consider in another paper.

Worship is not restricted to any particular time or place, though the combined manifestation of it must needs be so. When the family of God assemble to wait upon their Father, there must of necessity be an

arrangement of time and place; yet this does not constitute it more holy, or make the worship more acceptable, than in any other locality or at any other period.

The life of our blessed Lord was one unceasing, continuous act of worship. Looked at apart from His indefatigable labours, His journeys, preachings, teachings, healings, and all the displays of divine goodness and compassion and power, His whole course of being was one entire prostration of the soul before His God. By Him, and by Him alone, without any intermission, was the demand of God completely fulfilled: "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." (Mark xii. 30.) And this love wrought in Him the perpetual prostration of the soul unto God.

R. N.

PAUL'S "FAITHFUL SAYINGS."

No. IV.—2 TIM. ii. 11-13.

THE fourth of these faithful sayings has especially to do with those more public sufferings for Christ and the gospel's sake which have so often led to the prison and the fiery stake of martyrdom, and even in our own time; and thus it fittingly follows the three we have been dwelling on.

Paul's second epistle to Timothy was written with his own martyrdom death in full view (see chap. iv. 6), and even while writing it he was in prison for the gospel's sake as an evil-doer (chap. ii. 9); but his once-suffering Lord and Master "Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, raised (now) *from the dead*"—the subject matter and the glory of the gospel which he preached, and for which he was suffering—was kept in his soul's full view; and he gladly suffered all things "for the elect's sakes," for those, that is, eternally given to Jesus by the Father, whom the preaching of the gospel was making manifest, and whose faith was being helped by

his sufferings and his willing labours on their behalf. (See Phil. i. 12-14.)

And whom should Paul more wish to animate with the same suffering and martyrdom zeal that was then filling him than Timothy, than whom he had not any younger fellow-labourer more to his mind? (See Phil. ii. 20.) And his confidence concerning Timothy was great. "Consider what I say," says Paul to him, "for the Lord will give" (see Greek MSS.) "thee understanding in all things." And again, "Remember Jesus Christ . . . raised from the dead" (see Greek) "according to my gospel." He next points Timothy to his then imprisonment, and his triumph of spirit under it; and on this the apostle bases yet another of his "faithful sayings," thus supplying one more glorious pillar truth for all in God's Church who should after him also suffer for the gospel's sake.

It reads thus: "It is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we suffer" (*i.e.* endure), "we shall also reign together; if we shall deny Him, *He* also will deny us; if we believe not, *He* abideth faithful: for He cannot deny Himself." (See Greek MSS.)

Here we have, 1st, in verse 11, that our life eternal with Christ is secure, because we died with Him at that blessed moment when we believed in Him, and we then became united to Him in eternal resurrection life. (Compare Rom. vi. 8-10; Gal. ii. 20; Eph. i. 19, 20; ii. 1-6; Col. iii. 3.) And this is our strength to suffer at any time for Christ's sake, and for the sake of His gospel; viz., we have died with Christ, we have life even now in Him, and shall ere long live with Him. The church at Smyrna was about to suffer persecution, and the devil would cast some of them into prison; and our Lord speaks to it precisely as Paul here does to Timothy. Paul says to Timothy, "Remember Jesus Christ . . . raised from the dead according to my gospel." And our Lord announces Himself

to Smyrna as "the First and the Last, which *was dead and is alive*," and reminds Smyrna at the close, "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death;" *i.e.* as Paul here says to Timothy, the one that has died with Christ shall live with Him.

2nd. In verse 12 Paul says, that as sufferers here for His sake we see ourselves as *co-reigners* with Him ere long, but that day of Christ's throne will be one of denying and refusing from it, as well as of owning and placing any along with Himself upon it—a denying that will apply to false professors, to whom He will have to say, "I know you not" (Matt. xxv. 12); and this denying will also apply to all such works and ways of real saints and servants of the Lord as have been of the flesh. "The day shall declare it . . . the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (See 1 Cor. iii. 13.)

Thus a strengthening cheer for the tried and suffering labourers for Christ is given in this "faithful saying," and also a solemn warning. By the one he is drawn on to His glorious Master's smile, and His "Well done, good and faithful," while he is taught by the other to dread His frown. Verse 13 declares that our weakness of faith about these things won't alter Him, nor change the truth of these His ways towards us in that day. "If we believe (them) not, He abideth faithful; for He cannot deny *Himself*;"

"For He, whate'er our changes,
For ever is the same."

And these laws of His house now, and also of His ways with us at His coming, are a part, as it were, of Himself, and are as fixed and immutable as His being and His character. Hence labourers in God's Church may know them now, and may now walk by the rule of them; and this "faithful saying" is given to help them to do so.

And the fruit of their so walking will be seen, as verses 14, 15, imply, in their avoiding vain strifes

in God's Church about "words to no profit," and they will "study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that have no need to be ashamed."

We may be as fully assured of Christ's judgment-seat ere long to try our work as His saints, as we are of our deliverance from hell and our eternal life; and as fully assured also of what the "mind of Christ" will be at that day by which He will judge. As Paul says, in 1 Cor. ii. 16, "We have the mind of Christ;" we have it in the Scriptures, and in these "faithful sayings" of the apostles, and we have it by the Spirit who indwells us, ever inclining us to subject ourselves and our ways to the Scriptures.

"All acceptation" then to this abiding truth—that since we have died with Him, we shall live with Him, and that if we suffer for Him, we shall reign with Him; and equally to the other; viz., that in whatever we deny Him, He will have to disown us.

No. V.—TITUS iii. 8.

The fifth and last of these "faithful sayings" relates to the general law of "good works," as not only the natural fruit of a new and divine life in the believer, but also that it is his duty diligently to "maintain" them in order to "adorn" with them "the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." It runs thus: "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain GOOD WORKS. These things are good and profitable unto men;" "*good*," i.e. in themselves, for both "this life" of the believer who practises them, and "for that which is to come" (see 1 Tim. iv. 8), and "profitable to men" around, who witness the good results of this doctrine, and are drawn to Christ by what they see. Compare Matt. v. 16: "Let your light so shine *before men*, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

In the epistle to Titus the "sound doctrine"—"the doctrine of God our Saviour"—"the word of God" (chap. ii. 5), is brought to bear as closely and as directly as possible upon our daily lives as those who have believed it, and confessed it before men. And this also, because the "grace of God" thus ushered in by the gospel, and confessed by us as dear to us, "has appeared to *all men*."

It is in an open arena, and we who accept it and adopt it are therefore as public as the gospel itself is. It is not like Judaism, special to any one nation; nor is it like Jewish ritual, enclosed inside any curtains; it is open to the notice of all.

Nor is it open to inspection only; but it invites all to come and partake. It is a "love toward man" as man; it is a divine "philanthropy" (the only place of this word in the New Testament), and should therefore commend itself to all men as such.

And there is one language which all the tongues in this Babel world can readily understand; viz., the language of godly lives and of good works, and that of our "showing ALL meekness to ALL men," because only lately we were the same as they—"foolish, disobedient . . . hateful, and hating one another."

But Paul well knows that the tree which is to bear this good fruit, and even, as it were, "twelve manner of fruits," and to yield a new fruit every month, and its very leaves to be for "healing of the nations," must needs be planted by the waters, and spread out her roots by the river, so that she may not see the heat when it cometh, and that her leaf may be green. (Jer. xvii.) So he is rich indeed in this epistle to Titus with the stream of God's grace; and deep, clear, and full it runs—"a river of God full of water"—in those wonderful words: "According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly" ("a plentiful rain"—see Ps. lxxviii. 9) "through Jesus

Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." And surely it is more immediately to these words he refers when he instantly adds, "It is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, in order that" (see Greek) "they which have believed in God might be careful to *maintain* good works."

These five "faithful sayings" are indeed then "five points" of a good theology for us. May they be to us like the "five in a rank" (see Exod. xiii. 18, margin), by which the sons of Israel went up "harnessed" out of the land of Egypt to fight the battles of Jehovah; and may we keep them as the "corner gate" and the other gates of the wall of Jerusalem in Ezra and Nehemiah's day, which were raised up out of the "much rubbish," and were kept for God by but a feeble remnant, whose might was this, that though they were an afflicted and poor people, "they shall trust," says God, "in the name of the Lord." (Zeph. iii. 12.) Be it so for His name's sake. H. D.

THE MAN AFTER GOD'S HEART.—In the Word God repeatedly shows that man's heart is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," and that the most favoured of His servants, if not hanging by faith on the living God, have no strength against the enemy. To this day the world asks, "How could David be a man after God's own heart?" But let his whole history be taken, and it will be seen that God is righteous. His terrible corrections of His servant make it manifest, while David's repentance is such that he rises after his fall above his former level of obedience and knowledge of God. He grows in grace to the end, and amid the decay of the outer man, he comes forth in the inner man's perfection of vigour and beauty.

R. C. C.

GRACE AND HOLINESS.

IN Titus iii. 8 it is written, "These things I will that thou affirm constantly." What things? That "the kindness and love of God toward man had appeared;" that "according to His mercy He saved us;" that "being justified by His grace we are made heirs of eternal life."

And why are these things to be so diligently inculcated? Because they are empowering, constraining truths. "Affirm them constantly, in order that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works."

If you are desirous of maintaining good works, you must abide in His grace. Holiness is the fruit, grace the seed; and as there can be no fruit without seed, so seed without fruit is valueless. (2 Tim. ii. 1; 2 Peter iii. 17, 18; Jude 17-21.) There is great stress laid on fruit, but grace alone is the spring, the power to produce it. Thus, though grace and holiness are distinct things, they harmonize, and are inseparably united.

As saints we are often deeply grieved at sin, and ardently desiring holiness, yet failing to obtain our aim; and why? Because we are not living in the sense of grace; not exercising our affections on that grace which is the only possible source of holiness.

Remember that God's demand upon His children is holiness. But we must not feel oppressed by this demand; for it is not made till we have become partakers of the grace. He first teaches us what He is in pardoning, cleansing, preserving, shining in upon our souls; and then He says, "Be ye holy; for I am holy."

If we forget that He demands holiness, we shall be turning the grace of God into licentiousness. If we forget the grace, we shall be impoverished, and get into bondage, weakness, and sin. The two must never be separated; they are exact counterparts of each other. If God sows the seed by giving us the know-

ledge of His grace, He must look for the fruit; and if we desire to please Him by bringing forth the fruit of holiness, we must be living in and upon that grace which is its sole and single spring.

All peace, love, hope, joy, power for service, power in worship, or power unto the "perfecting of holiness," consist in realizing that we *are redeemed*; that He sees us in Christ washed, cleansed, perfected; that this is an accomplished fact; that our union with Him is not a thing to be sought for and attained, but to be realized in our soul because it is already true; not only to be believed, but beyond that, to be *known*.

When therefore we would set about anything for God, whether in our own souls or in service to His people, let us call to mind that we are in His sight perfect and delighted in; that having saved, He rejoices over us with joy, that He rests in His love, joying over us with singing (Zeph. iii. 17); and this we shall find to be strength for all our need.

RIGHTEOUSNESS IMPUTED AND IMPARTED.

(From MS. notes of the late J. T. M.)

In 1 Cor. i. 30 we read, "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and *righteousness*, and sanctification, and redemption." Again, in 2 Cor. v. 21, "He hath made Him (Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the *righteousness* of God in Him." Thus *Christ Himself* is given to the believer as his righteousness.

Man is under a threefold exigency before God: he needs his guilt to be expiated; his barrenness or lack of righteousness (that is, his inability to be upright) to be supplied; and his badness of nature (that is, his spring of bad-doing and non-doing) to be corrected or changed. For man stands before God as the Judge (that is, the Inquisitor of criminality or guilt), as the Moral Governor (or Requirer of a righteous, law-conformed

life), and as his Creator, who, although man has departed from Him, and made himself antagonistic and abominable to Him (see Col. i. 21), yet has He not ceased to yearn over him with fatherly bowels, and to desire his restoration to the soundness and goodness appropriate to those who are His offspring. (Acts xvii. 26, 27.) And the very glory of God becomes effulgent (Heb. i. 3; see Greek) as His redemption-power and wisdom appear in and through the Son of His love, Jesus Christ.

Now there are some who assert that man's guilt is put away by the death (that is, the passive obedience) of Christ, and that his barrenness or nakedness of good is removed or covered by the life (that is, the active or law-fulfilling or law-keeping righteousness) of Christ; and here they close their account of the *imputation* of the work of Christ, leaving man's nature (that is, his natural inability to be righteous) uncovered and unre-presented, and consigning its *correction or change* to the subsequent operation of the Holy Ghost, and not making it consequent upon the imputation of the divine holiness in the gift of the Divine Person.

But if, on the contrary, CHRIST HIMSELF be "made unto us righteousness and sanctification;" be given as the Bearer of judgment, and as the Righteousness of God in essential being as well as in enacted life, in PERSON as well as in works or performances; if He be given as the Stock or Root (that is, the Source, Spring, or Power) for righteousness of nature now imputed, and anon by degrees to be imparted, as we are "changed from glory to glory;" if He be given to be our "completeness" (Col. ii. 10) before God, comprising our guiltlessness, our obedience of life, and our goodness of nature; if, in short, He not only stand for us vicariously, but is given to us as the spring of such goodness as God requireth and loveth—then man has his three-fold exigency met in Christ, anterior to the "ministration of righteousness" within him by the Spirit.

Yes; man has in CHRIST (the unspeakable gift of God) the expiator of guilt, the righteous and the good one, and the eternal life, and thus possesses a spring of life, of acceptableness and of perfectness, yea, an absolute excellence and loveliness (Canticles v. 10; Matt. iii. 17) before God his *Judge*, before his moral *Governor*, and before his *Creator* and his *Father* in Christ Jesus.

Christ Himself then, as our propitiation, our righteousness, and our sanctity, inasmuch as HE meets the three exigencies of man, is the gift of God rather than the imputation of the work of Christ, which, though accomplishing our absolution from guilt and our furnishing of works, would still leave us unrepresented in our *nature*. Yea, Christ, in all the righteousness and holiness He brought into human nature as God manifest in the flesh, and brought out in human life as the holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, is *Himself* our substitute for judgment, our sponsor for righteousness of walk, and our representative for goodness of nature in the presence of our God, as He is also our spring and sustainer here below. "Now He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit."

NOTES AND REPLIES.

WHAT is the bearing of Hebrews x. 29?

It appears to be one of a class of passages of which we find several examples in this epistle (see chap. ii. 3; iii. 6, 14; vi. 4-6; xii. 25), in all of which the possibility seems suggested of the believer not enduring to the end. No *apparent* contradiction can, however, be allowed to weigh in the face of the many scriptures which directly affirm the final perseverance and the complete security of the child of God. Moreover, these very passages have, as a rule, in their immediate context a limitation or qualification which forbids their

being taken as doubt would suggest. I refer particularly to chap. vi. 9 and x. 39. I would say that the object of the Spirit of God is to warn the Christian who, to avoid the offence of the cross, is in danger of lapsing into anything of Judaism (ceremonialism). Such an one, in concerning himself with the shadow, really loses sight of the body, that is, Christ. (See Col. ii. 17.) God has now spoken by His Son (chap. i. 2); hence to be occupied with ritual only is to "neglect so great salvation," to "tread under foot the Son of God." It appears that this is the case with none who are really *saved* (chap. vi. 9; x. 39), but it may be so of many who have borne in a marked degree much outward resemblance to the saved. The warnings are profitable to us, leading us to look to our ways, to "endure chastening" (chap. xi. 7), "looking unto Jesus." (xi. 2.)

J. C.

May we apply Matt. x. 19, 20 to the ordinary ministry of the Word?

The context has only to do with the wisdom and help promised through the Spirit under persecution; but he who is led of the Spirit, and lives in the faith of the Son of God, through Christ living in him (Gal. ii. 20), will assuredly find that for whatsoever ministry he is called, whether in the church or in the world, whether in public or in private, it will then be true, under all circumstances, that it is no longer he who speaks or acts, but the Spirit of his Father who speaks and acts in him, and that more especially when suffering for his Master's sake.

What is the meaning of Matt. v. 19, 20?

The Lord is enjoining the keeping of the spirit of the "holy, just, and good" law of God, every jot and tittle of which has its significance. As each pin and cord of the tabernacle had its fitness and connection, so has each jot and tittle of the law. The sons of Levi (the Merarites) dare not omit or displace one pin. The

sons of God must not abate one iota of the God-given statutes. (See James i. 22-25.) "For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of the heavens." For theirs is an outside righteousness, whose praise is not of God, but from men. Let yours be inwrought of God, through Him who, of God, is made unto the believer "righteousness," even Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. i. 30.) One grain of God-wrought righteousness far outweigheth all the righteousness which is of and for the praise of the flesh.

A. O. M.

How is Exodus xxiv. 10, 11 to be understood in connection with Exodus xxxiii. 20-23?

A careful comparison of the two passages will at once explain the difficulty. The one refers to the distant "far off" seeing, which is a seeing and yet not a seeing, according to the relation of the seers to the One seen. To those who were called to come and "worship afar off" (chap. xxiv. 1), it was seeing indeed, and very glorious; but to one who was to draw nigh and speak to God "face to face," and to worship on the top of the mount, it was no seeing. Moses wanted to see more; and in the cleft of the rock God passed before him, and he saw the hinder parts of the glory, when the hand was removed that prevented his seeing the face of God. To see God as God means it, is to see His face. (Exod. xxxiii. 20.) This even Moses could not see. And Paul says: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in light inaccessible (*φως οικων απροσιτον*); whom no one of men (*ουδεις ανθρωπων*; i.e. man as such) hath seen, nor can see." (1 Tim. vi. 16.) In Revelation we read, "His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face." (Rev. xxii. 3, 4.) It is to this, which to Moses was then impossible, that he and all the redeemed shall be raised up, when "the pure in heart shall see God."

THE JEHOVAH TITLES.

“They that know *Thy Name* will put their trust in Thee.”—Ps. ix. 10.

How glorious to God is His own great name! and how precious He makes it to His people! What varied setting forth of that wondrous name He gives all through the Scripture! and all these various aspects of it, how dear to His saints!

The original names—God, God Almighty, Jehovah, Jah, and Lord—are themselves a blessed study;* each one having its own distinctness and depth of meaning, and each used in its own appropriateness to the context and to the subject in hand.

But beside these, God's Jehovah name stands specially linked with His gracious ways towards His saints, at certain times and places; and this gives rise to definite and permanent Jehovah titles: titles precious to all the multitude of God's children, though they had no personal connection with the events which gave rise to them.

In earthly heraldry, the nobles of a country may date and draw their permanent titles from distinguished deeds of other days; and all the nation make their boast in these heroes of the past, and in the banners and the mottoes of their pride. “But,” as Moses justly says, “their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.” (Deut. xxxii. 31.) And none can wonder, therefore, that God, our God, has made for Himself fresh names of honour, fresh titles of renown, from the victories His grace has wrought in the past, both *for* His saints and *in* them.

There are six of these Jehovah titles specially prominent in the Scripture. They are :

* Hence the value of an accurate rendering of these divine names from the original Hebrew; a point in which our excellent translation often fails. To remedy this is one object of *The Englishman's Hebrew Bible*, now being published.

Jehovah-jireh—"Jehovah will provide." (Gen. xxii. 14.)

Jehovah-rophecha—"Jehovah that healeth thee." (Ex. xv. 26.)

Jehovah-nissi—"Jehovah my banner." (Ex. xvii. 15.)

Jehovah-shalom—"Jehovah [send] peace." (Judges vi. 24.)

Jehovah-tsidkenu—"Jehovah our Righteousness." (Jer. xxiii. 6, xxxiii. 16.)

Jehovah-shammah—"Jehovah is there." (Ezekiel xlvi. 35.)

The first four of these stand connected with events and persons in the past, and tell of what God has already been to His people; the other two shine brightly for us in Israel's future; but of all the fatness of their olive-tree we as Gentiles partake, as branches of the wild olive-tree, even now grafted in. (See Rom. xi. 17.)

Let us begin then with the first four, and we shall find the very order in which they occur to be the best in which to consider them.

JEHOVAH-JIREH.

"Jehovah-jireh" (Jehovah will provide) is indeed well-known and dearly-loved among these divine titles; and it is joy to remember, that as the cry, "Behold, the Lamb of God," &c., (John i. 29), so precious ever since, was uttered first by the faith of John the Baptist, so "Jehovah-jireh" was first given by believing Abraham, as the joyful and adoring utterance of his experience of what God had been to him in his hour of need.

This Jehovah title has been much used by saints as cheer for faith in God in *temporal things*, and justly so. Hymns have been written in this strain, and often sung, each verse ending with "The Lord will provide;" and the faith of many a one has been helped by them.

But does not the context in Gen. xxii. attach to it

the higher and the larger meaning of God's provision of the Lamb? The whole dealing of God with Abraham was on that subject. God's ability to provide, and His purpose to do so, are uttered all through the chapter.

"The land of *Moriah*" means the land of *providing* (*Moriah* being the participle form of the same Hebrew verb of which "*Jireh*" is the future tense); and in giving this name to the district, God did Himself furnish food for the faith which enabled Abraham to assure his son Isaac, "My son, God will PROVIDE Himself a lamb for a burnt-offering," and caused Abraham's faith to give to God at that spot the lasting record of a new name, the blessed name "Jehovah-jireh." The great provision of the Lamb was, therefore, the origin of this first and most glorious of these Jehovah titles.

It is true that passing earthly things were not forgotten by our gracious God; and they never are. Isaac, who was the joy of Abraham's brief earthly tent, was still preserved to him; and he knew he would be; for did he not say to the young men, not only "I and the lad will go yonder and worship," but also added, "and *come again* to you"? (See Heb. xi. 19.) And Isaac's heirship to all the promises of even temporal things was thus shown to be also provided for by God.

But over and above all this, there remains inscribed on the whole transaction, as in letters of light, the mighty truth of God's provision of His only and well-beloved Son, as the One who alone could be God's true burnt-offering, and the believing sinner's abiding acceptance and sweet savour in God's presence.

"Jehovah-jireh" is therefore a glorious beginning of these Jehovah titles, since it points us to the Lamb "as it had been slain," seen even now by faith "in the midst of the throne." Our place is above all heavens, where Jesus sits at God's right hand; and as we find ourselves blessed there with all spiritual blessing in Christ, we call it our "Jehovah-jireh," and say, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

More than this. Every spot of our journey, and our worship *here below*, is made rich to us with the same blessed Jehovah title; for when we thus grasp its first and largest meaning, we next learn to say also along with Paul, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "He surely (see Greek) that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

JEHOVAH-ROPHECA.

"Jehovah-ropheca" is the next of these titles on our list, and relates to God's people in their many diseases and sicknesses.* "I will put none of these diseases on thee . . . for I am Jehovah that healeth thee;" or as an older English version renders it, "I am Jehovah thy Physician."

How well this follows the former; for when we have known our God as the great Provider of the Lamb, the bearer away of our *sins*, it is good then to trust Him also in all matters of sickness and bodily suffering. For too many forget this, even among God's dear children; and while they turn to Christ, the Lamb of God, for their sins, they turn too readily, and too much as a matter of course, to any merely human help that may be near for their bodily sicknesses, perhaps without exercise as to their soul's state, or even caring whether it is a godly person to whom they are applying.

This ought not to be. The apostle James says: "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him

* The contrast between Israel and the Church as to conflicts is obvious: theirs with flesh and blood, ours with spiritual foes; and in the matter of healings it is also marked, though not so apparent. As Jehovah-jireh points to the provision made in the Lamb of God for sin, Jehovah-ropheca points to the provision of the Spirit, that meets the sickness and weakness of our spiritual life by the indwelling power of the Sanctifier. But though we especially need spiritual healings, yet we, like Israel, need bodily healings, though we have not like them to wage bodily conflicts.—Ed.

call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him," &c. (Jas. v. 13, 14); words that teach us to draw nigh still *to God*, whatever our outside matters may be, whether joyful or sorrowful.

David's ciii. Psalm may have issued from his overflowing heart and lips, at a time of recovery from some special sickness; but even if so, he enlarges greatly his soul's delight in his Jehovah God, and says (*v.* 3), "Who forgiveth ALL thine *iniquities*; who healeth ALL thy *diseases*," as if in remembrance of the very order of these two Jehovah titles which we are now considering.

It is true that health and long life were God's special rewards to Old Testament saints (see Prov. iii. 2, 8, 16), and will again be His rewards to Israel in the millennial age. (See Isa. xxxiii. 24.) And consistently with this, when our Lord would show Himself to the nation as their own Messiah and Jehovah, He was not only announced by John the Baptist as the Lamb of Jehovah-jireh's providing, but He did works of bodily healing also all through Palestine, that all Israel might once more hear God saying to them as of old, "I am Jehovah-rophecha" (Jehovah thy Physician), and thus be utterly without excuse for not repenting of their sin, and returning to their God, from whom they had so long and so deeply revolted.

But this does not set aside the truth, that all we who are now blessed in Christ in heavenly places have Him also for our sicknesses as well as for our sins, as we have seen in James v.

And Christ's Church has still so much bodily sickness in it, that if His sick ones did but more hear Him saying, "I am Jehovah, thy Physician," and turn to Him for healing, many chambers and beds of affliction would be richer with spiritual blessing than they now are. Praying ones would gather to Him, saying, like Martha and Mary of old, "Lord, he" (or she) "whom thou lovest is sick," and distincter and better remem-

bered experiences of His healing power would be oftener known among us, filling many a cottage and many a larger dwelling with the odour of praise for what Christ had done for them, and thus would our Lord Jesus be far more known amongst us as the Physician and Healer of soul as well as body.

Sickness of body in saints is of two kinds: first, Discipline of the one already well-pleasing to God, in order that in sickness the sick one may bear yet more fruit, as in Job's case (see also John xv. 2, last clause); and second, Loving reproof from the Lord because of malady of soul seen by Him, and used in order to recover the soul to health. (See 1 Cor. xi. 30; James v. 15, 16, where the same is implied; see also Elihu's words to Job, Job xxxiii. 19-29.)

Doubtless far too many bodily sicknesses amongst us are of this latter kind; and if only confessed as such, and brought to the Lord, how blessedly would our Jehovah-Jesus then be known by the raised-up one, and by fellow-saints around, as "Jehovah-rophecha" for soul and body. By His fulness as the Lamb of God's providing He has *atoned* once for all for all our sins; but it is by His skill amongst us as our twofold Physician that He brings to us "health and cure" (Jer. xxxiii. 6), and frees us from the power of indwelling sin.

Oh that this faith in Him may be more given us ere He comes again! for it is only "a little while" longer that, as His saints waiting for Him, we shall have any opportunity left us of exercising it.

But the waiting saints have conflicts to wage with spiritual foes, as well as bodily sicknesses to bear, and this makes the next of the Jehovah titles so welcome to us.

JEHOVAH-NISSI.

We find this in Ex. xvii. 15, where "Jehovah-nissi" (Jehovah my banner) was the name which Moses gave

to the altar he put up, as Abraham had called the mount of the Lord "Jehovah-jireh."

It was Amalek's assault of Israel (apparently unprovoked by them) that gave rise to it. By lifting of hands to God Israel had gained the victory, and God declares that over Israel's foe He will still give victory, and will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. Moses accepts the gracious promise; and as it was lifting up of hands that had begun the conquest, so it is an *altar* that he builds (the place, that is, of *constant* lifting up of hands; see Ps. xxviii. 2; cxxxiv. 2; cxli. 2), thus confessing his similar dependence upon God for all future victories; and it is this simple altar of earth (see Ex. xx. 24), and not any human weapons of war, to which Moses gives the all-conquering title of "Jehovah-nissi" (Jehovah my banner).

What victories have God's people gained by standing at the lowly altar of their worship, and by having in their felt weakness no banner as their trust but "Jehovah-nissi!" And, alas! what Ai-like defeats (see Joshua vii.) have been incurred by forgetting this banner-name of our unchanging Jehovah, and going to the fight in some strength of our own!

Paul knew the value of it when he said, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but *mighty through God* to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations," &c. (2 Cor. x. 4); and he taught the same to all saints when, telling us (Eph. vi.) of all the armour provided us, he still said, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance."

And only thus shall we show ourselves learners and followers of Him who not only had no cause but that of His God for which to fight, but also no strength but that which His God supplied Him with which to begin the fight, continue it, or end it. (See Ps. xxvii. 1-3; cxviii. 6-16; cxxxviii. 1-3). Of Him we sing—

“His be the Victor’s name
 Who fought our fight alone;
 Triumphant saints no honour claim,
 Their conquest was His own.”

But making Him our banner, our “Jehovah-nissi,”
 we also sing—

“Mid mightiest foes, most feeble are we,
 Yet trembling in every conflict they flee:
The Lord is our banner; the battle is His;
 The weakest of saints more than conqueror is.”

But that “weakest of saints” must make this Jehovah-banner his own *individually*, in order to be thus step by step a “conqueror.” “Jehovah-nissi” is a single soul’s utterance in faith’s conflict; it means “Jehovah *my* banner,” just as Psalm xxiii. says, “Jehovah is *my* Shepherd.”

Let us remember also that it was Moses, one chosen and gifted by God to *lead* the people, who built this altar, and gave to Israel and to us this abiding banner-name of our God and Lord. He was as wise at this beginning of Israel’s wars on the homeward march as he was afterwards, when he said, as to the pathlessness of the untrod desert, “Show me now thy *way*,” and had the blessed, abiding help assured to him, “My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.” (Ex. xxxiii.)

How happy it is when those who are in any measure guides of God’s pilgrims thus themselves seek guidance; and such as lead on the fight do with a *personal*, individual sense of weakness stand each one at the altar of his worship, and say, “Jehovah-nissi” —“Jehovah (is) *MY* Banner.” Such ones, and only such, are true guides of God’s saints, and good captains in Christ’s army; and all such must “watch and pray” in order to continue thus to the end, remembering how even Moses failed when he and Aaron said, “Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?”

(To be continued.)

H. D.

WORSHIP.

IN a former paper upon this most important subject I endeavoured to draw attention to the misunderstanding that prevails as to the nature of worship, the fundamental idea being almost obliterated from the mind by modern observances. Instead of honouring God and abasing ourselves, has not the predominant desire in this act been to gain comfort—peace of soul it may be—instruction, strength? that is, the central thought has been *self*, not God. The soul goes hungry, seeking for nourishment; and too often comes away hungry if the nourishment be not there, or not suited to the taste or digestion of the seeker. Is not this an honouring of self instead of God? In true worship, as we have seen, the soul is in the dust before God, not in pretence or in form, but in reality; not to gain applause from others by assuming the appearance of superior sanctity (for in this the searching eye of Him with whom we have to do would probably discover any thing rather than self-abasement), but in the same frame of mind in which David stripped himself of his royal apparel and danced before the ark, or that in which Jehoshaphat and all Israel cast themselves on the ground worshipping the Lord. (See 2 Chron. xx. 18.) They were not ashamed publicly to confess their own nothingness, and the supremacy of Him before whom they thus humbled themselves.

We do not mean that the desire of the soul to obtain comfort, strength, and instruction is incompatible with worship. Far otherwise. Direct intercourse with our God is the surest way to obtain these blessings. They flow out spontaneously from His presence into the minds and hearts of those who thus wait upon Him.

But instead of this direct and childlike intercourse, is it not customary for the earnest soul, in appearing

before its God in combined worship, to regard itself as far off and destitute, a candidate for mercy, hoping to obtain it through our Lord Jesus Christ; also expecting that through some word spoken on the occasion it may gain a little strength to sustain the trials of life during the ensuing week, and so on from week to week, possibly throughout life? But if we compare this frame of mind with the many scriptural examples already noticed, is it not apparent that the very element of worship is absent?

Of what value is the sacrifice of Jesus the Son of God unless it obtains pardon for the sinner who trusts in Him? Of what value is the propitiatory offering which God places in our hands wherewith to appear before Him unless it secures acceptance of our persons? Why should our God seal each sinner who approaches Him through Jesus, anoint him, and give him the earnest of the inheritance to come, all in and by His Spirit bestowed upon each of His redeemed ones, except to assure us of His unceasing favour and protection until the day of the redemption of our bodies from the grave, enabling each one, like Paul, to say, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

With all the eternal blessings that as His child He has heaped upon my guilty head, and all the temporal favours granted me, can I approach Him as destitute? Dare I do so? Would it not be to assert that He has done nothing for me, and that all must be done over again, or I must perish? What must be the astonishment of the angels surrounding the throne when they hear believers in the Lord Jesus Christ seeking for mercy as though they had never tasted it, and asking in their hymns for *drops* of blessing as though they had not been "blessed with all spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ"? What must they think of our ignoring all that God and His Son have done for us, under the impression that to speak thus implies humility?

The tender spirit may perhaps recollect that God, speaking to Israel, said, "I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them" (Ezek. xxxvi. 37), and may conclude that He is continually to be asked to do it. But when the day long foretold has arrived, and He has fulfilled His promise, and restored them to their own land, would it be proper for them still to continue asking for the fulfilment? Would not the answer be, "I have already done it; why do you ask?" So when we read those gracious words, "Who has loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father," shall I venture to sing to Him, "Pass me not?" What would an earthly friend feel if such a request were made under corresponding circumstances?

In all the instances which have been adduced the soul worships in consequence of some favour having been bestowed or promised. That the most High should even look upon His poor sinful creature man is such infinite condescension that no word can express its magnitude. When He is pleased to make him a promise, with what boundless joy and gratitude should it be welcomed! If He is pleased to reveal to His creature what He has already done in his behalf, what can the creature of the dust do with becoming reverence, but fall low before Him in acknowledgment of the amazing mercy. Such is worship. Were we to practise it, there would be an end of the doubts and fears that perplex so very many of the children of God, marring their peace, and casting dishonour upon the truthfulness of the mighty One who has stooped so low as to concern Himself about His poor insignificant creature.

In the sinner's *first* approach to God he must ever have a bad conscience. He is aware of guilt, and that he deserves no mercy. A rich preparation has been made, and through the grace of Christ his guilty con-

science is then and there sprinkled, not, as were the Israelites at mount Sinai, with the blood of bulls, but with the costly blood of Jesus.

This is equally done by God Himself upon every believing heart; and the worshipper being thus once purged (cleansed), has "no more conscience of sins." He is informed that though they are in reality mountains, yet the blood of Christ has washed them all away, and that there is no sentence out against him as there was before. He is now constituted a worshipper, and qualified to worship. This is his proper business, and it is expected of him that he should make his obeisance to the majesty of the most High, who has thus liberated him from all that was against him.

But where is he to do this? Where is the place for worship? There are many "places of worship" in this most favoured part of the world, but are they entitled to the designation? Some call them "houses of God." Has He ever taken possession of them as He did of the temple which Solomon built? Of that edifice He chose the location, gave directions as to the plan, the materials, the furniture; and when it was finished, took possession of it by means of the cloud of visible glory. His royal presence was established there, and at that spot His subjects were to present themselves to worship Him. That temple is no more. No dwelling-place has God at present on the earth. Heaven is His abode; and there where His High Priest is making intercession for us is the hallowed place for Christian worship. It is there in spirit we are privileged to draw near and yield our homage. The idea of an earthly locality not only stamps upon some favourite spot a romance and reverence which does not belong to it, and for which there is no foundation, but it tends to distract the mind from the person to whom the reverence is due, and the place where He resides. The only virtue of the temple at Jerusalem was the presence of Jehovah, not the goodly stones, the orna-

ments, or the gold. Neither was the dress of the high priest, nor the grand ceremonial, of any value, save as being ordered by Him to be worn and done in His presence. The modern pageantry of dress and ceremonial in so-called sacred things, however gratifying to human taste, has as little accordance with the New Testament ordinances of God as any theatrical representation here of the ceremonial of the court of China would have to do with reverence for the monarch of that country.

Some may contend that the synagogue service of the Jew justifies the setting apart certain buildings as appropriated for worship. It is very probable that these buildings originated the idea. But whatever may now be done in synagogues, it is to be remembered that at first they were merely places for the reading and exposition of the law, not for worship or prayer, the temple being the only recognized place of approaching God for such purposes; and there He was pleased to make known His replies through His chief official servant, the high priest, always in attendance on His presence.

If the Israelite, after bringing his gift to the altar, saw the fat of it placed on the heaven-lit fire ever burning there, and perceived the flame ascending, heightened by the fresh fuel thus supplied, could he have a doubt that Jehovah had accepted his offering, and that, though in himself guilty and helpless, he now stood in the favour of His God? The wise wife of Manoah (Judges xiii. 23) reasoned rightly on this subject; and though in our day sight is debarred, faith, presenting its sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise, is privileged to know that "with such sacrifices God is well pleased." And if our God is pleased, what greater or more substantial joy can His creature possess?

R. N.

JACOB;

OR, "THE SHRUNKEN SINEW."

GENESIS xxxii. 24, ETC.

MANY and varied are the lessons read out to us from the history of Old Testament saints. Of Jacob it was long since written, "He gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost;" and yet he still speaks to us. Let us listen.

The first lesson taught us by his life is that which each redeemed life should teach us—the faithfulness of God's love. He loved Jacob. "Jacob have I loved." This love of God to him accounts for all Jacob's blessings, even as it does for ours. Whatever interpretation we in our folly may give of God's ways, "all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth."

God's purpose of love in blessing Jacob was revealed to his mother before his birth; for in answer to her enquiry, raised by the struggle in her womb, "Why am I thus?" she was told that two children were in her womb, and that the elder should serve the younger. In him therefore was exemplified divine sovereignty, the good pleasure of Jehovah's will: "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated."

The proud reasoner, the mere natural man, could never find what he would consider a proper reason for this preference; for, viewing the two men from a human standpoint, Esau was the man to be preferred. He was the world's noble man, as all those have been who have foreshadowed the antichrist. King Saul, Absalom, and others, were attractive men to the world, men of the earth, pointing on to him who is emphatically called "the man of the earth" (Psalm x. 18), contrasted with God's Man from heaven. Jacob was the plain tent-dweller, and David was the ruddy, youthful shepherd, in the eyes of Goliath to be con-

temned, while Saul was head and shoulders above the people; yet both Jacob and David were God's men; for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in His sight, who judges not according to appearance.

Thus was it also with ourselves, dear reader. There was nothing good in us by nature to account for our salvation; and if we know God, and are filled with joy and peace in believing through receiving Christ, how shall we account for that reception? Not by anything of nature, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 12, 13.)

Jehovah was the God of Jacob throughout his life. His constant love is ever traceable; and in nothing is it more clearly seen than in His discipline of Jacob, debating with the flesh in him, yet "staying His rough wind in the day of His east wind" (Isaiah xxvii. 8), and all to deliver him from the power of his besetment, and so to increase his blessing. This He did in Laban's house, at Penuel, in Canaan, and in Egypt, where we see him as the aged worshipper, leaning on his staff, blessing his sons, and dying in faith.

Jacob's life became a testimony for God by Jehovah's acting all through it in character with Himself, as did also Jacob, save as the grace of God prevailed over his nature. At his birth he took his brother by the heel, the act of a sly tripper, even as his son Dan after him acted as an adder in the path, biting the horse's heels, and throwing the rider backwards. Afterwards, taking advantage of Esau's despair of life, he bargained with the mess of pottage for nothing less than the birth-right; and then, though reluctantly, for fear of being discovered, deceived his aged, dim-sighted father, and so snatched the blessing. Surely in all this we learn the unalterable nature of the flesh! But God will debate with it.

Jacob fled to Laban, and found him to be indeed his

mother's brother; for if lovely Rebekah could, in the hour of unbelief and impatience, scheme for Jacob, and prompt him to lies, Laban also could practise deceit. Jacob looked on his two daughters, and set his heart on the younger rather than the elder; but at his marriage was deceived. This was discipline for him; he reaped as he had sown. He had deceived his aged father, and as a correction he was cheated in the marriage-bed. Such is the discipline of divine love; "for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth."

Beloved fellow-believer, remember that you are every moment sowing either to the flesh or to the Spirit; that the harvest is not only possible and probable, but absolutely certain, and always in keeping with the sowing ("to every seed its own body"), corruption reaped of the flesh, but the harvest of the Spirit everlasting life. Lot sowed to his flesh, and he reaped corruption; while Abraham sowed to the Spirit, and reaped blessing.

Again, selfish Laban took advantage of his son-in-law, and oppressed him. Jacob again, acting according to his own nature, by manœuvring, enriched himself, though with toil and sorrow. God was still with him, pitying and helping him, acting according to His promise at Bethel. "God will not *cast off* His people . . . but *judgment* shall return unto *righteousness*."

Leaving Laban's house, let us pass on to Penuel, or Peniel, the place to which the title of this paper refers, and to the circumstances immediately preceding his meeting his brother Esau. Here again we trace the man Jacob as well as the saint of God. He had just seen "God's hosts," a sight which should have encouraged him; but when he heard of Esau's approach with four hundred men, he trembled, and in his trouble *first* made his plans, arranged his household and his flocks, and *then* prayed. May we, dear reader, ever pray *first*, acknowledging the Lord, in order that He may *instruct* as to plans and arrangements. Yet

God heard his prayer, and helped him. In this we see the love of God, and learn the lesson taught us in Psalm cvii. of "the loving-kindness of the Lord," which is seen in this, that although in each case God was prayed to the *last* thing instead of the *first*, yet He heard and delivered.

But this spot and moment were to become marked and memorable to Jacob. He must now know both God and himself more perfectly. He had known God's discipline in his trials through Laban's conduct, and by other means; but now he must learn directly from God; he must come face to face, and hand to hand with Him in human form, and be blessed.

Having carried out his plans, "he was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." Jacob had long known day trials and night difficulties, the heat by day and frost by night; but this was the most solemn night of his life—a contest indeed. To an ignorant observer it would have appeared a doubtful one, at least for a time, until the Angel's well-directed, gentle but effectual touch put the hollow of Jacob's thigh out of joint, and thus disabled him. Unable longer to contend, what will he do next? Surely the mightiest deed he had ever done; viz., cling to the Angel, fall into his bosom, there weep his tears, and make supplication. This he did, and prevailed. (See Hosea xii. 3-7.)

Thus he conquered, and left Peniel a very different man from what he was when he reached it. He came to the place a man erect, with full muscular power; but his name was Jacob, the supplanter. He left it halting on his thigh, and, doubtless, leaning upon his staff; but his name was Israel, a prince. Having acknowledged his first name, and thereby indirectly confessed his crooked ways, he receives a new and honourable name, implying power with God and with man—a conqueror.

This blessed change was effected by the divine hand.

It is God in Jacob's history, and from it we learn the fourfold lesson of God's faithful love, the unalterable evil of the flesh, God's debate with it (*i.e.* discipline), and the power of grace and of the prayer of faith. Thus the history affords us instruction, warning, and encouragement. The dealings of God with Jacob were, if I may so say, sample dealings; and the things which happened to him so happened as types to us.

Each child of God has something which answers to the sinew in Jacob's thigh, something natural to him to which he is tempted to look and trust, instead of renouncing the flesh and relying on God alone for wisdom, strength, and prosperity. God only fully knows what it is in each, how to touch it and make it shrink in order that He may strengthen the weak against the mighty, and cause the lame to take the prey.

Beloved fellow-believers, let us enquire of God for ourselves; ask Him to teach us what it is, and then seek grace to take part with Him in subduing it, acting in this also in fellowship with Him. Let us cling instead of contend, and weep and supplicate rather than contrive and boast. Then we also shall be blessed, shall have power with God and with men, and become Israels.

Again, Jacob was not the first man, neither was he the last, in whose life we can trace the discipline of divine love.

Job had a sinew which neither Satan nor Job's friends, not even Elihu, could effectually touch; but God did so. And when Job took the low place, the Lord exalted and doubly blessed him.

Saul of Tarsus also had a sinew which nothing but contact with the risen Lord Jesus could cause to shrink; and from being a proud, self-righteous opposer of Christ and of grace, he became in his own eyes the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints, yet the mightiest of apostles.

Moreover, what have those who sprang from Jacob's

loins been doing ever since their boastful speech at Sinai, “All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do”? Going about with the sinew of self-righteousness untouched, to establish their own righteousness, refusing to submit to God’s righteousness, *i.e.* Christ, “for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.” By the law Jehovah wrestled, contended with them, is still contending, and will do so, until by revealing Messiah to them He shall bring them low. “They shall look on Him whom they pierced, and *mourn*.” Then shall they know forgiveness, acknowledge their King, and be blessed. Thus the two parts of Jacob’s life will have their answer in his seed. Jacob’s name was changed, his circumstances altered, and his spiritual condition improved; but God was the same. The God of Israel was Jacob’s God; and most interesting and instructive is it to observe that throughout the prophecies, even to Malachi, Jehovah connects Himself with, and so owns, both the name of Jacob and of Israel, the first pointing to the low and weak condition of the nation as now, and the second to their blessed and honourable condition hereafter.

H. H.

“THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

PSALM xix. 4-6.

“DARKNESS before the sun must flee away,
The moon and stars are hid while he is seen;
And from the earth’s foundation he has been
The sole and faithful ruler of the day.
His strength to run his race knows no decay;
All lands he visits with a kingly mien.
Winter departs, and earth again is green,
Fruitful, and glad beneath his quick’ning sway.

When souls were wrapped in thickest gloom of night,
Rose from the tomb the Saviour of mankind,
The King whose favour is the only light
Of life eternal. He, the heart and mind
Renewing, holds His course with power and might;
For on the Cross He once His life resigned.”

R. C. C.

FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST.

“God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.”—1 Cor. i. 9.

THIS fellowship is the blessed, glorious, inalienable portion of every child of God. It is *His* free gift to us upon conversion; and however much we fail in our apprehension and enjoyment of it, it is still our proper portion, maintained for us by Christ Himself; for “Thou maintainest my lot.”

“The fellowship of His Son” implies partnership with Christ in *all* that He is and has, *present* partnership, for “ye were called;” and the partnership continues and abides to all eternity. So that *even now* His fulness, His grace, His love, His wisdom, His strength, are *all* ours, to be used according to our need and for His glory, for He is also “our *Lord*.”

Again we read, “Truly our fellowship is . . . *with His Son Jesus Christ*.” Fellowship *with* Christ implies *companionship*—close, happy, intimate companionship—fellowship in thought and feeling, union of heart and will; so that our hearts respond to His, we love what He loves, and hate what He hates. It also involves *walking* with Christ, and leaning upon Him, so that moment by moment we receive out of His fulness all we need. Yes, *all*; for He has all power, and never will He fail the soul that *leans* upon Him.

The partnership is full and real; but we are so weak, that we need the power of Christ to guard our treasures for us. Our enemies are strong and vigilant, watching for our halting; and no sooner do we turn aside from Christ, and seek to walk alone, than they prevail against us. Again, we are so foolish, so easily beguiled, not sufficient to think a right thought of ourselves; and we need the *continual* guiding hand of our blessed Lord, and fresh words of wisdom direct from Him, to keep us from being ensnared or carried captive.

Fellowship with Christ implies such close companionship with Him, that all His resources are ours—His grace sufficient for us; His strength upholding, so that we should not fall; His wisdom directing our words and ways; His meekness, gentleness, and love making us meek and lowly, conforming us to His image, and enabling us to bring forth fruit, much fruit, His *own* fruit, to His praise and glory. The provision is ample indeed, *fresh* springs flowing continually from His own heart of love, and flowing *into* us *as* we abide in Him. What a portion! What could He give us more?

Well may He say, "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." For cleaving to Him, His power would rest upon us; thoughts and feelings, words and acts, would flow through us from Christ Himself, and the life of Jesus would verily be manifested in these our mortal bodies; and we should be able to say with truth, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

This is our portion, our proper portion which our God has given to us; present, continued fellowship with Christ Himself—full and unhindered fellowship. Our blessed Lord loves us with such a love, that He desires our company, and longs to keep us *near* Him. It is His joy to have us cleaving closely to Him; He never wearies of our many wants and weaknesses, but loves to prove His faithful, watchful care by meeting every one. There is *no* lack on His part, *no* unreadiness to help, *no* complaining of our shortcomings, *no* upbraidings; His grace is exceeding abundant, He knows our frame, He pities our weakness, He bears with and forgives our wanderings, He never grows impatient or angry with us.

"No earthly tongue can half describe
His sympathy and tender love;
The ceaseless watchfulness and care
With which He guards us from above!"

He never wearies while we tell
 Our mournful tale of sin and woe ;
 Nay, He invites us to outpour
 The grief which lays our spirits low.

He never changes, never dies,
 He knows no lack of power or skill ;
 His smile illumines the darkest cloud,
 His presence every blank can fill.

Oh, make this glorious One thy Friend,
 The Sharer of thy every thought !
 Thy joys He 'll sanctify and crown,
 And make thy griefs with blessings fraught."

His love is strong and faithful ; many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it. It is a love that bears with all our wilfulness and ingratitude, and nothing can induce Him to turn away from us. The turning away is *always* on our part ; He will never, no never, forsake or leave us. Indeed, so great is His love, that even when we turn away from Him, He follows after us, beseeching us to return to Him, and promising to restore our souls and heal our backsliding.

Such is His grace, and such is our portion ; and yet how slow of heart we are to enjoy His love, how slack of hand to take our portion ! It is all free and open to us, and well we know there is no joy like the joy of His presence, no pleasure like the enjoyment of His company, and that all the things we can desire are not to be compared with it.

Why then are we so foolish, why so feeble, when the very strength of Christ is ours ? Why make mistakes, when all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid for us in Christ ? Why so poor in faith and grace and love, when He is waiting to pour all His fulness into our souls ? Is it not because we do not cling to Him ? We leave His side, and try to walk alone, and then our enemies prevail, and we are wounded, robbed, and spoiled. But *why* do we wander from Him ? What is the secret of our folly ? We may

mention at least four distinct reasons—(1) self-will, (2) self-sufficiency, (3) unbelief, (4) cold affections.

1. *Self-will*, or desire to please ourselves, or do our own will, or have our own way in anything. The matter may be very small; but the least act of disobedience mars fellowship with Christ; and until we really yield ourselves to Him, determined to do His will at all times, in all things, and at all costs, there will be no *steadfastness* of heart, and no evenness of walk.

He is worthy indeed to be obeyed and served. In His love and wisdom He has considered our path, and marked out the good and the safe way for us. He has not given us one needless precept, nor one harsh command. Every word is written for our blessing, that it may go well with us; and He offers to walk with us step by step, and to give us all the grace and strength we need. But He cannot go with us into sin or folly; He is the holy, holy, Lord God Almighty. He hates sin with perfect hatred; and whenever sin gets the victory over us, we may be sure that we had turned away from Him, and were walking *alone before* we slipped.

“If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth;” for “He is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” He cannot call evil good, or good evil. He sees things exactly as they really are, and if we are walking in the sunshine of His presence we must in measure see things as He does, and could not excuse sin or make light of evil. Indeed sin (even an idle word) would become hateful to us; for the light of His holiness would show us the exceeding hideousness and heinousness of it. Thus fellowship with Christ *necessitates* a holy walk.

2. *Self-sufficiency*. This evil may be very subtle; it need not take the open form of pride and boasting, but may hide itself under an earnest desire to do right. It will make itself a cloak of devotedness to Christ

and self-sacrifice for His sake, and it often takes the form of strenuous efforts to do His will and continued struggles against besetting sins. And yet this self-sufficiency is one of the most fruitful causes of our wandering from Christ.

We have not really learnt that we can do nothing; we think there is some little power of goodness in us, some steadfastness of purpose, some possibility of doing better if we were more watchful and more self-denying. And so we brace ourselves up, and strive with all our might to overcome our sins and bring forth fruit to God.

And what is the result? We fail, and fail, and fail; we get discouraged and disheartened, and grow faint and weary; we find the conflict too much for us, and groan out in the agony of our souls, "O wretched man that I am!" And why? Because we have been walking alone, and waging an unequal warfare. The world, the flesh, and the devil are far too much for us, and it is only when the mighty arm of Christ is stretched forth for our help that we can prevail.

We have not learnt our own weakness; we desire to be something, and think we can do something; and though we go to the Lord and cry to Him for grace and strength, we come away from Him again, instead of cleaving to Him, and saying to Him as one of old, "If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence." Oh that we could fully learn this first, this simple lesson, "WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO NOTHING."

3. *Unbelief.* This need not necessarily be unbelief in any gross or open form, though of course that must completely destroy fellowship with Christ. Unbelief is a very subtle thing, and often spreads a cloud over the soul, and causes darkness and sorrow, even when there is a firm grasp of the finished work of Christ.

A Christian may be perfectly assured of his eternal safety, have the fullest confidence in the Lord's faithful

covenant love, and know for a certainty that all things are working together for his good, and yet there may be some cloud over the soul which obscures the bright sunshine of the Lord's countenance.

The cloud may be unconfessed sin, and if so the remedy is plain. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The rich grace of our God never fails; the provision is full indeed, and the soul may be at once restored, and walk again with its Lord. No reproaches await the returning soul; He forgives freely, and revives and strengthens the humble and contrite heart. (Isa. lvii. 15.)

But very often, even after the sin is confessed, the cloud remains. There is some little distrust of His grace and love; some lingering thought that He does not forgive from His heart; some feeling that He is still displeased; some doubt as to whether He will not use the scourge, or treat us as children who are in disgrace. We do not thoroughly believe the words, that "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive." We are occupied with our deservings, and feel we have forfeited everything, and know not how the Lord will deal with us.

This unbelief destroys fellowship. It makes us ill at ease in the Lord's presence. We cannot lift up our face to Him, but can only lie before Him, and groan out our misery. We lose confidence in His readiness to help us; and though there may be earnest longings to do His will, we have no courage to lean upon Him for strength. And yet there is no cause for this want of confidence. He has provided the precious blood of His own Son to atone for our sins, and to cleanse them away, and His own mighty power to subdue them for us. We cannot grapple with them ourselves, and He bids us bring them to Him for the *double* cure, both of their guilt and power. It is not true fellowship, unless we can lift up our faces in the conscious enjoyment of

His smile, and come up out of this wilderness leaning upon our Beloved.

4. *Cold Affections.* Oh, what a shameful thing is this! and yet how true of most of us! Indifference to His company, so that we grow tired of it, and turn away to something else.

He never wearies of us. He always delights to see our faces, to hear our voices, and yet we weary of Him, and find it an effort to abide in His presence. It should be the natural element of our souls, and we should find ourselves ill at ease and restless (like a fish out of water) the moment we leave Him. But, alas! how seldom is this the case! Indeed our affections are so dull, that we often turn aside from Christ *unconsciously*, and do not even miss His company, until some fall, some act or word arouse us, and to our dismay we find we have defiled our garments. Oh for the fervent love that could not rest away from Christ!

In *His* pathway through this world He never left His Father's side; He walked each step with Him, right onwards to the cross. His Father was His only joy, His constant help. He listened to His voice, He spake His words, He lived by Him; and now He gives Himself to us, and bids us cleave to Him, and live by Him. He seeks our company, and how heartless we must be if we neglect to seek His.

The Lord increase our love, and give us hearts to find their constant joy in Him. He will not bind us to Him; the only cords which He will use are cords of love. May we learn the blessedness of fellowship with Him—real fellowship, His company enjoyed, His fulness proved, His strength made perfect in our weakness. The Lord in His rich mercy enlighten our eyes, that we may discern the secret of our wanderings, and be so strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that henceforth we may have power to take our proper portion, and to rejoice continually before Him, and triumph in the God of our salvation.

FRAGMENTS.

THE best life insurance is the knowledge of God; for "this *is* life eternal, to know Thee the only true God."

At the cross we see two great sights—God's hatred of sin, God's love to the sinner in the gift of His Son.

They who lay up treasure in heaven can never become bankrupt.

To know God brings death to the flesh, but life in the Spirit.

The cross shows the acme of man's hate, the acme of God's love.

"*Living water*" has its source in God's heart, and bursts forth at Calvary. A. O. M.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

To whom was the epistle of James written?

James, as "the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ," wrote to those of the twelve tribes with whom in that relation his epistle would have weight; *i. e.* to those who were themselves believers in the Lord Jesus. This is proved by chap. i. 18; ii. 1, &c. The portions at the end of chap. iv. and beginning of chap. v. (iv. 13-17; v. 1-6) seem to come in parenthetically. The one is addressed to those who assume a power to go and do as they will, and the other to the rich and unjust; and both are designed as an indirect warning to Israelites who professed to be Christians, lest they should prove to be no better than those of whom James writes. The words "my beloved brethren," "my brethren," "brethren," mark those to whom the epistle is addressed; and the deep importance of the warnings of the epistle must make us very careful of anything that would rob the church of God of its fullest application. It also teaches how Old Testament prophetic language, addressed to degenerate Israel, may

be applied to the degenerate church of even apostolic times, an application that we do well to ponder.

1 Sam. xiii. 14: "The Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart."

Another explanation may, I think, be found in the consideration why Saul was superseded in the kingship. The standing order to him was to go to Gilgal (chap. x. 8), in case of emergency, and wait till Samuel came to offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. When the Philistines caused the alarm (in chap. xiii.), he went thither, but did not wait till Samuel came to offer the sacrifices. Upon this failure, he is told that his dynasty shall not continue; but that the Lord will seek a man after His heart. David was not then born: nor for several years after this. In chap. xv. Saul is sent against the Amalekites. He fails: this time in active obedience; in the former instance in passive obedience. He is now (v. 23) personally rejected. His successor is to be one who will obey orders. The selection does not depend upon his moral character as a man, or even upon rectitude of conduct as a king; but relates to those points in discharge of his kingly office in which Saul had failed. Unless the contrast with Saul is kept in mind, the passage appears morally inexplicable. And this also determines the force of Ps. li. 11, "Take not thy holy Spirit from me," as had been the case with Saul. (1 Sam. xvi. 14.) Yet through the forbearance of God he lived even longer than David; and his reign was of equal duration, forty years. Acts xiii. 22 evidently refers to a subsequent testimony by God. David is here mentioned by name. He was then living, and probably anointed: a period some twenty-five years subsequent to the former communication to Samuel. But the purport is the same. It is only David's Lord who either can or will in every possible aspect essentially and completely fulfil all the desires of our God.

R. N.

FRUIT AND WORKS.

IT is important to notice the distinction and the connection between *fruit* and *works*: the one the spontaneous outcome of inward life, and the other the result of active effort. It is by fruit rather than by works that man is known. The latter may deceive; not the former. Hence the significance of our Lord's words: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. . . . Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. vii. 15-20.)

We will consider what Scripture regards as *fruit*, and then what it says of *good works*.

1. OF FRUIT. In John xv. our Lord likens Himself to the vine, and His people to the branches, and then says: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples;" and again, "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing." The source of all fruitfulness is abiding in Christ, and the result of abiding is necessarily fruit-bearing; for that branch cannot help yielding fruit to the glory of the Husbandman, which obeys the one condition necessary thereto of abiding in the Vine. But the first principle in fruit-bearing is spontaneity. It is not forced; it cannot be made; it cannot be copied. Fruit is real, the natural outcome of the source whence it springs. Hence the primary importance of the subject to the Christian whose earnest desire is to bring forth fruit unto God; and therefore, when Paul writes to the Galatians, who were going back to the law, he opposes the fruit of the Spirit

alike to the "works of the law" (chap. iii. 10) and to "the works of the flesh" (chap. v. 19); and this fruit, he says, is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

When speaking of what he was as a natural man under the law, the apostle says, "Touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless;" but this, with all other things that "were gain to him" as in the flesh, he counted loss for Christ. "Yea doubtless," he adds, "and I still count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

Law and precept can never produce fruit. They may produce works, and an enforced obedience; but the higher and deeper thing which God is ever seeking from us they cannot yield. It is for this, however, that He has united us to a living and life-giving Saviour, even that we might "bring forth fruit unto God." (Rom. vii. 4.) To this end we have been married to another husband; for, as married to the law, we could only bring forth fruit unto death, respecting which the apostle writes: "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death." (Rom. vi. 21.) Out of Christ all is fruitless toil. Sin works death, and law stirs up sin; but when the soul is made free from sin's dominion, its fruit is then unto holiness, and the end is everlasting life.

Where the Spirit is, the fruit of the Spirit will be manifest, and that manifestation will at once divide between the children of God and the children of the devil; for "whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." (1 John iii. 10.) How easy to lay claim to the Spirit; and how prone are we to be satisfied with knowing that we are in the dispensation of the Spirit, while there may be comparatively little concern that the fruit of the Spirit be seen and own in us. This fruit is the

result of the inworking of God. It is to this end that the whole course of God's dealings with us is directed, whether in His outward or His inward actings. All that we do for God, to be rightly done, must be the result of what God is doing in us. Thus the fruit of the Spirit is produced in us, and we are brought into that condition wherein God can hold uninterrupted communion, such as *He* has ever sought, whose delights were with the sons of men, and who created us for Himself that we might be to Him "for a name, and a praise, and a glory." It is thus He unfolds in us now in measure, and will do perfectly in the future, the features and the characteristics of the divine nature into which we have been regenerated.

Well might we ponder over the Spirit's description of this spiritual and heavenly fruit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (or self-control). In all these characteristics there is a humbleness and lowliness which we are very slow to prize, as God prizes them; and perhaps nothing shows so much the distance between our thoughts and God's as the catalogue we should make of cardinal virtues and that which the Spirit has given in the fifth of Galatians. The whole list reminds us of that "meek and quiet spirit which is in God's sight of great price," and which is so essential to the spiritual growth of the child of God. "The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy," hath said, "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite."

The life of Jesus perfectly shows us what the fruit of the Spirit is; and it prepared Him for the mighty ministry He came to render, and for the spotless sacrifice He came to offer up. The Nazareth home was the place where, as a child, "He grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom" (Luke ii. 40), and where

in older years He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." (v. 52.) It was there for thirty years, in the quiet subjection to God and to home ties, He yielded those rich and fragrant fruits that made Him the delight of the Father in heaven. Unknown He had trod the streets of Nazareth through His early manhood, and had been a frequenter of the synagogue as a listener and a learner, but probably not until the memorable occasion mentioned in Luke iv. 16 had He ever "stood up for to read."

Those preparation years of silent growth had yielded their fruit, and in the fulness of time He came forward for His work; and being baptized, and praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove, upon Him; and a voice came from heaven, which said, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Mark i. 11.) What love, joy, peace, and lowliness were found in Him! Thus prepared He went forth to meet the enmity of the devil, and the antagonism of a world of darkness. The fruit of the Spirit is the very element of the light with which He shined into the darkness that surrounded Him; for we read, "The fruit of the light* is in all goodness and righteousness and truth."

It would be an interesting study to examine the early preparatory histories of many of the most prominent servants of God; a preparation of which God thinks so much, but of which the busy life of our time thinks so little. Moses had his forty years at the back side of the mountain before he was sent to lead Israel forth; and it must have been there that he became the meekest man upon earth; for he certainly was not so when he smote the Egyptian. David spent his younger years with the "few sheep in the wilderness;" and there learnt the power of God to enable him to rescue the lambs from the lion and the bear. It was after months, and perhaps years, of lonely prayer on the

* The ancient MSS. read "light" instead of "Spirit."

mountains of Gilead that Elijah came, clad in his hairy mantle and leathern girdle, with a message of divine wrath against His idolatrous people. Paul, that mightiest of men, spent years in Arabia with God, and then commenced his wonderful career of ministry and suffering.

These records are not in vain to any who seek to be prepared for what they are called to as chosen vessels of God's power and grace. It is not every instrument that is meet for the Master's use. The shaft needs its polish, and the harp its tune; and if there were more concern about the polishing of the shaft and the tuning of the harp, there would be more work done in the harmony and power of the Spirit of God.

2. OF WORKS. What are the good works of God's children which men are to see, and for which they are to glorify God?

A few words will suffice here, after what has been already said. As we have seen, fruit is God's work in us, and our good works are what we do for God. The one tells what we *are*, and the other what we *do*; and the latter, to be of any real value before God, must result from the former, the necessary outcome of the light from those who are themselves light in the Lord. This explains our Lord's words: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. v. 16.) Our Lord had just before said: "Ye are the light of the world." They were born of Him who is Light, and in whom is no darkness at all; they were children of the light and of the day, and as such were to bring forth the fruit of the light in righteousness, goodness, and truth. These are divine attributes; and as they are seen shining forth from the life of the Christian, like the rainbow colours which are found in light, they give to his life below a grace and glory which at once show that they are not of human origin, but of divine bestowment; and thereby the

glory is given to the Father in heaven, and not to the man. When the light of heaven is wanting there may be human philanthropy, benevolence, kindness, or whatever else may exist by mere human growth and culture; but from these glory will never ascend to God, but will necessarily centre itself around the creature. Hence the importance of the little word *so*. "Let your light so shine" that the Father gets all the glory of what you do; and if He does not, there is something wrong.

The distinction here sought to be shown between fruit and work in the life and history of the child of God is seen also in the distinction Scripture makes between the *ways* and the *works* of God. The former were shown to Moses when in the mount he had revealed to him the *way*, the *glory*, and the *name* of God; the latter (his works) were seen by Israel, who knew nothing of the "ways." So God says to them, "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and *saw my work*. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and *they have not known my ways*: unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest." (Ps. xcv. 7-11.) Hence it was that when God had planted Israel as His vine on a fruitful hill, and He came expecting to find grapes, He found nothing but poisonous berries (or wild grapes), as we read in the sorrowful song of the Beloved touching His vineyard in Isaiah v. Instead of judgment he found oppression, and instead of righteousness there was the cry of wrong.

If then we would ever do anything for God, it must come through that fruitfulness which God has wrought; and this inworking depends on the Spirit's being ungrieved in our heart, and unresisted in our lives; for unless God is able to work unhindered in

our souls, we shall never be able to do those good works for which we were “created in Christ Jesus,” and which “God has before ordained that we should walk in them.” We are God’s workmanship; and the more deeply this is realized, the more will our good works be seen as springing from a higher source than the natural amiability of the creature, or man’s highest conceptions of duty or of virtue. Of this the works of Christ, who went about doing good, are the all-perfect example. Self had no place; He acted under an impulse Godward in all He did and in all He left undone. He sought “not His own glory, but the glory of Him that sent Him.” Of such an one the Lord has said: “The same is true, and there is no unrighteousness in him.” Nothing of self, but all of God; nothing for self, but all for God. When this is the case, and in exact proportion as it is so, our works will be wrought in God, and God will be glorified in us.

H. G.

“AS HE IS, SO ARE WE.” *

1 JOHN iv. 17.

I am the Light of the world.	Ye are the light of the world.
John viii. 12.	Matt. v. 14.
I am not of the world.	They are not of the world.
John xvii. 16.	John xvii. 16.
Ye know that it hated Me.	The world hath hated them.
John xv. 18.	John xvii. 14.
I have overcome the world.	Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world.
John xvi. 33.	1 John v. 4.
He will judge the world by that Man whom He hath ordained.	Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?
Acts xvii. 31.	1 Cor. vi. 2.
He put on righteousness as a breastplate.	Having on the breastplate of righteousness.
Isa. lix. 17.	Eph. vi. 14.
An helmet of salvation on His head.	Take the helmet of salvation.
Isa. lix. 17.	Eph. vi. 17.
Behold the Man, whose name is The Branch.	Ye are the branches.
Zech. vi. 12.	John xv. 5.
A living Stone.	Ye also, as lively stones.
1 Peter ii. 4.	1 Peter ii. 5.
The Son of God.	Now are we the sons of God.
1 John iii. 8.	1 John iii. 2.
A Priest upon His throne.	And hath made us kings and priests.
Zech. vi. 13.	Rev. i. 6.

* Gatherings from Scripture of a new-born soul.

He shall reign for ever and ever.	Rev. xi. 15.	They shall reign for ever and ever.	Rev. xxii. 5.
The faithful Witness.	Rev. i. 5.	Ye are witnesses.	Luke xxiv. 48.
He was afflicted.	Isa. liii. 7.	Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted.	Matt. xxiv. 9.
He Himself hath suffered, being tempted.	Heb. ii. 18.	Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.	1 Peter i. 6.
He was reviled.	1 Peter ii. 23.	Men shall revile you.	Matt. v. 11.
He is despised.	Isa. liii. 3.	We are despised.	1 Cor. iv. 10.
Make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.	Heb. ii. 10.	After that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect.	1 Peter v. 10.
He went forth conquering, and to conquer.	Rev. vi. 2.	More than conquerors through Him.	Rom. viii. 37.
Heir of all things.	Heb. i. 2.	Heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ.	Rom. viii. 17.
My Servant.	Isa. xlii. 1.	Servants of God.	1 Peter ii. 16.
God anointed Jesus.	Acts x. 38.	He which hath anointed us is God.	2 Cor. i. 21.
Christ, who is the Image of God.	2 Cor. iv. 4.	Changed into the same Image.	2 Cor. iii. 18.
The glory which Thou gavest Me Even as We are One,		I have given them.	John xvii. 22.
Even as Thou hast loved Me,		That they may be one.	John xvii. 22.
In Whom I am well pleased.	Matt. iii. 17.	Thou hast loved them.	John xvii. 23.
Without spot.	1 Peter i. 19.	The Lord taketh pleasure in His people.	Ps. cxlix. 4.
Who only hast immortality.	1 Tim. vi. 16.	There is no spot in thee.	Song iv. 7.
How terrible art Thou.	Ps. lxxvi. 3.	This mortal must put on immortality.	1 Cor. xv. 53.
Holy, undefiled.	Heb. vii. 26.	Thou art terrible.	Song vi. 4.
Grace is poured into Thy lips.	Ps. xlv. 2.	My undefiled.	Song v. 2.
God hath blessed Thee for ever.	Ps. xlv. 2.	Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely.	Song iv. 3.
He which raised up the Lord Jesus		God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.	Eph. i. 3.
Crowned with glory and honour.	Heb. ii. 9.	Shall raise up us also by Jesus.	2 Cor. iv. 14.
Chosen of God.	1 Peter ii. 4.	Ye shall receive a crown of glory.	1 Peter v. 4.
He was faithful to Him that appointed Him.	Heb. iii. 2.	They that are with Him are chosen.	Rev. xvii. 14.
Mine Elect.	Isa. xlii. 1.	They that are with Him are faithful.	Rev. xvii. 14.
In Whom My Soul delighteth.	Isa. xlii. 1.	Elect of God.	Col. iii. 12.
My Beloved.	Matt. xii. 18.	The Lord delighteth in thee.	Isa. lxii. 4.
Fairer than the children of men.	Ps. xlv. 2.	My beloved.	Jer. xi. 15.
He Himself likewise took part of the same.	Heb. ii. 14.	Thou art all fair.	Song iv. 7.
There appeared an angel, strengthening Him	Luke xxii. 43.	The children are partakers of flesh and blood.	Heb. ii. 14.
		Strengthened with all might.	Col. i. 11.

A Star.	Num. xxiv. 17.	As the stars.	Dan. xii. 3.
My Father.	John xx. 17.	Your Father.	John xx. 17.
My God.	John xx. 17.	Your God.	John xx. 17.
The Lord of peace.	2 Thess. iii. 16.	My peace I give unto you.	John xiv. 27.
He would have given thee Living Water.	John iv. 10.	He that believeth on Me, out of Him shall flow rivers of living waters.	John vii. 38.
A Man of sorrows.	Isa. liii. 3.	Ye shall be sorrowful.	John xvi. 20.
His raiment was white as the light.	Matt. xvii. 2.	Clothed in white raiment.	Rev. iv. 4.
His countenance was as the sun.	Rev. i. 16.	Clear as the sun.	Song vi. 10.
The Lord will hold Thine hand.	Isa. xlii. 6.	I the Lord will hold thy right hand.	Isa. xli. 13.
Jesus wept.	John xi. 35.	Ye shall weep.	John xvi. 20.
All power is given unto Me.	Matt. xxviii. 17.	I give unto you power.	Luke x. 19.
Jesus groaned in the Spirit.	John xi. 33.	We do groan, being burdened.	2 Cor. v. 4.
Jesus was troubled.	John xi. 33.	We are troubled on every side.	2 Cor. iv. 8.
I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles.	Isa. xlix. 6.	The Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles.	Acts xiii. 47.
I was a Stranger.	Matt. xxv. 35.	I beseech you as strangers.	1 Peter ii. 11.
A Man of sorrows.	Isa. liii. 3.	Ye now therefore have sorrow.	John xv. 22.
This is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.	Jer. xxxiii. 6.	This is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.	Jer. xxxiii. 16.
Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh.	1 Peter iv. 1.	Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.	1 Peter iv. 1.
A Man approved of God.	Acts ii. 22.	Study to show thyself approved unto God.	2 Tim. ii. 15.
He became obedient.	Phil. ii. 8.	As obedient children.	1 Peter i. 14.
Merciful.	Heb. ii. 17.	Be ye therefore merciful.	Luke vi. 36.
Christ pleased not Himself.	Rom. xv. 3.	We then . . . ought . . . not to please ourselves.	Rom. xv. 1.
I am meek and lowly.	Matt. xi. 29.	Be clothed with humility.	1 Peter v. 5.
Separate from sinners.	Heb. vii. 26.	Be ye separate.	2 Cor. vi. 17.
Even as Christ forgave you, I am holy.		So also do ye.	Col. iii. 13.
As I have loved you.		Be ye holy.	1 Peter i. 16.
Jesus rejoiced in Spirit.	Luke x. 21.	That ye also love one another.	John xiii. 34.
I will feed My flock.	Ezek. xxxiv. 15.	Rejoice in the Lord.	Phil. iv. 4.
He . . . gave thanks.	Mark viii. 6.	Feed My sheep.	John xxi. 16.
Holy, harmless.	Heb. vii. 26.	Giving thanks always.	Eph. v. 20.
I have washed your feet.	John xiii. 14.	Be ye harmless.	Matt. x. 16.
		Ye also ought to wash one another's feet.	John xiii. 14.

THE SUFFERINGS AND THE GLORY.

ROM. viii. 18-27.

It is comforting to notice that in the mind of the apostle Paul the expected glory utterly outweighed the present sufferings. It was not that he did not suffer. There must be sufferings, and they are not pleasant. But he reckoned that "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." It was not merely that he knew he would *then* get rest and glory; but even *with* his sufferings he had a present enjoyment of the glory.

It is the glory which shall be revealed *in* us. It is *our* glory, and yet it is God's glory. He counts it but fair that if we are in the sufferings we should be in the glory also. "If so be we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." While Christ (the Son) reflects the glory of the Father, the woman (the Church) reflects the glory of the man.

We ought to apprehend by the power of the Holy Ghost that this glory belongs to us, is really our own. If the heart were *filled* with the sense of this, it would pass on through the world as an angel would pass through it. What portion would Gabriel find in this world? It is defiled. It is this present evil world. How strongly Paul realized this. He says: "I reckon *present* suffering not worth a thought." The glory was so present to his soul. He had suffered much; but it only brought the glory the brighter before him. "Our light affliction is but for a moment." What is a moment to an eternity of glory?

We never realize eternity till we fill it with the Father's love and Christ's glory; otherwise it is a vacuum.

"I reckon" (not, I teach) "that the sufferings of

this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." They had lost their hindering power, because He saw the hand of God in them, and endured afflictions according to the power of God. He does not say the glory is *received*, but shall be *revealed in us*. It is wonderful how the Holy Ghost uses the word "us." "To the glory of God by us." All saints alike. Oh that our hearts were occupied more with Christ and glory! How happy should we be, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

God has children; and when He transfigures them He will display them in glory. Then, and not till then, will the creation be introduced into the liberty of the glory of God's sons. When man fell, creation was involved in one common ruin; but it waits with us in sure hope of deliverance, it groans with us.

We groan for our deliverance from these bodies of sin in which we are burdened. But, blessed be God, if we groan, it is the Spirit Himself who dwells in us that groans; and God, who searches the heart, knows the groan of His own Spirit, and tells us it is all for our good, and will only make heaven more sweet at the last. Blessed be God, there is no groaning in connection with Himself! His word to us is, "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice." "Be careful for nothing."

We are not waiting for the redemption of our souls, but for the redemption of our bodies. We are quickened in our souls; but God will never have us what He desires us to be as His children till we are like His own beloved Son. We too shall never be satisfied till we see His face in righteousness, and awake up in His likeness.

It is wonderful how God has brought us into union with Christ in everything: filling us with His hopes, His sorrows, His affections. How thoroughly He has come in to possess the believer's soul. It is God's love

outside us; and His love is also shed abroad *in* our hearts. We dwell in God, and God in us.

Ah the wondrous ways of God! Nothing can separate us from the love of God. Why? Because it is "*in* Christ Jesus;" and He died, rose again, and ascended, and is at the right hand of God ever living to sustain and keep us.—*Extract from a Letter.*

THE JEHOVAH TITLES.

JEHOVAH-SHALOM.

WE come now to the fourth of these glorious titles of our covenant God. How precious has *Jehovah-shalom*, "*Jehovah send peace*," been to God's children since the memorable day when Gideon first built his altar at "*Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites*," and thus named it! (Judges vi. 24.) Such a title of our God is doubly dear to us whilst still in a world in which there is "*no peace*." Its own votaries and followers have none; nor would they allow any to God's own children if they could help it. But PEACE is one of God's richest provisions for us as His children, both in Old Testament pages and in New. It rests, too, upon the most solid basis. The very word "*Shalom*" in Hebrew means, first of all, completion or finishing, then payment, and thus also it means peace; reminding us that God's peace for us rests upon a finished work, and a full payment. Hence it is

"Stable as Jehovah's throne,
For evermore the same."

In the New Testament pages we are accustomed to observe three stages of experience in this blessed matter of divine peace. First, "*peace with God*" (Rom. v. 1); then "*the peace of God*" (Col. iii 15; Phil. iv. 7); and the knowledge also of "*the God of peace*." (Rom. xv. 33 and xvi. 20; 1 Thess. v. 23; Heb. xiii. 20.)

"*Peace with God*" is "through our Lord Jesus Christ," and tells us of a blessed and unchangeable relation to God through Christ's finished atoning work, and by Him as now the raised One from the dead, and seated at God's right hand. We have peace with God *through Him*; and it abides the same whatever discoveries we make of deep-seated sin within us, or of the temptations of an evil world around us, and their subtle effect upon our evil nature. Our relationship to God, as being at peace with Him, remains unchanged. And a glorious peace it is, because it is through the glorified One; a mighty peace, because it is in Him who is the triumphant One; a peace of sweetest and most blessed nearness to God, since it is ours in "the Son of His love;" in short, all its blessedness is learned only by knowing Him; for "this Man shall be the peace." (Micah v. 5.) This heavenly peace is ours the moment we believe, because of the sin-bearing work being already finished, and the payment of our debt having been made in His death, and shown as accepted by His resurrection from the dead.

"*The peace of God*" is something wrought by the Holy Ghost in the believer's heart, and is no less glorious, or mighty, or full of nearness to God than the former; but being a thing *in us*, it is never perfected here below, where we carry in us to the last a "desperately wicked heart;" and it is subjected to all the many checks and changes which arise from our grieving that blessed Holy Ghost, by whom alone it can be accomplished in us. All such grieving of the Spirit dims our soul's view of Christ, and it is by taking of the things of Christ and revealing them to us that the Spirit works in us this blessed "peace of God." In Col. iii. 15 it stands connected with walking in love toward all fellow-saints, a thing in which we so often fail; and in Phil. iv. 7 with our privilege of carrying everything to God in prayer, and that too (as the context implies; see Phil. iv. 3) even when

strifes may arise among saints. Oh blessed "peace of God," that is thus mighty in us here below, whilst "peace *with* God" is mighty *for* us above in our Lord Jesus Christ!

But then there is also God Himself for us as "*the God of peace.*" In Rom. v. 11 Paul says, "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ," and one part of our blessed joy in Him is as "the God of peace;" and this is the New Testament revelation of peace that seems most brought before us by the title of "Jehovah-shalom." The "Jehovah" of the Old Testament that sends peace is in the New Testament "the God of peace."

And this particular revelation to us of God is given in each scripture as a means to an end, and not merely as something to take rest in. In Rom. xvi. 20, the God of peace is the One who will "bruise Satan under our feet shortly;" and thus we are strengthened neither to be daunted by the open adversaries of the gospel, nor to be led away during this "little while" by "the good words and fair speeches" of such as corrupt the gospel of Christ, and bring in heresies and divisions. In 1 Thess. v. 23, the searching but welcome eyes of "the God of peace" are looked to (as in Ps. cxxxix.) to search the "spirit and soul and body" of the believer; *i.e.* his thoughts, his desires, and his actions, that he may be altogether as a whole burnt-offering, a sweet savour-offering for his God, and may be found such at the looked-for moment of Christ's coming; while in Heb. xiii. 20 "the God of peace" has raised up from the dead such a great Shepherd of the sheep as can unite all the pilgrims ("Hebrews" means pilgrims) thoroughly together to "every good work," to do only the *one* will of their gracious God, as well as to confess together in their worship the *one* name of the risen Jesus; and if this fellowship is even aimed at, "the God of peace," says Paul, "shall be with you." (Phil. iv. 9.)

Thus rich is the New Testament for us regarding "the God of peace;" and no wonder, for it is in this character that we see all the glory of the redemption He has wrought, and the salvation He has accomplished. Sitting upon the "mercy-seat" was God's glorious attitude of old. The "God of peace" is His special attribute for us now. And all the more, because the full and open hostility of Satan and the world have now come out. They were always against God and Christ in reality; but the energy of evil that accomplished Jesus' death at Calvary has broken loose over earth in tenfold power ever since, partly in deeds of violence, and partly in all that "deceivableness of unrighteousness" which we see in false Christianity.

How blessed then that word of our Master ere He left: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John xiv. 27); words uttered at the same time when He said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me" (John xiv. 30); and also, "I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John xv. 19.)

Just so with our "Jehovah-shalom" title in Old Testament. (Judges vi. 24.) Nothing could well be worse than Israel's state in Gideon's time—oppressed and robbed by the Midianites at their pleasure. And no wonder; for the altar of Baal and its grove had too much taken the place with them of the true altar of Jehovah. But God never forsakes His people, however severely He chastens them. And first a prophet is sent with God's message, and then the Angel-Jehovah Himself appears to Gideon as He is threshing wheat at the unusual place of the winepress, in order that the Midianites might not suspect him to be thus engaged, and come and seize it. It is the very picture of the world's oppression of God's people; and that too as the

result, alas! of their wandering *from* their God, not of their fidelity to Him. Yet this becomes the moment of God's yet richer and more especial grace. Jehovah looked on Gideon with those eyes of favour which are the strength of all who trust in Him (compare Zech. xii. 4), and said, "Go in this thy might, . . . have not I sent thee?" But Gideon's faith still failed, and he cried, "O my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel?" and he asks "a sign" as a proof of the reality of all that he then saw and heard. The flesh of the kid and the unleavened cakes are brought out, and the wondrous One did wondrously by accepting it in God's own way; viz., by fire—fire too out of the rock. This was as overwhelming to Gideon as the gracious look of Jehovah upon him, and the words spoken had before been insufficient, and "Alas, O Lord God!" is now his cry. The "face to face" of the Angel-Jehovah was too much for him; it is a light that "no man can approach unto." But behold, it was "the God of peace" that was thus nigh him. "Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die," was the gracious word to him from the glorious and the Holy One. Faith was at once awaked in Gideon's soul; and "JEHOVAH-SHALOM" was the lasting name of the altar that he raised in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites, and which still existed when the book of Judges was written.

And it *was* enough. This was the God of peace that could and would shortly bruise all Satan's power under Israel's feet, and who will one day unite them, even as a nation, under their own "Good Shepherd" and "Great Shepherd," as "the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand" (Ps. xcv. 7); and who will then, as their "Jehovah-shalom," search out all their uncleannesses for them, and sanctify them also to Himself in "spirit and soul and body." And as "the root and fatness" of their olive-tree is *ours* now by having been grafted in, even in this day of their national unbelief, we joy in "Jehovah-shalom" as part

of that "name of our God in which we set up our banners." (Ps. xx. 5.)

One other New Testament expression on this blessed subject of divine peace must not be passed by; it is in 2 Thess. iii. 16: "The *Lord* of peace Himself give you peace always by all means." It fitly concludes the second epistle, as the verse already dwelt on of the "*God* of peace" suitably closes the first epistle.

"The God of peace Himself (see Greek) sanctify you wholly" (1 Thess. v. 23) agrees well with an epistle in which the saints have "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and are waiting for His Son from heaven." Their place of blessing is "IN God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ," and enclosed and embraced in this

"Ark of God, love's own preparing,"

they have, like Noah of old, no window, but upward, and by this the light of the Holy One beams down into the heart and life of each waiting saint, claiming him entirely for God and Christ.

But the second epistle tells more especially of the hostility of an evil world against the waiting saints, both in open persecutions (see chap. i. 4, 5), and in its "mystery of iniquity," and its many antichrists leading on to THE antichrist. But "the Lord of peace Himself" is near, and is blessedly enough for His saints in all these waves and storms of persecution, and amidst all this whirlpool and vortex of error and delusion. "Jehovah sitteth upon the flood; yea, Jehovah sitteth King for ever. Jehovah will give strength unto His people; Jehovah will bless His people with PEACE." (Ps. xxix. 10, 11.) Thus had David sung; and thus Paul in this epistle speaks. "The Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means;" "always," *i.e.* throughout all the waiting time (see Greek), and "by all means" using, that is, this very wrath of a hostile world, and all these underworkings of its cloaked

and covered iniquity only as new occasions of hearing His own voice above it all, speaking PEACE to your souls.

The storm on the sea of Galilee (Luke viii. 22-25) may illustrate our meaning. "The Lord of peace Himself" was with them in the ship; and as such "He fell asleep" while they sailed along. His strength had been well spent in teaching the multitudes; and wearied in His body, God "gave to His beloved sleep." (Ps. cxxvii. 2.) No violence of the storm awoke Him; for His own blessed peace (see John xiv. 27) was filling Him. But more than this, the storm was His opportunity for also giving them peace. It was well that it had held on so long as to fill the ship with water, and well also that the blast had been violent enough to awake their fears; for all that violence of the wind, and all the raging of the waves now became only a mightier opportunity for "the Lord of peace Himself to give them peace always by all means." And but for its grand and precious teaching never would His disciples have said, "What manner of man is this; for He commandeth even the winds and the water, and they obey Him!"

They were slow to know the wondrous One who was in their midst, and soon forgot again anything they did learn; but they had not the indwelling Holy Ghost. (See John vii. 39.) Alas, that we who have His indwelling should still be so much as if we had it not, and therefore so much like them!

Oh that we worshipped Him more in the calm and more trusted Him in the storm! The former is the best preparation for the latter.

Paul Gerhardt knew afflictions for Christ's sake more than many; and well does he say what we sometimes sing :

"Give to the winds thy fears:
 Hope, and be undismayed;
 God hears thy sighs, and counts thy tears,
 God shall lift up thy head.

- “ He everywhere hath sway,
 And all things serve His might ;
 His every act pure blessing is,
 His path unsullied light.
- “ Through waves, through clouds and storms,
 He gently clears thy way ;
 Wait thou His time : so shall the night
 Soon end in joyful day.
- “ When He makes bare His arm,
 What shall His work withstand ?
 When He His people’s cause defends,
 Who, who shall stay His hand ?
- “ Thou comprehend’st Him not :
 Yet earth and heaven tell
 God sits as Sovereign on the throne,
 He ruleth all things well.”

H. D.

THE LAW OF GOD.

MS. NOTES OF THE LATE J. T. M.

[We are thankful for these words on Law by our dear departed brother. His observations are alike scriptural and profound, and we would commend them to the consideration of thoughtful readers; for there is a sad ambiguity in the minds of many as to the relation of the believer to law. These remarks on law, as something external to the natural man, accord with Paul’s expression, “Ye are not under law” (Rom. vi. 14; Gal. v. 18); but regeneration makes that which was external and against us to become internal and for us, and we can say, “Thy law is within my heart,” and realize in our renewed souls the apostle’s words, “I delight in the law of God after the inward man.” The law is not changed; it cannot change; for God changeth not; but our relation to it is changed. We are no longer under it, but it is *in* us; and that which was opposed to us, when “under sin” and “in sin,” is opposed to us no longer, now that we are “in Christ,” and the law of the Lord becomes an instinct and an intuition, and we love God, not because as sinners we ought, but because as saints we cannot help loving.—Ed.]

Does the law of God comprehend all moral goodness, as well as all justice? And by the law of God we mean not the Ten Commandments or words, not the law of Moses, either of the Pentateuch or of the Old Covenant, but “the perfect law of the Lord,” “the word of truth and righteousness,” revealing the moral relation of God to His rational creatures, the utterance of God to them as their Sovereign, and necessarily

their moral Governor. With such a view of the law before us, we ask, Does it include an outflow of loving regard, of service undue and unclaimed, of kindly sentiments and affections, and the performance of acts of the purest grace? Does it involve all this?

What is law? The philologist, seeking for the derivation of this word "law," will stop at the Anglo-Saxon *leagan*, to lay down, to impose *law*; hence implying *standard and obligation*, the principle of direction and of action to the rational being. Law is rectitude, absolute rightness, and thus involves authority and obligation upon every rational being; hence *law* is defined as *the moral nature of God*. Therefore law, as *external* to the rational being, denotes in him discrepancy or deformity; as *internal*, it declares righteousness or moral conformity; as *inherent*, it manifests his perfectness in holiness. A rational being is under law, *because rational*; and as being under law, whether or not he acknowledge and obey and observe law, he is a *moral* being.

Since the nature under law is so in *all* actions and times, we are prepared for the association of the ideas of law and *habit*, association which meets us in the Greek *εθος* and in the Latin *mos*, as the basis of ethics or morality.

To be under law is to be *moral*, to be *habitually* subject, *ipso facto*, to its claim; hence the idea of *ought*, or *duty* (*το δεον*), from which the idea of *right* springs as from a stem. And here note that *το δεον* supposes a rational being, a being under debtorship to law, because competent to discern and to discharge all its demands.

As we have seen law to be *absolute rightness*, to be the moral nature of God, we see that in *law* must be included *all moral beauty, all moral excellency*. So then *grace* (in its several departments of grace, mercy, compassion, benevolence) and *all goodness* are components of God's moral perfectness, *are elements of law*.

If it be asked, "What is law, as *external* to the rational or moral being?" the reply is simple. *Positively*, it is requirement on the part of the holy God, from the unholy and profane, that he be like Him, and exhibit His own moral perfectness; it is demand of love from the hateful and hating; it is command to the unjust, implacable, and high-minded, that he do justly, love mercy, and humble himself to walk with God. *Negatively*, it is prohibition to the unrighteous of unrighteousness, to the crooked of crookedness. To the self-worshipper and idolator God says, "Thou shalt have none other gods before me;" to the luster, "Thou shalt not lust."

And what is the effect of law, thus external?

To show him who is thus addressed, and who assents—as by reason of his *morality* he must assent—to all this requirement, that it is good; that he is unable, utterly unable, to fulfil it. To stir up, awaken, and by opposition spur to activity, evil, before latent it is true, but dormant and inoperative—yet without giving power to subdue and overcome; giving strength, not to the moral being, but to the moral malady which is working moral death. To light up by a vision of infinite purity the abyss of the familiar depravity; but to provide no way of escape from the closely-encompassing bondage. To show God as holy, just, and good; but to supply no means of passing the great gulf between. Imposing a yoke, the iron of which eateth into the soul, it gives not strength to bear it. To the crooked it enjoins rightness, to the untrue, truth; but the frowardness waxes more and more, and falsehood multiplies its lie. It comes to lust with, "Thou shalt not lust;" and at once the motions of sin, no longer dormant, begin to work "to bring forth fruit unto death." It is the commandment that gives to sin an "occasion" (*αφορμη*, Rom. vii. 11) and power to slay—sin, that it may appear sin, working death by that which is good. It is "Thou shalt not," addressed

to hostility, which provokes and calls forth the defiance and rebellion which is death.

Light, so long as simply external, may display darkness; but the display is by contrast, and "the darkness comprehendeth it not." Law, so long as simply external, is but the "rebuke" or "reproof" (*ελεγξις*, see Eph. v. 11, 13) of *sin*; manifesting and convicting, it judges and condemns (see James ii. 9, literally "being convicted of the law"), but cannot free. Law, while external only, is disobeyed, and is therefore adverse; the understanding being darkened, its utterance is imperfectly understood, and thus conveys an imperfect exposition of the divine nature. "Weak through the flesh," it cannot save from the death which it has brought to light.

What then is his cry to whom law is a thing external? "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Wherefore then serveth law when external? To bring him who is thus wretched, despairing, lost, to a Saviour, Christ; that by dying to it he may be delivered from the curse, and freed from the yoke of law dishonoured and disobeyed; that begotten of God, born from above, made partaker of the divine nature, he may know law, not as *external* and therefore condemnation, but as *internal principle*, as his very sphere and element, and delight and harmony of being. For *in whom* is law internal? Is it not in the man begotten of God? is it not in the partaker of God's nature?

As law external is the exhibition to the offending moral being of God's righteousness or moral perfectness, and is therefore a thing foreign, hostile, and condemnatory, so to the recipient of God's nature or righteousness, or moral perfectness, law is a thing internal and natural, reason's concord, and the heart's correlative. It is in the renewed and regenerate that we contemplate law internal; and in the dictates of a

nature cast in law's mould and fashion we recognize the dictates of law.

We have seen that law, being the moral nature of God, must include within itself *all* moral perfectness; hence the moral being in whom law is *internal* is the possessor of mercy, compassion, benevolence, love, grace, and *all moral goodness whatsoever*. His is not the enchannelled stream, but the source and gushing fountain. To him is given not merely the perfectness of obedience, but that of love. He is called to be, not a mere payer of the due, an "unprofitable servant," but a walker "unto all well-pleasingness," an adorer of the gospel of Jesus, an imitator of the holy and good God, a performer of actions "of an odour of a sweet smell," "acceptable" before Him. The life he now lives he lives by the faith of the Son of God, who loved him and gave Himself for him; he lives, yet not he, but Christ liveth in him. The Divine Spirit is carrying on in him "the ministration of righteousness" till Christ be fully formed (*μορφωθη*) in him.

Here then is the answer to our inquiry, "Does law comprehend all moral goodness, as well as all justice?" No, we reply, so long as law is a thing *external*, the *ελεγξις* (reproof or rebuke) of sin, adverse, and unto death. But yes, emphatically *yes*, when in the God-begotten, law is *internal* and genial, as a nature expanding into goodness; the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus; the perfect law of the Lord, "converting the soul," and making the child perfect, even as his Father in heaven is perfect, enabling him to be a fulfiller of grace and of all goodness; "the perfect law of liberty," delivering into the forth-flowing spontaneity of love, and into the likeness of Christ, "who is the image of God." For this is the law of the Son, "the ministration of righteousness," the law of God, till Christ, the holy and good God in humanity, be formed (*μορφωθη*) in us.

THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD.

"In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at even [see v. 6], ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread." (Exod. xii. 18-20.)

"Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (1 Cor. v. 7, 8.)

ISRAEL'S feast commenced on the evening of the passover. The lamb was to be eaten "roast with fire," and with "unleavened bread, and with bitter herbs." Not only was unleavened bread to be eaten throughout the feast, but no leaven was to be seen in any house under severe penalty.

If Christ be the passover Lamb, what then meaneth "the feast"? Does it mean the Lord's Supper, as replacing the passover?

As the feast of unleavened bread began with the slaying of the lamb, and continued *seven* days, "holy convocations" being appointed for both first and seventh days, so our feast beginneth with the Lamb slain, and continueth without intermission (seven denoting perfection), a "holy convocation," or "holy rest," being appointed for the outset, to go on until merged in "the rest that remaineth for the people of God."

As the command for the feast was issued to Israel contingent on the slaying of the passover lamb, so to the Israel of God now cometh from God the injunction, "Christ our passover is slain for us; therefore let us keep the feast."

A feast for *seven days* continuously was the feast of unleavened bread to Israel. A feast for seventy times seven days, even until the Church is with her Lord in glory, is the feast enjoined her now.

It was a feast of *unleavened* bread; no admixture allowed with the corn-flour obtained through the death

of the corn of wheat. (See John xii. 24.) Pure must it be for Israel to feed on. So for the Church the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth—"the truth as in Jesus"—is the "food convenient."

"*The feast*" then is not the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, though intimately and essentially connected with it. For as in consequence of the death of the passover lamb Israel was vicariously judged and set free by God, and enjoined to keep a pure and continuous feast without leaven, so now *because* "Christ our passover is slain *for us*," and we are set free by God, therefore are we commanded to keep the pure and holy feast ever in sincerity and truth. The Lord's Supper is truly to the church the precious and constant memorial of the death (and victory) of Christ the passover. The subsequent feast is her high and holy calling, to walk below, before God, in all "holiness and righteousness" all the days of her sojourn.

And this is fully borne out by the context of 1 Cor. v. Evil has manifested itself in the church at Corinth; and Paul writes (through the Holy Ghost): "Purge out therefore *the old leaven* [for a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump], that ye may be [manifestly and actually] a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover hath been slain (margin) for us: therefore let us keep the feast . . . with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

Here the *old leaven* spoken of is clearly *sin and wickedness* (and nowhere in the Word is leaven spoken of in a good sense, Matt. xiii. 33 and Luke xiii. 21 not excepted). Hence the commands, "Even *the first day* ye shall put away leaven out of your houses." (Exod. xii. 15.) "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump."

There can be no feast-keeping when sin is *winked at* or *allowed*. "If we *regard* iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us." No communion can we have with God unless in sincerity and truth; no real joy,

no power, if sin be permitted. The disobedient Israelite in this case was severed from the congregation. (Exod. xii. 19.) The sinful one now is to be severed from the assembly, and is severed by his deeds from all communion with God, until confession is made, and restoration takes place.

“*Let us therefore keep the feast.*” We have been redeemed at mighty cost. Now let it be ours to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear, “calling on *the Father,*” who loves His children with the love wherewith He loves His well-beloved Son. A. O. M.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

HEB. xii. 4: What is *resisting unto blood, striving against sin?*

This verse has to be considered in connection with those that precede it. The word *sin* has the article in the Greek, and we would connect it with “the sin” in verse 1; and the word *striving against* (*ανταγωνιζομενοι*) is connected with the word rendered “race” (*αγωνα* strife, fight) in the same verse. That which has to be resisted is the sin of denying our confession of Christ, which has to be maintained though it cost us our life. “Wherefore we also having so great a cloud of witnesses” (to the faithfulness of God, as given in chap. xi.) “encompassing us, laying aside every weight, and the sin” (of denying Christ) “which so easily besets, let us *run* with patience” (following Christ, our *fore-runner*, chap. vi. 20) “the race set before us, looking unto Jesus.” He witnessed the good confession when He acknowledged Himself the Son of God, and the king of Israel; and we, looking unto Him, have to witness the same, and with him to endure the cross and despise the shame. It was by thus considering Him that the Hebrews would be able to resist unto blood, and endure the contradiction of sinners without weariness or fainting.

Did the *temptation* of our Lord in the wilderness embrace every class of temptation to which we are exposed?

The three temptations, without doubt, present the germs of all temptation. In the garden of Eden three temptations were presented to Eve, in that the fruit was (1) good for food, (2) pleasant to the eyes, and (3) desirable to make wise. John, when summing up "all that is in the world" (1 John ii. 16), describes it as (1) "the desire of the flesh," (2) "the desire of the eyes," and (3) "the pride of life," or the vainglory of this life (*αλαζονεία βίου*). These agree in character and in order with those in Gen. iii.; and although we may find it difficult to compare our Lord's temptations with them, there can be no doubt that they are designed to represent Him as subjected to the three great classes of temptation which began in the garden and still continue, and in which are summed up "all that is in the world." In Heb. iv. 15 we read, as directly affirming this, "He was *in all points* tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Who are the persons alluded to in Jude 22, 23?

Jude had been warning against ungodly men who had crept in unawares (like the tares which were sown while men slept), and after giving directions to the faithful (*vv.* 20, 21), in regard to their own life and walk, he refers, in verses 22, 23, to those who had been more or less defiled by the spirit and ways of these ungodly ones. These he divides into three classes. Of the first he says: "Some who contend with you, rebuke;" of the second, "Others save, pulling them out of the fire;" and of the third, "Have compassion on them in fear;" and in all three cases act as "hating even the garment spotted from the flesh." In the translation of these verses we have followed the Greek text of Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Alford, as undoubtedly the correct one. The believer is com-

manded to be unspotted (*ασπιλος*, Jas. i. 27; 2 Peter iii. 14; 1 Tim. vi. 14), as Christ is unspotted (1 Peter i. 19); and hence, to hate all spots that come from the fleshly mind or will, upon what ought to be the spotless robe of the child of God. But our treatment of those who have become defiled must vary. Rebuke some—a word implying severity; snatch others by force from dangers they may scarce be conscious of; and with others again deal gently, in the fear of God. The object in each case being to prevent the call for further discipline on the part of the Church.

Are the dead in Christ conscious?

The passages referring to the subject in the New Testament are few, but they are plain. Our Lord's words to the dying thief are, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Paul says of himself: "To die is gain," and "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." (Phil. i. 21, 23.) In Rev. xiv. 13 we read, "Blessed" (or happy) "are the dead which die in the Lord." To these must be added our Lord's account of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke xvi., from which it must be inferred that even under the Old Testament economy the dying believer and unbeliever were alike in consciousness, and that therefore the utterances in the Old Testament, which seem to imply the contrary, are merely expressive of that ignorance respecting the intermediate state which then existed, in such marked contrast with the clear knowledge of a future resurrection spoken of by Job, and prophesied of by most of the prophets, and accepted of the Jews at the time of our Lord. But whether in the Old or New Testament, the divine purpose seems to be to take the mind off the intermediate state and fix it on the resurrection, and on the coming of the Lord. (1 Thess. v. 13-18.)

THE POSITION AND CALLING OF THE CHURCH,

AS UNFOLDED IN THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.*

WHILE I should have liked to have spoken on the coming of the Lord, two things lead me to dwell upon another line of truth ; first, my being asked to speak at the opening meeting of this Conference, and observing that the Church's position and calling are put first on the programme ; secondly, I think it will be a more suitable beginning for us to see what is God's purpose in Christ about us, His heavenly people. I propose then, as the Lord shall enable me, to give you a distinct idea of the position and hope of the Church. I will therefore sketch in a rapid outline the teaching of the Holy Ghost concerning the Church, as given in the epistle to the Ephesians. Not much is said here about the coming of the Lord, as we are contemplated as already in the heavenlies. Still the coming of the Lord is put as the sum of all our hope. The epistle consists of seven parts.

I. *The work of God, Father and Son and Holy Ghost, in lifting us into the heavens.* (Chap. i. to ii. 10.)

We have, first, the work of the Father, the work of the Son, and the work of the Holy Ghost, in lifting us up into our proper place through Christ. In Romans we have the work of God in saving us from hell and from our old nature, while in Ephesians the subject is continued, being taken up just where Romans ends. Thus it is in this epistle God beginning with us at the very tip-top ; but in Romans He is seen picking us up from the very bottom, while in Corinthians the Church is in responsibility on earth. In the epistle to the Ephesians the Church is looked upon as in her rightful

* Address by W. Lincoln at Freemasons' Hall, taken from *Addresses on the Coming of the Lord.*

place, where sovereign grace before the world began determined to put her. It is in connection with the position of the Church we have, I repeat, the work of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and at the close of each subdivision we find such expressions as "to the praise of the glory," and "the praise of the glory of His grace" occur. And here for a moment I call your attention to the three variations of the name of Christ in this epistle: first, Jesus Christ; second, Christ Jesus; and third, more fully, the Lord Jesus Christ. These variations are not without design. When it is Jesus Christ, it speaks of His path from the bosom of the Father to the cross; when it is Christ Jesus, it speaks of His path from the cross to the throne; when it is the Lord Jesus Christ, it alludes to His relationship to us as *our Lord*.

Now, as to the work of the Father, we have three things stated, and these rest upon this sure basis, that "He has taken us into favour in the beloved One," which is a better translation than "accepted in the beloved." We have three statements then as to the work of the Father.

Firstly, He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus; He has blessed us with everything up there, because He determined we should be His sons under His eye and resting in His love.

My friends, God does not do such things generally; it is not His usual way of dealing. If He makes a bird, its home is in the air; if He makes a fish, its home is in the water; if He makes a human being, his natural abode is on the earth. But now He acts far differently; earth-born ones are raised up to be "for ever with the Lord."

Secondly, He hath chosen us before the world began, that we should be before Him in love. He determined from all eternity that He would have the company of lost sinners, redeemed by the power of the blood, with Him up there; that they should be before Him, happy

in His love for ever. *Before* the world began—that shows that we have nothing to do with this earth; our place is a heavenly one. “Before Him in love;” that is under His eye, and surrounded by His love. Above me, around me, beneath me—“before Him in love.”

Thirdly, He predestinated us to the place of sons. The word unhappily is translated “adoption.” But you know that it is not adoption. God never adopts any one. Adoption is a sham. He always makes us actually and truly sons. He does so in three ways; by redemption, by regeneration, and by the resurrection of the body. No one but God can do that; and He is doing it with, it may be, millions.

Then follows the clause “to the praise of the glory of His grace,” a similar one being found at the end of the account of the Son’s work, and again of the Holy Ghost’s work. The basis of God’s work is, “He has taken us into favour,” and that—oh wondrous thought!—“in the beloved One.” This expression denotes that, according to His love of His Son, so are we in Christ *the beloved One, favoured*. Next we have the work of the Son: “In whom we have redemption through His blood,” the forgiveness of sins. This is the only allusion to sins in this chapter; but observe how heartily and largely we get the forgiveness, “according to the riches of His grace.” He does not forgive a few sins, and that tardily, as if He would rather not. No; He forgives with a large hand, and according to the riches of His grace. We look for blessing, not simply according to our need, but according to the riches of His grace. He delights thus to bless us. We should never ask Him to bless us according to our need; for He never will. He likes to bless us according to the riches of His glory. He will look at our need, and expand it, and make it far more than ever we have any idea of, and then will come in and fill us with the riches of His glory.

Then we have the second statement about Christ’s

work. As the former glanced at the past, so the other looks onward to the future; for God "hath made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He will head up in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on the earth," even in Him.

Here it is recorded as God's purpose that Christ should head up all His works. Christ is head or King of the Jews, and head of the Gentiles, and head over all things. But to the Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, He is head likewise. Remember it is in the heavens that our place is, according as we have seen in verse 3, "That we should be to the praise of His glory, who before ~~the glory~~ trusted in Christ," that is the right meaning of the verse. There are a certain number of people who have believed in that blessed One before He is manifested—before the glory—and God so honours that blessed One, that He blesses thus highly those who have thus trusted His Son: God blesses us as He does no other. For so the Lord Himself said to Thomas, "Blessed are they who have not seen, but yet have believed." Thus then God will gather or head up all in Christ, both those which are in heaven and those which are on earth.

Next as to the Holy Ghost's work: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." Mark those two words, *sealed* and *earnest*. The difference between the Seal and the Earnest is this: in the *sealing* God marks you as His own, and in the *earnest* He gives you the enjoyment of His love. In the sealing He says "thou art Mine," and makes His mark increasingly plain upon you, and by the earnest He enables you to say, "O my God,

how great is Thy love to me." Thus we have precious intelligence of what we are to Him and what He is to us, to the praise of His glory.

Now a prayer follows, which in its brief sense is this—that the apostle would have us know in our inmost souls what is our true place in God's counsel. It is so appropriate that a prayer should follow after such wonderful things. Hearing such truths, we might well feel that it was too much to take in. Therefore he prays that "the eyes of your *heart* (so Greek) being enlightened, ye may *know* what is the hope of His calling." But notice, first of all, "in the *knowledge of Him.*" Let us be full of the Lord Jesus Christ. When we come to the Lord Jesus Christ, God, His God, and the Father of glory, will give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation; but let us look at Him. Would you know your position? Look at Christ. Would you know what you are to be? Look at Him. Would you know your hope? Look at Him.

Now we have three prayers, or rather three divisions of the subject. First, "the hope of His calling;" but it is obtained in the knowledge of Him. He said, "I am coming again to receive you to Myself." That is His promise; and Heb. x. says that it is *the* promise. (*vv.* 36, 37.) No other promise comes up to that. There are not so many promises in the New Testament as in the Old. The grand promise is, "I am coming again to receive you to Myself." That is His promise; and it is our hope. He has promised, so we cannot but hope. He has not said one word about the date. Putting a date in upsets everything. Dates cannot be reckoned till the heavenly people are gone. When the heavenly people are taken away, then dates recommence where they were broken off by the cross and by the rejection of the Holy Spirit.

II. *A command to the risen ones to look down by remembering what they were.* (Chap. ii. 18-22.)

But it is time that we come to the eleventh verse of

chap. ii., which is the commencement of the second part of our epistle. After the Father has lifted us right up as the bride and body of Christ, He causes us to sit down, as never before did a creature *sit down* in God's presence. You read of angels over and over again in His presence; but never seated. Raised up together, and made to sit down together. Oh, what blessing is ours through being taken into favour in the beloved One. But *now* we are enjoined to *look down, and see where we were*. Not until He has put us at the very top, and brought us into the very presence of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, does He refer to our past history. It is very striking. And remark that the religious Jew and the irreligious Gentile are now made one in the Lord Jesus Christ. All such differences hath God set aside for the present. When the religious Jew believes in the Lord Jesus Christ he is made one with Him; and so with the irreligious Gentile. Thus we have another hint of the uniqueness of the Church's position. Whenever the Church is taken home, the distinction between the Jew and the Gentile recommences. That the Gentiles should be saved was revealed, though not understood, as we find in Rom. xv., where passages taken from the Law, and from the Psalms, and from the prophets, are quoted in proof "that the Gentiles should glorify God for His mercy." In the Church, however, Jews and Gentiles are not saved as such, but are joined together in Christ as one new man in Christ. The Church of God then is a new, unique, singular thing in the universe.

How long has Christ been raised and seated at the right hand of God? Two thousand years at most. How long has the Holy Spirit been down here working? Two thousand years at most. Are these not cardinal, fundamental facts, that at present God's Son is at His Father's right hand, and the Holy Spirit is down here in reality?

III. *The body together.* (Chap. iii.)

Now comes the third part of the epistle (read chap. iii.). But the rendering of verse 6 is unfortunate and incorrect as given in the authorised translation. It should read, "that the Gentiles should be heirs *together*, should be the body *together*, should be sharers *together* of the promise in Christ." So we obtain the proper emphasis on that word "together." "Unto me," says Paul, "was this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles Christ's unsearchable riches, and that I should enlighten all as to what is the stewardship of the mystery which had been hidden from the beginning of the world in God, who created all things, but that now to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Thus this mystery which was hid from all ages in God is the unity of the body, the Church. The calling of the Gentiles was not hid, the mercy of God to the Gentiles was not hid; but that we should be made a *body together* was hid, it is a new thing in the universe. That Jews and Gentiles believing in Christ should be made one with that glorified One is quite a new thing indeed.

Then follows the other prayer, because he cannot get any further than showing that we are *one with Christ*. Overpowered with this grace, he prays that we may know the love of Christ, that so we may be filled with all the fulness of God. And the chapter concludes with an expression to which I would call attention: "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us," which power in us is the Spirit of God, "unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus unto all the generations of the age of ages. Amen." In the singular, unique, distinct mystery of the Church God has at last brought out the love which He kept hidden in His heart till

Christ had been rejected and gone up on high. And so therefore unto Him be glory in *the Church* by Christ Jesus unto all the generations of the age of ages. Therefore this Church is not only a unique body *now*, but it will be to all eternity. Hebrews xii. 23 shows it as a distinct, unique body throughout the millennium. We see there the heavenly Jerusalem, the company of angels, the Church of the firstborn, and the spirits of just men made perfect, all distinct and separate classes. So in the millennium the Church is a unique body, while Ephesians here shows us it is to be so for ever, "throughout all the generations of the age of ages" will God be glorified through *the Church!*

IV. *Union with Christ—the care of the Head for His body now.* (Chap. iv. 1-16.)

Then in the fourth chapter we have the fourth part of this epistle. Here we have a picture of Christ's care of His Church even now. Do you think He does not care for her now? Yes, He does. As He has made us one in these seven unities (*vv.* 4-6), He gives us apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. What for? For two objects. First, for the perfecting of the saints *unto* the work of ministry; and secondly, as looking further on still, *unto* the edifying of the body of Christ. Nothing is reserved! What He gets from the Father, as if with one hand, according to Psalm lxviii., here He gives with the other hand unto men, aye, and to those who were once rebellious too!

The word "gave," or "giving," signifies that He keeps on giving. No one can take that work out of the hand of Christ. He looks after the Church. Some pretend to make evangelists or pastors by the laying their hands on them horizontally; others affect to *choose* their own pastors by lifting up one hand perpendicularly. But here is Christ seen constantly looking after the welfare of His Church, by giving these gifts, until we all come into the unity of the faith, and of

the knowledge of the Son of God, and grow up to Him in all things who is the Head, even Christ.

V. *Walk in light, in love, in light.* (Ch. iv. 17, to v. 21.)

Now the fifth division of the epistle commences at the 17th verse of the fourth chapter, where we have the first hint as to the walk of those called with such a high calling. The first feature in our walk is to walk in light. Then the second principle is "walk in love." (v. 30.) First, do not grieve the Holy Ghost, who *has* sealed you till the day of redemption. Second, be kind to one another, forgiving one another, as God in Christ hath forgiven you. Then in chap. v. 1, 2, we are enjoined to walk in love, as Christ loved us. So that here we have an injunction to imitate God in His actings towards us as respects the Holy Ghost, and God, and Christ. It is to be regretted that in chap. iv. 32 the translation in the authorised version is "God for Christ's sake." As if God did not gratify His own heart in so forgiving us in Christ. God *in Christ* hath forgiven you.

Next (v. 3) we are to walk in light, because we are His children, His Church, and because we are those whom Christ loves. Next follow directions as to how we are to walk in the light.

VI. *Walk in love.* *The climax reached in Christ's formal presentation by Himself, and to Himself, of this heavenly Eve taken out of His flesh and bones.* (Chap. v. 22, to vi. 9.)

But now comes the sixth division of this epistle. Again the Spirit shows how love is to be maintained; and it is very worthy of observation that God always puts the weakest first when He is dealing in grace. It is the wife before the husband, the children before the parents, the servant before the master, and so on. And it is whilst enlarging on these relationships, and the correlative affections, that the display of Christ's love to His Church is brought in as it were, though in a bye-way, yet to a grand climax. That is the usual

way in the New Testament of bringing in, in an apparently incidental way, the grandest truths. So in verses 25-30 we have seven truths as to Christ's way with His Church. First, He loves it; secondly, He gives Himself for it; thirdly and fourthly, "He sanctifies and cleanses it by the washing of water by the Word;" for once purged there is no more conscience of sins. Next, we read that the Lord Jesus Christ nourishes and cherishes the Church; He has never resigned His office. In the seventh place we have the ultimate object, "that He *Himself* might present her to *Himself* the Church, glorious." Not "a glorious Church," but "the Church, glorious." You see the value of the exact reading there.

It seems that the thought of the Church being the body is here put in subordination to that of her being the bride. Eve was literally taken out of the body of Adam; but observe that, while the Lord brought Eve to Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ brings His bride to *Himself*. It is an argument for the divinity of Christ; the reference to Genesis iii. is unmistakeable. So there is our position, "we are members of His body," being taken *out* of His flesh, and *out* of His bones. These words "out of" are valuable. The ties of relationship in the Old Testament were always expressed by flesh and bones; now in these days we have got down to flesh and blood. But "we are members of His body, out of His flesh, and out of His bones." Then for a moment the writer coming back to the love of the husband for the wife, rouses us from all insensibility as to the grandeur of the love entertained by Christ for His Church, by the declaration that all this is a great mystery, since he is speaking of the love of Christ and of the Church. Then this sixth part is continued down to chap. vi. 9.

VII. *Now stand, against all wicked spirits, where God hath placed you, for a contest with whom He has found you armour.*

Now the seventh and last division of the epistle relates to the conflict in the heavenly places, and to God's armour provided for our use as being there placed. Our contest is not with flesh and blood; that is, not as the Canaanites were, with whom the Israelites contended. Our place is up there. There are wicked spirits up there who would fain keep us from enjoying God's love and the blessed hope set before us. But as Joshua, by God's command and power, turned out the wicked Canaanites, so He will cast out these wicked spirits, and we are to remain there where God has put us. So He says stand, stand where God has placed you. Wicked spirits shall try to overthrow you, but cannot. Your armour will enable you to resist them up there. It is not a contention with Satan and ourselves, as in the wilderness. This would be Peter's subject. But it is how to continue in the holiest of all, and in the presence and love of God.

I close with one remark. The proper conclusion of Ephesians is the twelfth of Revelation, where you see the body caught up to God and to His throne. There is this difference between Ephesians and Revelation, here the attack is made by the wicked spirits on the Church; but there Michael and his angels, which I believe represent Christ and His Church, are to make the final onslaught on the enemy, and cast out the wicked spirits. After which God will welcome us to His heavenly home, with these words, "Rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that now dwell therein," as if He would make us feel quite at home in our new and everlasting abode. "Come, Lord Jesus."

"The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs;" "the beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him."

Stony pillows often bring heavenly dreams; therefore, O child of God, kiss the stones of thy trials, and dream thereon of Jesus.

PRIDE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

THE Lord *hates* pride; so much so, that three times over He declares it is an abomination to Him.

“Six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto Him.” And the first mentioned is “a proud look.” (Prov. vi. 17, 18.) Again, “Pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, do I hate.” (Prov. viii. 13.) And the third time, “Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord.” (Prov. xvi. 5.)

The Lord *resists* it: “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.” (James iv. 6; 1 Peter v. 5.) It was the pride of Esau which provoked the Lord to fight against him (Mal. i. 3, 4), and the pride of Moab that brought judgment upon him. (Isa. xvi. 6, 7.)

The Lord will *bring it down*: “Thou wilt bring down high looks.” (Ps. xviii. 27.) “Him that hath an high look and proud heart will not I suffer.” (Ps. ci. 5.) “Behold, I am against thee, O thou most proud. . . . And the most proud shall stumble and fall,” &c. (Jer. l. 31, 32; see xlvi. 29–44.) Notice also the fruit of Nebuchadnezzar’s pride in Dan. iv.

The Lord would have us *mourn* over it in His people: “Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken. . . . But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eyes shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord’s flock is carried away captive.” (Jer. xiii. 15, 17.) Hear also His pathetic appeal to Israel: “Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.” (Ps. lxxx. 13, 14.) And again, “Oh that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.” (Isa. xlvi. 18.)

Pride causes *shame*: “When pride cometh, then

cometh shame." (Prov. xi. 2.) How bitter the shame which came upon Aaron and Miriam for speaking proudly against Moses. (See Num. xii.)

Pride causes *contention*: "Only by pride cometh contention." (Prov. xiii. 10.) See what contention was caused by a few proud words between the men of Israel and of Judah, in 2 Sam. xix. 41-43, and xx. 1, 2. Well may we echo the apostle's words: "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" &c. (James iii. 5, 6.)

Pride brings *destruction*: "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." (Prov. xvi. 18.) Pharaoh brought all his plagues upon himself by his haughty rebellion against God. (Comp. Ex. v. 1-9, and xv. 3-19.) Uzziah thought himself strong, and was lifted up *before* he fell. (2 Chron. xxvi. 16-21.)

"A man's pride will *bring him low*." (Prov. xxix. 23.) How low Rehoboam was brought through his proud and haughty, yet foolish speech. (1 Kings xii. 1-19.) And if Amaziah had not lifted up his heart to boast, what sorrow he would have saved himself and others. (See 2 Chron. xxv. 16-21.)

The Lord seeks to *hide pride* from man (Job xxxiii. 14-30), and leads His people about to humble and to prove them, and to do them more good in their latter end. (Deut. viii. 2, 3, 16.)

Let us seek grace to humble ourselves "under the mighty hand of God" (1 Peter v. 6), and to learn of the Lord Jesus, who is meek and lowly in heart: that we may find *rest to our souls*. (Matt. xi. 29.) "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke xiv. 11.) "Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly" (Ps. cxxxvi. 6), and dwells with him "that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." (Isa. lvii. 15.) What greater encouragement could He give us, to confess wherein we have sinned, and to humble ourselves before Him?

MEEKNESS.

“Seek Righteousness, seek Meekness.”—ZEPH. ii. 3.

Seven New Testament PRECEPTS.

- I. “Put on Meekness.”
Col. iii. 12.
- II. “Follow after Meekness.”
1 Tim. vi. 11.
- III. “Be . . . gentle, showing all Meekness unto all men.”
Titus iii. 2.
- IV. “Walk . . . with all lowliness and Meekness,”
Eph. iv. 2.
- V. “Receive with Meekness the engrafted Word.”
James i. 21.
- VI. Be adorned with “the ornament of a Meek and quiet spirit.”
1 Peter iii. 4.
- VII. “If a man be overtaken in a fault, restore . . . in the spirit of Meekness.”
Gal. vi. 1.

“LEARN OF ME; for I am Meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”
Matt. xi. 29.

Seven Old Testament PROMISES.

- I. “The Meek shall increase their joy in the Lord.”
Isa. xxix. 19.
- II. “The Meek shall inherit the earth.”
Ps. xxxvii. 11.
- III. “The Lord lifteth up the Meek.”
Ps. clxvii. 6.
- IV. “The Meek shall He teach His way.”
Ps. xxv. 9.
- V. “The Meek shall eat and be satisfied.”
Ps. xxii. 26.
- VI. “He shall beautify the Meek with salvation.”
Ps. clxix. 4.
- VII. “The Meek shall He guide in judgment.”
Ps. xxv. 9.

“All the PROMISES of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”
2 Cor. i. 20.

THE JEHOVAH TITLES.

JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU.

THE two remaining Jehovah titles are in the pages of prophecy, and point us to Israel's glorious and blessed future. They are promises of what Jehovah will be to them ere long as a nation, as the other four which we have considered are divine mottoes of what His goodness has been to them in the past. And oh, what a day to them when at last that nation knows Him as their “righteousness,” and also morally reflects His image! for the name of the city, as well as of its Saviour King, is to be *Jehovah-Tsidkenu* (see Jer. xxxiii. 16); and then Zion's glory, to the last hour of this earth's existence, will be *Jehovah-Shammah*—

“Jehovah is *there*.” And how naturally do these two Jehovah titles of the future rest the one upon the other! for how could Jehovah be to them “Jehovah-Shammah,” and make that city and that people known in the millennial earth as the dwelling-place where all through that age He would be found, unless He had Himself first become to them their righteousness, and also wrought righteousness IN them? for God can never dwell anywhere but in righteousness and holiness.

When of old He bid that people make Him first a tent, and afterward a temple, that He might dwell among them, His first word was, that it was to be “a SANCTUARY” (Exod. xxv. 8); *i. e.* a holy place. The white linen curtains of the very court within which the tabernacle was enclosed, and which separated it from the sinful tents of the camp, told of a divine righteousness which God must have round about Him wherever He dwelt.

But no such outside court of curtains, with all its other inside veils, will He need when surrounded by that nation in that happy day; for they will all know Him by simple faith, will by the Spirit worship Him; for He Himself will be to them their righteousness, their “Jehovah-Tsidkenu.”

But the grace which is in store for them has become ours already, who know the Son of God in this day of their unbelief. As branches grafted in, we partake of the root and fatness of their olive tree of blessing. Hence a joy and a sweetness ever new to us in this “Jehovah-Tsidkenu” title. The persecuted ones of Scotland used it as a “watchword” by which to know each other when they met, it being a word that would be unknown and unmeaning to their ignorant and cruel enemies; and McCheyne’s “Jehovah-Tsidkenu” hymn has an allusion to this.

Righteousness, then, is the subject of this Jehovah title—a “righteousness of God,” as Paul says (Rom. iii. 22), “which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all

and upon all them that believe." This righteousness is as superior to any goodness or excellency of unfallen Adam by God's creation of him, as the Creator Himself, even Jesus, in whom it is wrought out for us by God, and given to us, is superior to the creature. Creature-righteousness was seen in Adam for a little while, when in contrast with the beasts of the field around him, he knew his Maker, and yielded to God worship and obedience, and retained that "image" and "likeness" of God in which he had been made. But what was this, even at its best, to the "abundance of the grace and of the gift of righteousness" which is ours by Jesus Christ?

God has taken occasion by man's disobedience and consequent loss of his own creature-righteousness (to say nothing of his also incurring the penalty of death) to bring forth an infinitely better and more glorious thing. God has now made Jesus Christ Himself to be the righteousness of the believing sinner, and that too as risen from the dead, even the deep death of the sinner, in which God's own hand of justice and of wrath laid Him for our sins. (See Ps. lxxxviii. 6, 7.)

Hence the risen Jesus, as our righteousness, is not merely sin removed for us from God's view, and our doom endured for us; in addition to this, it is the giving us such an obedience in which to stand before God as there never was in God's presence till Christ accomplished it, and in resurrection entered His presence with it.

Eternal life is inseparable from this righteousness, because it is wrought out in Him who lives to die no more; and it is He Himself, with all that He is, that is God's gift to us. But on this we do not now enter, *righteousness* being our present subject.

Grace, then, is the source of this righteousness; Christ Himself, the risen One, has through His death become the righteousness; and eternal life is the power for knowing and enjoying it.

“A righteousness I must have,” says an old writer, “as broad as the law, as spotless as the light, and richer than an angel ever wore; and Christ is that righteousness for me.”

Here then we find *our* joy even now in Israel's yet future “Jehovah-Tsidkenu” title of their and our Saviour God. But more than this. Christ is not only our *imputed*, He is also our *imparted* righteousness. We have not only Christ FOR us as our robe of righteousness, in whom God sees us in His presence, but we have also Christ IN us, fashioned in us by the Spirit the moment that we, by the Holy Ghost, believed in Christ. The moment we were in God's sight, clad with HIM as our acceptance in His presence above, that moment Christ became formed within us—the character of our new life, and the hope also of coming glory.

Thus “Jehovah-Tsidkenu” is ours, not in Him only, but in the measure of our present likeness to Him through His grace. Just as in the coming millennial age “Jehovah-Tsidkenu” will be the name of the *city* as well as the name of her glorious King.

The truth of “righteousness of the law fulfilled IN us” is the subject of Romans viii. as righteousness FOR us is of Romans iii. iv. v. “The law” (or power) “of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” is shewn us in Romans viii. This omnipotent power entered us the moment we believed, to accomplish *in us* a righteousness answering to that in which we that moment had been accepted in heaven. Hence the possession of this “spirit of life in Christ Jesus” is made the conclusive proof that there is against us “no condemnation.” Verses 1 and 2 should be, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus; FOR” (not He died to put our sins away, and is risen for our justification—though this would have been a true reason to give—but) “the law” (or power) “of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus

freed me from the law" (or power) "of sin and death." Thus a new and a crowning proof arises of there being "no condemnation" in our case; viz., we were as truly freed from the reigning power of sin and death as we were for ever delivered from the sinner's hell. The blood of Christ Jesus (*i.e.* His precious death) ransomed us from hell, and "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" freed us from sin's dominion.

So with the leper in the day of his cleansing. (Lev. xiv.) It was "the *oil*" put "upon the blood" that was to complete within him the consciousness that all his former leprous state was no more remembered, and that he was now an accepted worshipper. Compare also Heb. x. 15-18, where the indwelling Holy Ghost's witness is added to that of Christ on the cross (see *v.* 10), and Christ at the right hand of God (see *v.* 12) as proof of the boldness which we have for drawing near to our God.

This is the true meaning also of 1 John iv. 17: "Herein is love with us" (see margin, *i.e.* love in its dealings with us) "made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because AS HE IS, so are we in this world;" that is, as God is One whose characteristic is LOVE, such are we in this world. Our characteristic also by His grace is that of *love*, now that we are His children. The apostle John had before said, "God is light," and had made us as "children of light," to be walkers "in the light, even as HE is in the light," "partakers," that is, "of the divine nature." And now he says the same as to love; but tracing it all to its right and only source, he adds, "We love Him, *because* He first loved us."

So also with God's righteousness; it is not only *upon* us in Christ above, but it has also begun *in* us by the Spirit of Christ. Grace thus brings to pass what Sinai law never could get from ruined man. As Paul says (Rom. viii. 3, 4), "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His

own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; *that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us*” [*i.e.* in all believers] “who are walkers” [*i.e.* now we have believed in Him] “not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” All believers, therefore, are even now law-fulfillers in some measure, fulfillers of its righteousness, and are blessedly qualified and sufficed by God for being such by the Spirit, the Holy Ghost, who now indwells them. Precious truth of this favoured dispensation—the dispensation, as it were, of the Spirit!

This makes the great contrast between them and all natural men, even those outwardly the fairest and best—*they* are “after the flesh,” and “mind the things of the flesh,” the minding of which “is death” and “enmity against God,” and by their very nature cannot be “subject to the law of God;” they cannot, that is, be law-fulfillers, and therefore “cannot please God.”

But how different with such as are Christ's! They are “after the Spirit,” and “mind the things of the Spirit”—the minding of which “is life and peace”—and have in them a mind which is “subject to the law of God,” and is able therefore to please Him; and therefore they “are not in the flesh,” though they have the flesh (the old and evil nature) in them, but are “in the Spirit,” since HE who is mightier than the flesh—*viz.*, the Spirit of God and of Christ—dwells in them.

Thus blessedly furnished, all such ones can fulfil “the righteousness of the law” during life, and can “die daily,” knowing “that HE that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken their mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwelleth in them.” For even the resurrection of saints is here based on the Spirit of the risen Christ dwelling in them, and not only upon Christ's own resurrection for them.

This fulfilling of “the righteousness of the law” by all who are Christ's is accomplished by that LOVE which is the leading “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal. v. 22) and

the first instinct of their new nature. "Owe no man anything," says Paul (Rom. xiii. 8), "but to love one another: for he that loveth another *hath fulfilled the law.*" And again (v. 10): "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." And if it is the fulfilling of the law, then it is also the fulfilling of "the righteousness of the law," and "Jehovah-Tsidkenu" becomes a name wrought out, in measure, in us His saints, as it also is in HIMSELF in divine fulness and perfection.

Let not the feeblest saints fear that this blessed truth can hardly be said of them; for it is not a matter of attainment only, but is true more or less of *all* saints, since *love* is its fulfilment; and wherever the Spirit of Christ is, a love "taught of God" has begun in that person, which is to go on for ever; for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ" (see Rom. viii. 9), he would by that very fact be proved to be "none of His."

Thus "Jehovah-Tsidkenu" is seen to be also a *fellowship* title of our gracious God for us, in which we all share. HE is "Jehovah our righteousness," both as the One in whom we *will* boast as our righteousness for us before God, and also as our righteousness imparted to us all, and already begun to be accomplished in us all. It is the only one of our six Jehovah titles that is in the plural number; and it may well be plural when it is the birthright possession of such a countless multitude.

JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH.

But there is yet another glorious name for that city of God's grace and of His blessing. *Jehovah-Shammah*—"Jehovah is there"—is true of her, as well as the "Jehovah our righteousness," that He has been pleased to accomplish in her; for wherever God's grace is, there God Himself dwells, whether it be with a single one who is of "a contrite and humble spirit" (see

Isa. lvii. 15), or amongst "two or three who gather together to His name" (Matt. xviii. 20); or in Jerusalem of the next age, when she has become a city of holiness and truth; or, better and higher far, in the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to which, Paul says (Heb. xii. 22), we have already come by faith; or, best of all, in the finished and perfected, "holy city, the new Jerusalem" of an eternal new earth and new heavens. (Rev. xxi. 2.)

God must always dwell where His own attributes are found, wrought out in sinners saved, through the death and resurrection of His Son. Hence *Jehovah-Shammah*—"Jehovah is there"—becomes the most fitting and glorious completion of these Jehovah titles.

In one blessed respect this title resembles the former; viz., it abides when once bestowed. Of "Jehovah-Tsidkenu" it says (Jer. xxxiii. 16) it is the name wherewith Jerusalem "*shall be called*;" *i.e.* once thus named, the name *remains*; and of "Jehovah-Shammah" it shall be "the name of the city *from that day*." (Ezek. xlvi. 35.)

As God's gifts and calling of Israel have been without repentance—*i.e.* without change of mind on His part toward them through all this dark age of their unbelief—so when once "the Sun of righteousness" dawns on them, He will be with them unto the perfect day.

Hence at the very end of the thousand years' reign of Christ, when Gog and Magog come up against her, she still is to God, her Saviour God, both the "camp of the *saints*" (compare Jehovah-Tsidkenu) "and the beloved city," because "Jehovah-Shammah" is still true of her; and fire comes down out of heaven and devours them, and earth and heaven at once pass away.

This Ezekiel title of "Jehovah-Shammah" is connected with Israel's having built that temple, the very pattern of which could only be showed them as they became "ashamed of their iniquities" (see Ezek. xliii. 10, 11); and not only measured the house, but above

all, understood the law of the house; viz. (v. 12), "Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be MOST HOLY. Behold, this is the law of the house."

Holiness therefore is the surrounding and the very element of the "Jehovah-Shammah" title, as righteousness is of "Jehovah-Tsidkenu." The one is connected with God's actions and character as the other is with His very nature.

God can only dwell where the fruits of His own grace are found; for "God of all grace" He must be even in His own eternal glory. To delight in those who are the subjects of His grace, and in all that His grace will have done for them in the wondrous past of Calvary's cross, and will have graced them with in His own presence, will be to God an eternal delight, whether in Israel on earth for the millennial age, or in them and us in a new earth and heavens for ever.

Thus will Israel's dependence upon Him their God, and their obedience to Him, make room for Him amongst them till they gloriously lose their nationality at last in a new creation perfectness.

But even then, when "Jehovah-Shammah" will be no longer needed as distinctive of a nation, and a single city only, the glorious and eternal truth that the tabernacle of God is with men, and that "He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God HIMSELF shall be with them, their God" will remain for ever as the mighty proclamation of "the great voice out of heaven" to explain to us God's rest in a creation, which will stand as eternally as Himself. (Rev. xxi. 2-4.) Every whit of it will utter glory to Him, and "God shall be all in all." (1 Cor. xv. 28.)

Till Jesus comes, then, may we learn to be, both singly and with each other, such as so please God that it can be said of the place where we even briefly sojourn, *Jehovah-Shammah* — "the Lord is there." Amen.

H. D.

WORSHIP.

(Continued from page 125.)

HAVING considered the nature of worship, the place where it is to be rendered, and the worshipper, the enquiry presents itself whether the man has anything further to do on these momentous occasions. The book of God instructs us that he has. We learn from what Jehovah was pleased to direct through His servant Moses that His people Israel were to present to Him certain offerings; some of them personal or individual, some in behalf of the community; some were to be voluntary, others compulsory. But one general feature prevailed throughout: all were to be presented publicly, none in private. And these presentations were, in divine wisdom and mercy, to precede the worship. On the three great occasions when every Israelite was required to appear before the Lord, no one was to come up empty-handed; each was to bring something to be presented to God. (Deut. xvi. 16.) Every one was also at liberty to bring certain prescribed things at other times as often as he pleased. Yet these presentations were not worship. The distinction may be noticed in Ps. xcv. 6; xcvi. 8, 9; also in Deut. xxvi. 10. The offerings were first made, the worship followed; all which has deep significance.

Into the details of these offerings, or their typical import, I do not purpose to enter, though they are full of the sublimest indications of divine mercy and goodness. My subject is, the nature of an offering generally in its moral aspect—a presentation to God.

It cannot have escaped notice, that when in Exod. xxv. and the succeeding chapters the God of Israel directed a tent to be prepared for Himself to occupy, with the requisite furniture and domestics, that He made no provision for the supply of meats and drinks for His table; for this, as we learn from Mal. i., was

the idea intended by the altar. These were, with a few remarkable exceptions, to be furnished by the goodwill and gratitude of His subjects. Long afterwards He complains, by His servant Amos (v. 25), of their negligence in this respect: "Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?" And in Mal. i. He again complains that the priests had presented lame and diseased animals instead of those that were unblemished and sound. Was this befitting the majesty of the Most High?

But in Ps. l. He thus speaks: "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God THANKSGIVING."

Under the figure of food the Lord God is pleased to convey the intimation that He looks for the expression of gratitude from those whom He befriends. This is what His heart desires. The description of the food presented is of course all-important. It must be that which He has Himself prescribed. It must have the sweet savour of Jesus, or it lacks that which can alone make it acceptable.

Such is the declared, the ostensible purport of these offerings. A grateful heart, conscious of mercy received, then brought, according to its ability, a tangible and visible acknowledgment of favours bestowed. It was not to be expressed in the shape of money; silver and gold were not food adapted to the requirements of His table. Neither was the idea of benevolence connected with these offerings; for the victims were not sold, nor the value distributed to the poor, but slain, and either burned or eaten by the attendants or the worshippers. *The contents of the chest* (*Mark xii. 42*), into which the widow's mites were dropped, were not for the poor, but for repairs of the temple of God. Money is but a poor substitute for praise. In Ps. l. 23 we read: "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth

me." And with this accord the directions in Heb. xiii. 15: "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name." Confessors of the name of Jesus are alone qualified to do this with acceptance; no other channel of approach exists. "With such sacrifices God is well pleased." (v. 16.) The parenthetic instruction, "But well-doing and fellowship forget not," seems to carry the mind of the Hebrew back to Deut. xxvi. 11, where, as accompaniment to the offering and the worship, these things were enjoined. The sacrifice of Phil. iv. 18 was not an act of simple benevolence, but, like the widow's mites, an offering to God in furthering the gospel of His Son through assistance given to His servant.

Offerings of praise and thanksgiving from the believing heart are at all times an odour of a sweet savour unto God, coming up into His presence through His beloved Son Jesus. If presented in public, either by the lips of an individual, others concurring, or by joint acclamation, as in singing, the idea seems more analogous to the public acts of Israel. But in either case the address must be to God, or to His risen and exalted Son, else the analogy fails altogether. Those worshippers, with their faces directed to the presence-chamber of Jehovah, did not turn round and address one another under the impression that they were worshipping. While proceeding on their several journeys towards the tabernacle of the Most High, or afterwards to the temple, they might profitably remind one another of their great privileges as the people of God—exhort, comfort, warn, instruct one another, or sing together any of the songs of Zion; yet, when arrived in the presence of their God, they would speak to Him, the mighty and holy Being, to address whom was the object of their assemblage.

When the knees are bowed before the Lord, this is always the character of the language employed.

Prayer and praise are then addressed to Him personally; but it is not always thus in the singing of hymns. Herein usage has established a widely different course. It would be difficult to account for the way in which the mind has been led to invoke objects, animate or inanimate, under the persuasion that true worship is rendered. "Fly, ye seasons," "O happy day!" "Sweet hour of prayer," are familiar instances. If we take up any collection of hymns, do we not find them made up chiefly of meditations, exhortations to those around, personal desires and experiences, or descriptions? Frequent opportunity may be found for the use of such spiritual songs; but the soul having the high privilege of entrance into the holy of holies, there to present its offerings, may surely find words more suited to the occasion. "Abba, Father, we approach Thee;" "Father, we Thy children bless Thee;" "Hail, Thou once-despised Jesus;" "Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness;" "Lamb of God, our souls adore Thee;" "O Lord, Thy love's unbounded," and very many more in a similar strain, are ready at hand, were the soul's attention awakened to the consciousness of its position, and alive to its requirements.

But in fact the mind is scarcely exercised upon this very serious point. Habitually, anything that can be sung is considered proper to be sung in worship, however discordant with the thoughts of our God. Were it otherwise, could we admit into our hymn-books such words as those of beloved Cowper when in his despairing mood, or invocations to the Holy Ghost, as if He were not here already dwelling in each believer? Unbelief here assumes the garb of humility. True it is that the writers have no other design but of holy reverence; while singers perhaps attach some other intention to the words. But will He who searches the heart be pleased with the disregard of His promises, or the evasion of saying one thing and meaning another? Must we not ever be

striving to present to Him such things as are pleasing to Him? And how are we to gain the knowledge of this except by recurring to His own declarations?

Hymns, or rather spiritual songs, apart from such addresses, may be admirably adapted for use on other occasions. Some are meditations of a pious soul, very suitable when walking by the way, lying down, or rising up. Hymns of individual joy or thankfulness in like manner find their proper place when we are alone. When the feelings are gratified, the Christian is prone to imagine that all is well, forgetful of the charms that eloquence, music, and song possess over man's nature, whether he be converted or not. The Christian may return home very happy under the influence of emotions excited in this way, and yet his God may have received neither worship nor offering. Surely such happiness would be natural, not spiritual. It is not our being pleased, but pleasure given to Him, which is the source of spiritual joy in both worship and offering.

In worship we do not come before Him as petitioners, though such we ever must and shall be, but as those who have already received at His hands more than imagination can conceive—the fulness of blessing. Inwardly we bow down to the dust before Him, avowing our guilt, vileness, ruin, absolute subjection to and dependence upon His pleasure. He raises up the heart, permitting it to present unto Him, through the Son of His love, its thanksgiving and praise for His adorable goodness extended unto us in our crucified, risen, and exalted Saviour and Head, Christ Jesus. This He is pleased to accept, regarding it as an odour of sweet savour. Again, we bow before Him in acknowledgment of His favour in accepting a present from such defiled, insignificant beings as ourselves, returning to our homes with the happy conviction that His favour is unabated, His love undiminished, His protection assured, vile though we are. R. N.

“THE BIRDS DIVIDED HE NOT.”

THE different animals offered in sacrifice present in type the differing degrees in which Christ, the Anti-type, is apprehended by different believers, or by the same believer in his varying experience. Thus, in Lev. iv., the *priest presents a young bullock (v. 3)*; the *ruler, a kid of the goats, a male*; and *one of the common people, a female*. If we apply this principle to Lev. i. we shall see that cutting the burnt-offering into pieces brings its various parts more fully into view, leading to the contemplation not only of the animal as a whole, but also of the head, the fat, the inwards, the legs, (vv. 8, 9); while in the case of the turtledoves or young pigeons, there is no such division (v. 17; see also Gen. xv. 10), and a general view of the birds is alone enjoyed. Is it not thus with our apprehension of Christ as a sacrifice to God? Blessed be His name, the poorest believer (spiritually) may bring the turtledove or young pigeon. (Lev. x. 7.) He thus comes to God in the name of *a whole Christ*. All is there seen and received by the Father, though, for want of the discernment which “divides asunder,” God alone, and not the offerer, may have in view “the parts.” (Chap. i. 8.) But it is happy not only to know Christ, as in John xvii. 3, but further to seek the knowledge of Phil. iii. 10. So, while our offering has, at the least, the turtledove character, we should desire to be so experimentally rich in Christ as to know Him as “of the flocks” or “of the herd.” Much, very much, might be said upon this subject, but, bearing the question in mind, I simply conclude by saying that, “cut into his pieces,” the offering is seen not merely in its general completeness but also in its details, every one of which bears the same stamp of perfection as the whole. Thus with the Lord, He is everything for every believer, for every time, for every experience.

J. C.

REMARKS ON HEBREWS IX.—XII.

BY R. C. C.*

“HIMSELF.”

OBSERVE, beloved, that in this epistle the Spirit of God has made a mighty use of the word “Himself.” See chap. ix. 14: “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit *offered Himself* without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Then again, in verse 25: “Nor yet that He should *offer Himself* often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others.” And in verse 26, “But now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the *sacrifice of Himself.*” Then we see the same thing in another form in verse 28: “So *Christ was once offered* to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” Also in chap. x. 10 we read: “By the which will we are sanctified through the *offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*”

“IT IS FINISHED.”

Now if we put together the testimonies of the Spirit in this epistle—not to mention other parts of Scripture—we see that the *offering* spoken of is that of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, by whom He made the world, and whose body was nailed to the cross. But that which satisfies me is not what the eyes of men could see—the mere shedding the blood of the body of the Lord Jesus. And remember that according to John ix. there was no such blood-shedding till after the Lord had said, “It is finished;” that is, it was only after His death that

* Notes of an Address forwarded by a friend. Portions read: Heb. ix. 14-x. 25; xi. 1, 2; xii. 1-3.

the blood flowed from His pierced side. But that which was set forth in type when the knife of the priest was thrust into the vitals of the lamb—ah, that *had* been done!—"Awake, O sword, against the man that is my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." That sword was not a sword that man could see; but faith can see it piercing God's own Son, who came in the flesh. "He made His soul an offering for sin." Again, in Ps. xxii., the nails are not spoken of until verse 16: "They pierced my hands and my feet;" but the psalm *begins* with, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" *That* was truly what in type was set forth when the knife was put into the heart of the victim.

"THE BREAD OF GOD."

Now turn again to John xix. 33: "But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." There was indeed the shedding of blood then, but it was to show that in God's sight the atonement had already been made. When false teachers talk of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, they do but proclaim their ignorance. That which we eat is the Christ. It is the Son of God who is our meat. Nothing less than the world's Creator, the crucified Lord, could ever satisfy our hearts. The mere body of the blessed Lord avails nothing. It is the Son of God come in the flesh, made sin for us, made a curse for us, forsaken of God—it is He that puts away sin. True, He could not have died if He had not come in the flesh; but being Son of God, He did a greater work on the cross than when He said, "Let there be light: and there was light." It is He Himself that satisfies God and satisfies us. When we speak of the blood of Christ, or when the Spirit of God speaks of it, the intent is always to remind us that to Christ it was death, and *no mercy*.

“WITHOUT MERCY.”

What a type was Israel's lamb without spot; that is, naturally without spot! It was a type of the only Man born into the world who was naturally all that God could wish. He came the Son of God, taking upon Him a servant's form, and was naturally and of necessity all that God could delight in. When the priest took the knife there was no mercy for the lamb. So did God's justice show no mercy to Christ, that He might show it to us. Let us then bear in mind the word “HIMSELF,” and all that is connected with it; because it keeps before us the excellencies of the Christ of God when brought to the cross.

“FOR US.”

Then observe in this same chapter the two little words “*for us* ;” “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but *into heaven itself*, now to appear in the presence of God *for us*.” We get also in chap. vii. 26 the words, “Made higher than the heavens;” and in chap. iv. 10, “Far above all heavens.” The meaning is that He has ascended into the place that shall never be dissolved. These heavens above us must be ere long on fire. The habitation of angels is spotted with sin. But the heaven itself, that is, where Christ is, can never pass away. Our dwelling-place is spoken of in Rev. xxi. as “coming down out of heaven from God.” Christ now appears in the presence of God for us.

In speaking to any one having an awakened conscience, and therefore brought to self-condemnation before God, how should we seek to set such an one at rest? Would it be by considering how far obedience to the commands of God has been attained? Oh, no! And yet those who are not led by the Word seek to get an assurance in that way. To one self-condemned, and still in bondage, and saying, “I find so much evil in me that I am not warranted to say, I am a child of God;” I would say, “Don't begin below with reckoning

about yourself, but begin with God; not with your conscience, but with God's acceptance of Christ; and instead of sitting in judgment, as it were, in the court of your own spirit and conscience, go into the holiest where Christ is, and see how God transacts the matter with Christ, and Christ with God. Observe the words *for us.*"

"UPON THE MERCY-SEAT."

We have been reminded of the words, "It is finished;" and as we delight to interpret Scripture by Scripture, let me find a key to this in Lev. xvi. 9-14: "Upon the mercy-seat eastward" (that is, resurrectionward); "and before the mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times." For the eye of God's holiness the blood was to be sprinkled *upon* the mercy-seat, and *before* it for the eye of the worshipper. The word seven signifies perfection—perfect atonement, perfect acceptance, and God's remembrance perfect. Let us begin with *upon*, not with "before;" let us begin where God begins. Does God accept Christ? Does He perfectly accept the atonement of His Son? Does He perfectly remember the work of the cross? Then what is the business of your conscience, the obligation of your soul? To do as God does. Let your eye and mind be fixed upon the blood of atonement; not as below in the sight of men, but as before God. In the eye of man the blood tells of rejection; it was making an end of Christ's titles and claims. But let us see how God deals with Christ, and then, instead of doubting and asking, "Am I saved?" "Am I God's child?" we shall be better occupied; that is, with worshipping first, and serving afterwards. And the best worshippers are always the best servants.

"MADE A CURSE."

But, lest I should be misunderstood by any one, let us for a moment turn to Galatians. Observe that in Galatians there is not the form of words, "The blood

of Christ," from beginning to end; yet if you were to ask what portion of Scripture is intended to show redemption by the blood of Christ, I would say, it is this epistle above all others. Why then this omitting to mention the blood of Christ? Because the design of the Spirit of God is to show the *substance* of these words. See chap. ii. 20, iii. 13: "Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Again, look at the fourteenth verse of the last chapter: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here we have what the Scripture means by "the blood of Christ"—God's own Son confessing our sins imputed to Him, and in justice, without mercy, made a curse in our stead. He who was naturally dwelling in the bosom of the Father was made a curse. And what words can show forth, or what thought can comprehend, the distance between the Father's bosom and Christ made a curse on the cross? I have often thought that of the four accounts of the cross which we have from the four evangelists, the most awful voice is in the silence of John xix. Throughout this gospel we find the words, "The Father," "the Son," "the Son of God." Every chapter abounds with these glorious names; but in chapter xix. "Father" never once occurs. In Luke the Lord twice uses that word on the cross; and in Matthew he says, "My God, my God." But in John xix. the record omits both; it leaves a silence; and oh, is it not solemn? The Father is Judge, and He executes the sentence of death without mercy. When the Lord is risen, He says, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." He puts the word "Father" first; but it is after He has said, "It is finished."

We have need to pray to be delivered from all carnal misapprehensions of the cross, whereby false teachers and their disciples are deluded. And if the blind

lead the blind, we know what will happen, "they shall both fall into the ditch." We, on the other hand, are so to deal with Christ, as not only to find Him our Rock of everlasting salvation, but as the Christ to lead us within the veil.

"THE CLOUD OF THE INCENSE."

In Lev. xvi. we have seen that the blood is spoken of as *upon* and *before* the mercy-seat. Let us look at verse 12: "And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil: and he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not." This was doubtless a type of God's justice *after the atonement*, approving and accepting the atonement after Christ had magnified the law and made it honourable. The fire upon the brazen altar would be a type of God's justice upon Christ on the cross, His justice *against* Christ to take vengeance; but on the golden altar it is justice *for* Him because He had made atonement—justice unfolding the glories of atonement. But then, why beaten small? In order that the fire, when the coals were cast upon it, might bring out all the fragrance.

Now, beloved, we are worshippers in the sight of God, and in our own sight, if unbelief do not thrust faith aside. We are worshippers, and we have no warrant to talk about our *poor* prayers, *poor* offerings, and *poor* doings. Because if we will speak of the flesh, we can never find words to show us how abominable it is, therefore the word "poor" is not strong enough. But all our offerings go up through the cloud of incense in God's presence, and they are not poor. May these words be graven upon our hearts, "*In the presence of God for us.*"

"THE THINGS OF OTHERS."

I would dwell upon another point. If we are found

obeying these commandments in Heb. x., we shall think more of Christ's intercession as our pattern than of our obtaining the supply of our own particular wants or comfort in our trials. I do not say we shall not speak to God about these; but we shall remember that the heart of Christ comprehends all the church. We shall seek to have a heart like His, and this will be a mighty help to us to observe the exhortation: "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." We are to be minding each other; and why? Because the Lord does so. There is not any servant of Christ in any place with whom and with whose service the Lord is not greatly occupied. What is of His Spirit He culls out from all the rest, and presents it to God. You remember that Aaron had all the twelve tribes on his heart and on his shoulders; we must be like-minded with Him in this respect.

"YET A LITTLE WHILE."

Then in this epistle are the words, "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." (Chap. x. 37.) You remember the words are from the prophet Habakkuk. (ii. 1-3.) But the apostle omits part of what we find in the prophet, and it is precious to observe the omission, and to consider what he means by it. (See v. 3.) Now observe, the apostle omits the words "though it tarry, wait." He does not bid us wait though it tarry; but he takes up the words "yet a little while." Now why this omission? Is it not plain that if you and I are worshipping within the veil, then time is no more? And the time of waiting is so small that it is not worth while talking about this or that number of years. We are to say, "The night is far spent;" and if so, we must be beyond midnight a great deal; "the day is at hand." It was in this fashion that the Spirit spoke by Paul, and to the saints at Pentecost. With regard to the coming of the Lord, time was behind their backs; so should it be with us.

It leaves room for the Lord to exercise patience, and room for us to exercise patience with Him also. And the better we know Him, the more will be our longing for His coming. But if He, to make His coming the brighter and more excellent, if He tarry, shall we wish to cut short the waiting-time? Far be that from us; we love the Lord too well for that.

: "PREPARE THY WORK WITHOUT."

I often please myself with that little proverb, "Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house." (Prov. xxiv. 27.) Doubtless the wise man had respect to his own practice. What did he before he built the temple? What noise without of axe and hammer! But not in Jerusalem; the noise was all on the mountains, in hewing cedars, and preparing stones. So he prepared his work without, and when brought together there was no noise of axe or hammer, but everything in order—not a stone out of place or misfitting. Oh, let Him take His own time for the work of preparation, and let our place be with Himself within the veil, and to do His will! And, let me repeat it, the most adoring worshippers are the most patient and enduring servants.

"PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERINGS."

We have in this epistle a great deal of the perfect One. If you remember, as early as chapter v. we have these words, "And *being made perfect*, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." Now how could He that was always perfect stand in need of being made perfect? The answer is easy. If the question be between Christ and God the Father in the days of His flesh, He was always perfect; but if the question be between God's justice and Christ's fitness to plead our cause, He was not perfect till He could say, "It is finished." Therefore it is in respect to His fitness to fulfil His office for us. Among other things He is perfect in sympathy;

and in Him there must be perfect sympathy for two reasons—there was in Him perfect holiness, and there was in His case perfect suffering. Now let the two meet together, and out of the two comes perfect sympathy. They never met or could meet in any one else. In Him was the perfection of holiness and of suffering. The apostle Paul was a great sufferer; but he said, “Light afflictions,” and “but for a moment.” And in what comparison? Looking at the eternal weight of glory. He never makes comparison between his sufferings and Christ’s. The reason is this: under all his sufferings he was still a blessed man, and never a curse. The curse cannot touch one that receives Christ; but by Christ was endured the uttermost of wrath and curse from the hand of God. But then, devils have suffering, and wicked men have suffering; they will have it to the uttermost. But will it soften their hearts? Will there be any sympathy? Not a whit. But in Christ suffering meets with perfect holiness, and hence His perfect sympathy.

CHRIST’S SYMPATHY.

This leads me to say, beloved brethren and sisters, that in order to prove what is Christ’s sympathy, I must be myself a sufferer. Take away my trials, and I can know nothing of Christ’s sympathy. What I have to afflict me, things that try me to the very quick, I bless God for, because they lead me to prove what a High Priest I have for me at the right hand of God. I would not have one jot or tittle less than God has appointed of sufferings for me, because I gain by all my losses, and become more acquainted with the heart of Christ.

And there is another thing: you cannot have sympathy for others, except you have it first from Christ. The sympathy of the world—what is it? It never leads them to God; but it shuts Him out. On the other hand, the sympathy that we have from Christ enables us to go to others, and raise them up to

Christ. Let us beware, therefore, of binding up any wound but with heavenly wisdom. Always raise the sufferers to God, and never let them sink in the mire of human sufferings and sorrows.

OUR ANOINTING.

One other thing necessary for the high priest was his anointing. It was not oil for the foot, but on the head, and it ran down to the skirts of his garments. And oh, how wonderful that the same Spirit of God that Christ received without measure He has given to us, not only to quicken us, but to seal, establish, and lead us within the veil, or rather to keep us there, lowly, adoring worshippers, and patient, wise-hearted servants, both towards the Church and towards the world!

SERVICE.

WE are familiar with this simple word, and usually connect it thus—worship and ministry, *service* and suffering. It is used in our translation for several words in the original, each slightly differing from the other in its meaning. The idea underlying each and all is, *doing the will of another*. Service has once and for ever been dignified by the Son of God having taken the place of a servant, saying to the Father, “Lo, I come to do thy will;” and to His disciples, “I am among you as one that serveth.”

No heartless service is accepted of God; for while all creatures must do His will, and all must subserve His glory, He can delight only in the service of *love*.

Service, as referred to in the epistle to the Hebrews, points to the temple and the altar, the service of the sanctuary. God’s servants are His true worshippers, and the spirit of worship should characterize them in all their service. An act of service that disturbs the spirit of worship must either be wrong in itself, or

rendered in a wrong spirit. Hence the importance of considering first our spiritual state, then our action. God's claim for worship is paramount.

Abraham, in offering up Isaac, was a worshipper. Before Moses returned to Egypt as a deliverer he worshipped. Joshua, ere he besieged Jericho, worshipped. The first example of faith, recorded in Heb. xi., was one of worship. We also should, as worshippers in heaven itself, go forth to serve. The word *latría*, to which these remarks refer, occurs in Heb. ix. 1, 6; also in other passages, both in gospels and epistles, but with similar import.

In Phil. ii. 17, 30, we again meet with the term "service." Here it is the translation of another word in the original—*litourgia*. This word, while retaining the spirit of the former, and employed by the Holy Ghost in Heb. viii. 6, ix. 21, is of more general application, its meaning being, a public service discharged by a citizen at his own expense, not necessarily religious in its nature; but as employed by the Holy Ghost in the Scripture, it is connected with that which is spiritual. (Luke i. 23; 2 Cor. ix. 12; Phil. ii. 17, &c.) Thus should we serve as citizens of heaven, born into its freedom by the Holy Ghost, upholding its constitution, observing its laws, serving the Lord in His brethren and in others, not indeed as from our own resources, but of a ready mind, neither from worldly ambition nor covetousness.

Again, when the apostle described the life of David he used another word, "He served (rendered service to) his generation." This word (from *hupereiteo*, to render kind offices) implies a service, either so-called religious, political, or general.

Very similar to this is another word, most frequently translated "ministry," but sometimes "service" (Luke x. 40; 2 Cor. ix. 12), which is of general application, *diakonia*; hence the title deacon.

Lastly, we have a word which, looked at from a

human standpoint, is the lowest of all, and tells of the work of a slave. In Gal. iv. 8 Paul uses this word in describing the life of the Galatians before conversion, "Ye did service" (*edoulusate*) "to them that were no gods;" and also in Rom. vii. 6, when describing the life of a believer, "That we should *serve* in newness of spirit;" and again in Eph. vi. 7, "With good will *doing service*, as to the Lord." Speaking in the same sense of Timothy, he says, "He hath *served* with me in the gospel" (Phil. ii. 22); and of the Thessalonians, "To *serve* the living and true God." (1 Thess. i. 9.) These Scriptures and many others represent the believer as the entire property of another, entirely under his control, and at his disposal; his time, strength, powers, substance, all to be used for his master.

It is evident then that the idea conveyed by all these terms is, doing the will of another, and each word presupposes, at least in its Scriptural use, affection, dependence, and subjection. Of this we have a happy illustration in the slave of old, noticed in Exod. xxi. 5-7, who having to choose between freedom and loneliness, or service in company, said, "I *love* my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free."

This illustration is by the Holy Ghost connected prophetically with Christ in Ps. xl. and in Heb. x., "Mine ear hast thou digged;" and, "A body hast thou prepared me." Taking in incarnation the body prepared for Him, He became the antitypical Hebrew slave. Wondrous grace, that He should *serve*, and that the Holy Ghost in describing His service should employ this very word, marking at once His unreserved surrender and the lowliness of His service of love. He "took upon Him the form of a servant" (Phil. ii. 7), literally *of a slave* (the place pointed out by Him for those who wish to be chief); and in His life and death we can trace the three elements requisite for service—love, dependence, and subjection.

LOVE

was the spring of action in the Hebrew slave; his choice, purpose, surrender, and service were the fruits of affection. "*I love*," said he; and surely love was the first incentive with Him, who, though a Son, became a servant, and that for ever.

The responsibilities resting on Him, whether already met or yet to be fulfilled, were voluntarily undertaken as by one who naturally had absolute freedom of will, who could say even of His life, "I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." This blessed One who *was* equal with God was He who "*made Himself* of no reputation, and took on Him the form of a slave." He loved the Father, and did His commandment, even to the laying down of His life, saying, "That the world may know that *I love* the Father; and as He gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence." Where? To Gethsemane and the cross.

"He *loved* the Church, and gave Himself for it." He loves and still serves. Love—deep, tender, mighty, immutable love—was and is the spring of His service.

This that is true in Him is also true in us. Love, which was ever true in Him, since our regeneration, has been true in us, and we serve from love. He who broke our chains has bound us to Himself with silken cords. As another has said, "He took off our iron shackles, and put upon us His golden chains." "Being made free from sin, ye became servants" (*slaves*) "to righteousness." (Rom. vi. 18.) Service without love cannot be accepted. Professed servants there may be, answering to the nominal servant mentioned in Luke xix., who hid his lord's money, and then excused his slothfulness by blaming his master, and received his deserved rebuke and punishment; but no loving servant could have been guilty of such conduct, neither will any true servant of Christ ever so do.

Our love being the fruit of His love for us, we can

trust Him who loves us. Knowing and believing His love, and confiding in Him, we *surrender* ourselves to Him, and as surrendered ones depend on Him.

DEPENDENCE

is a characteristic of a true servant, and is the power of his service. In this also the blessed Master is pre-eminent. He is the perfect example of dependence. In Ps. xvi. 1 (a psalm applied to Him in Acts ii.) He says, "Preserve me, O God: for in *thee* do I put my *trust*." In Isa. l. 7-9 we have His language, that of confidence the result of dependence, "For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded;" and to this He exhorts others in verse 10, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord . . . let him trust in the name of the Lord."

In Heb. ii. the Holy Ghost quotes Psalms and Isaiah, and applies them to Him; and with this agree His own words when here in service, "I live by the Father." This is the mystery, that He who is wisdom, and has might, was taught and upheld by the Father; and this is the sharpest possible rebuke to the spirit of independence in us.

This also is made true in us by the power of the Holy Ghost. Making us sensible of our poverty, ignorance, and helplessness, He teaches us to depend on Him in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and to know that we are fully furnished in Him—"He that eateth me, even he shall live by me" (John vi. 57); and as we draw into empty vessels from His fulness for service we are wise, strong, and efficient servants; but severed from Him we can do nothing. Only let us be weak enough to allow Him to do His pleasure, and He will fulfil the work of faith with power in us and by us.

Another characteristic of true service is

SUBJECTION.

Indeed there can be no true service without it. To be under the guidance of another, to do his pleasure, is

the first principle of service. In this also the blessed Master is our perfect pattern. Contemplating His service on earth, He, by the spirit of prophecy, declared, "Lo, I come . . . I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." (Ps. xl. 7, 8.) "The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious." (Isa. l. 5.) And at the early age of twelve years He said to His astonished parents, "Wist ye not that I must be about *my Father's* business?" To His disciples, as they marvelled at His words, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of," He said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work." Again, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me;" and that will was that He should receive and preserve every one who then came, and now comes, to Him by faith, as given Him by the Father. As the red heifer never wore a yoke, and served but one purpose, so Christ served and pleased the Father; and all who could in that way be served and pleased He pleased and served, but none else. Yes, He wore the yoke of subjection to the Father, and found it easy; and therefore He invites His followers to yoke themselves with Him, and find subjection light and easy. (Matt. xi. 25-30.)

Thus serving we cannot fail to prosper; for, said He, "If any man serve me, him will my Father honour." Whatever may be our sphere of service—the family, church, or world—in the ordinary duties of home, the office, counting-house, shop, train, or field, preaching the gospel, teaching saints, shepherding souls, if love be the spring, and dependence and subjection the spirit of our service, we must be blessed, and shall find that the varied forms of service indicated by the different words we have noticed above will all be spiritual, because performed with the mind of Christ and in His name.

A further illustration of this subject is given us by

Paul in writing to Timothy. In his second epistle (2 Tim. ii. 3-7) he charges Timothy to "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ;" and proceeds with his illustrations: First, a soldier must be a man of heart in his service, a man severed and surrendered, a man of one purpose, which enlists all his powers to "please him who has chosen him." The apostle may have had in his mind such men as David had around him, men not of double hearts, "a heart and a heart," one for self and the other for him, but whole-hearted men, who could take the expression of his desire for water from Bethlehem as a command, nor count their lives dear to themselves to meet it. This is *love*. But with all this he who strives must do it lawfully, subject to the rules of the course, ring, or army. This is *subjection*. Then, changing the figure, the apostle tells him that the husbandman must labour before he can be partaker of the fruit, "labouring first." This is *patience*.

Whole-heartedness, subjection, and patience make a servant, and secure the reward of service. May we by grace be such increasingly. H. H.

FRAGMENTS.

GRACE is the outflow of God's heart to sinners. Its cause "passeth knowledge;" its expression is Christ crucified.

We are often like children who quarrel in their father's presence instead of attending to their father's words.

If His words are so sweet, what must *He* be?

To live, we must first be born; to live to God, we must first be born again.

Apply the principles of eternity to the things of time.

Worship is the outgoing of the renewed soul Godward; service the outgoing manward. A. O. M.

DISCIPLESHIP.

LUKE xiv. 26-33.

A DISCIPLE is one who resolutely sets himself to learn of and imitate his master. All disciples are learners, but all learners are not disciples. "The *disciple* is *not* above his master." "It is enough for the *disciple* that he be *as* his master."

In *one* sense it is a greater thing to be a disciple of Christ than to be a child of God; and yet nothing can be higher than to be made children of the living God. Blessed be God, the *best* things are His free gift to us through Christ Jesus our Lord; and we "are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." But a disciple is one who determinately sets his heart upon learning of and following the Lord Jesus, and consequently gives joy to Christ, and brings glory to God, in a way in which many of His children never do. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

Luke xiv. 25-33 shows us the self-sacrifice and true-heartedness required *if* we would be disciples; and if these things be lacking, we may walk with the Lord for a season, but when difficulties arise, we shall probably turn aside, like those mentioned in *John vi. 66*, and possibly walk no more with Him. Alas! how often is this true of the Lord's redeemed and precious children. Saved, but choosing their own path; followed and cared for, loved and fed *by Him*, yea, taught and trained (for *He* is faithful), but walking *not* with Him!

If we would walk steadily with the Lord, we must be prepared to deny ourselves—*ourselves*—give up the things we really value—things not necessarily wrong, but which have to be sacrificed if we would follow Him. We must also "take up our cross," and not only take it up, but "bear it," endure the constant pressure of it, which may be very great. Yea, more, we must take it up "daily," unweariedly, not thinking

we have carried it long enough, and expecting a little rest, but *daily* take up each extra weight, or fresh difficulty or trial, and bear it after Christ.

Again, we must be prepared, if needs be, to forsake or give up all we have, "father, mother, wife, children, brethren, sisters," yea, and our own lives also. Not our natural life (that would be a small thing, to die and go to heaven), but that which is dearer to us than life, the object for which we live. We must be prepared to give it all up for increased fellowship with Christ, for the joy of His presence, and the consciousness of His approval. Nor should we count it hard, but, according to Phil. iii. 8, 9, count all but dung for the excelling gain of increased acquaintanceship with Him.

He would have us count the cost that we may calculate the gain, and consequently not be disheartened or turned aside by the sacrifice demanded. It is as if He said, "I told thee no less;" therefore let us gird our loins, and strengthen our hearts, and be prepared for crosses, disappointments, difficulties, and sacrifices.

We must count upon His strength, and not our own, or we shall be like the king mentioned in Luke xiv. 31, 32; but leaning upon Him, we may be fearless indeed, and defy all the power of the enemy.

Nor must we be staggered when we find we have to give up the darling object of our lives, that for which we have toiled and laboured, and, may be, suffered much. He may call upon us for a *real* giving of it up, with no assurance of restoration; and thus He puts us to the test as to whether we do count all but dung that we may win Christ.

But courage, courage! He is no hard Master. He will not impoverish us; He only means to enrich and bless. We may not understand Him, and the path may be dark, and the sacrifice great; but wait awhile, and He will either give us something far better in its place, or, in His own wonder-working way, fulfil the desire of our hearts through death and resurrection,

and give us back the very thing we had to give up for a season, enriched, and beautified, and multiplied.

One word more. The Lord Jesus always fulfils His own precepts; and how fully did He count the cost before He began to build the temple of the Lord! Verily He shrank not back, nor begrudged the cost. He measured the self-sacrificing love, the grace, the wisdom, the patience required; He knew He had enough, and put His hand to the glorious work. His hands have laid the foundation, and His hands shall also finish it; and when He brings forth the topmost stone, with shoutings of "grace, grace unto it," every whit of it shall utter His glory, and He will be satisfied and magnified to all eternity.

The Lord in His mercy hasten that day.

In the power of His might,
 In the power of His might,
 Who was made through weakness strong,
 Ye shall overcome in the fearful fight,
 And sing His victory song!
 But count ye the cost; yea, count ye the cost—
 The forsaking all ye have!
 Then take up your cross and follow your Lord,
 Not thinking your life to save!

By the "blood of the Lamb,"
 By the "blood of the Lamb,"
 By the faithful witness WORD!
 Not loving your lives unto death for Him,
 Ye *shall* triumph with your Lord!
 But count ye the *cost*; yea, count ye the *cost*,
 Ye warriors of the cross!
 Yet in royal faith and in royal love,
 Count all selfish gain but loss!

Oh, the banner of love!
 Oh, the banner of love!
 It will cost you a pang to hold!
 But 'twill float in triumph the field above,
 Though your heart's blood stain its fold.
 Ye *may* count the cost, ye *may* count the cost,
 Of all *Egyptia's* treasure!
 But the RICHES of CHRIST ye *cannot* count—
 HIS LOVE YE CANNOT MEASURE!

SELF EMPTIED, AND CHRIST THEREIN OUR EXAMPLE.

Notes of an Address delivered in 1841.

WE need to ponder what the setting aside of self involves, and to observe the extent in which this was manifested in our blessed Master. In Him dwelt all the fulness of love, as also the fulness of Godhead; but in His life down here, what an entire setting aside of self was there. Human honour, human greatness, human self-consciousness, when were they ever seen in Him? But in this how little are we like Him in our Christian life.

In Jesus we see the perfection of love in all its strength. He emptied Himself, making Himself of no reputation, that self being lost, love might shine out unhindered. Self-love is the canker in us that eats out divine love. They cannot co-exist; for the one destroys the other. In looking into our own hearts we see that if a kindly act be performed, or a friendly word spoken, we expect at least that it should be responded to, and some return be made, if only in a word of gratitude and thanks. But supposing the opposite be manifested, what then? Are we prepared still to love? That is love indeed; and we can then say with Paul, that blessed follower in the footsteps of his Master, "Though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved; but be it so." How few can follow Paul! and who can follow the blessed Master Himself? However rejected and set at naught, He had a heart to bless still, to do good still; and He could heal the bleeding ear of one who with sword and staff had come out to lay hold on Him. It was not that in proud Stoicism He did not care; He cared much, and felt deeply every act of unkindness; for all unkindness springs from the evil root of sin; and sin ever caused Him grief at God's dishonour and man's ruin, and anger at Satan's triumph. But in the

blessed Lord the effect of getting no return for love was to increase the outflow of love from Him, and He was content to be more humbled by those on whom that love had been expending itself.

Thus was Jesus humbled by those He came to save; and He laid aside His glory, that the fulness of love might flow out to man in all its perfectness. But what was the result of this infinite outflow of love? The One who loved as none had ever loved, who had wept over another's sorrow, and mourned at an enemy's woe as none had ever wept and mourned (Ps. xxxv. 13, 14), was despised and cast out; and man, "hateful and hating," took occasion by His humiliation yet the more to humble and to scorn.

As has been already said, He was not careless as to His rejection, nor did He despise His despisers; but He sought among men for comforters, yet He found none, and for some to take pity, but there were none.

The world was led on by Satan, and was against Him. But not only so; He had to cry in anguish, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" Man might reject; that was much; but He cried to God, "Be not *Thou* far off." Here was infinite, unselfish love rejected by unrighteous and wicked man, and forsaken by the righteous Judge, the holy God. Thus in heaven and on earth there was nothing for the eye to rest on; but love had its infinite purposes, and love conquered. Many waters could not quench it, the floods could not drown it. The deep sea of man's sin, and hatred, and scorn could not put out its eternal flame as it burned brighter and brighter in the dying Christ, and the mighty floods of God's righteous judgment against sin could not extinguish it; it burned on still, and consumed itself in death, to rise again out of death, and to burn as "Jehovah's flame"* throughout

* "A fire which is the flame of Jah;" so is divine love or absolute love designated. (See Hebrew, Song Sol. viii. 6). Who can fathom those mighty words?

the countless ages of eternity, which through grace will be given to us to contemplate the breadth, the length, the depth, and the height of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.

Thus it was on the cross that our Lord's love to the utmost was tried. In the activities of His daily life He went about doing good, healing the sick and comforting the sorrowful, preaching good news to the poor, and reproving with divine severity the hypocrisy of the proud; and there was something in all this on which the eye could rest, something in which comfort could be taken. But when He came to the cross there was the doing of nothing, there was no display, no manifestation of power; all was weakness, and shame, and suffering. He endured; He was crucified in weakness; and hence, though all life was an emptying, it reached its climax on the cross, when self was set aside altogether, and love triumphed in death. Then He was rejected by man, subjected to Satan, forsaken of God; but the fulness of love led Him through all this; and on this fulness of love are we called to lean—a love that proved stronger than the grave, a love that all our sin or failings can never overcome. He will love still; He must, He cannot help it.

Love is everything to the soul. The cross was to Christ and is to us the mortification of self, and in it the nothingness of the creature is seen. We cannot enjoy love and pride together; the one extinguishes the other; and whatever satisfies, the pride of our natural hearts makes the cross of Christ less precious, and love less powerful. May it be now and ever, *None of self*, and ALL OF CHRIST.

I want to be Christ's advocate on earth, since He is mine in heaven.

God's love to me is unspeakable, unfathomable, unchangeable.

WEANED AND RECOMPENSED.

REMARKS ON PSALM CXXXI.

THIS precious little psalm is one of the fifteen pilgrim songs which have been written for the counsel and encouragement of those who have a better country, even a heavenly, and who are therefore content to be but pilgrims and strangers here, and of whom consequently God is not ashamed to call Himself their God.

It is the song of the "weaned child;" and it will be necessary first to say something on this word "weaned," as used in the Hebrew language, that we may the better enter into the meaning of the song, and the depth of its teaching.

In the weaning of a child there are two distinct thoughts. The one is that from which it is weaned, and the other is that by which it is recompensed; just as redemption points to what we have been redeemed *from*, and also that which we have been redeemed *to*.

In English the word *wean* points exclusively to that from which the child has been taken, its mother's breast; but in Hebrew the word for a "weaned child" points exclusively to that which has been substituted for the mother's breast. The word here used is derived from a verb signifying "to recompense," "to deal bountifully with," "to reward," and therefore a "weaned child" means a "recompensed child."*

There is a weaning process that is ever going on with us as we are being drawn more and more from the things of Egypt and of the world, and the things

* A few passages where the word (נָמַל) is used may be referred to with profit, with the translation used in the English Bible. (1) *Wean*, Gen. xxi. 8; 1 Sam. i. 22, 24; 1 Kings xi. 20; Ps. cxxx. 2; Isa. xi. 8, xxviii. 9; Hosea i. 8. (2) *Reward*, 1 Sam. xxii. 21, xxiv. 17; Ps. xviii. 20, ciii. 10. (3) *Deal bountifully or Recompense*, 2 Sam. xix. 36; Ps. xiii. 6, cxvi. 7, cxix. 17, cxlii. 7. (4) *Requite or Bestow*, Deut. xxxii. 6; Isa. lxiii. 7. (5) *Ripen or Yield fruit*, Num. xvii. 8; Isa. xviii. 5.

which by nature we love; and in this Hebrew word God would direct our thoughts to those heavenly realities whereby He abundantly recompenses us in Christ Jesus. Thus He enables the weaned soul to forget what it has left behind, and, as one bountifully dealt with and abundantly satisfied, to say with Paul, that weaned man, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss" (*ζημιαν*, damage, detriment) "for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I am counting all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: on account of whom I suffered the loss of all things, and am counting them to be dung, that I may win Christ."

God had so fully recompensed Paul in Christ that he felt he was infinitely the gainer, and hence with a soul-satisfied joy he could look on all that he once was and once had, and turning his back on it, run with patience the race set before him. The Lord of the glory had appeared unto him, and he never turned back in heart or thought or purpose to those beggarly things of the law, or of this life, from which he had been redeemed. Phil. iii. shows us a "weaned" saint, and the preceding chapter shows us a Saviour who for the joy set before Him humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, the death of the cross.

It was thus that Moses forsook the court of Pharaoh for the recompence of God's reward, and left Egypt for the sorrows of the desert. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he looked off* unto the recompence of the reward."

It is thus that weaned hearts become strong; for the recompences of God strengthen and satisfy, and in

* *απεβλεπε*. Comp. Heb. xii. 2, "Looking off unto Jesus," *αφορωντες εις Ιησουν*.

that measure temptation has no power, and the world no attraction. The remembrance of these recompences of God forms the key-note to Ps. ciii.: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His *benefits*," or recompences.

There is a solemn warning in connection with the latter end of the good king Hezekiah which it will be well to recall. "But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the *benefit* done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Israel and Judah." (2 Chron. xxxii. 25.) Forgotten mercies are the sure forerunners of judgment.

Such then is the lesson taught us by the appellation of the weaned child, and we will now seek to meditate a little on the psalm itself.

"*Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself [or walk; see margin] in great matters, or in things too wonderful for me.*" (v. 1.)

The *heart*, the *eye*, and the *feet*, call for our particular attention if we would really live in the power of the weaned child, and enjoy the blessing of satisfied affections. We need a heart fully recompensed in the will of God, an eye content with the glory given to it to behold, by the Spirit's revelation, and feet willing to walk in the paths of righteousness and consecration marked out by God.

Of Uzziah, who did what was right in the sight of the Lord according to the measure that his father had done, we read that "God made him to prosper," and that "God helped him," for "he was helped marvellously till he was strong." But, alas! "when he was strong, his heart was lifted up [Hebrew, as here, was *haughty*] to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense." When the heart goes wrong, the eye or the desire will go after it, and the feet will follow.

Of Hezekiah we also read the same thing. He had been the receiver of great revelations of God's goodness, and of great deliverances; but his heart retained not its uprightness and brokenness of spirit. The grace of God was too much for His poor failing servant; for when "he was magnified in the sight of the nations" by God's grace towards him, we read, his heart was lifted up, so that "God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart."

We are ever in danger of a high look and a proud heart when we occupy ourselves with the grace that has made us what we are, and given us what we have, to the forgetfulness of the God of all grace, whose mighty presence alone will keep us humble, and bow down our hearts before Him in whose sight we can but regard ourselves as "dust and ashes."

Job had learned much of God in the goodness of His dealings towards him. He had owned His hand, and bowed before Him as a worshipper; but all this was, after all, but as the hearing of the ear. And how different were his experiences when he had seen God face to face, and lay in the dust in His presence! It is there that we learn, in lowliness of spirit, that there are many things that are too "great" for us, and many things that are too "wonderful;" things that faith has to leave alone, and to commit to the mighty hand of infinite love; things too great and too wonderful, that are too high and too deep for us.

Such things were in God's dealings with Job; and because he exercised himself about them, and walked in them, he had well-nigh made shipwreck of his trust and reliance in the goodness and wisdom of God. Such things constantly arise in the inner recesses of our own souls, in matters that lie beyond our reach; such also arise in our circumstances, and in the circle of family life. How much we cannot comprehend; misfortunes, disappointments, trials, difficulties, and perplexities, that in their character seem to make trust in God

stagger, and faith in His infinite and unchanging love lose its hold. A dark, impenetrable mystery seems to hang over us, and the more we exercise ourselves about it, the darker it becomes. How much grace is then needed to walk in the power of a weaned heart, that does not go beyond its depth because it has learned to walk in darkness, and to obey the voice of God's servant, and all the while to "trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." (See Isa. l. 10.)

These are God's deep lessons, fully known to none but Him who could say, "The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious." But we have to learn them if we would walk in close communion with Him, who is ever seeking to draw us into the companionship of His love, and who uses the darker things of life to draw the soul closer to Himself. It is thus that all these things, which are too great and too wonderful for us, cast us in all our sorrowing helplessness into the arms of God's grace, because we know there is nothing too great or too wonderful for Him.

Thus God silenced Sarah's unbelieving doubts when she laughed, and He asked, "Is anything too hard [in Hebrew, too wonderful] for the Lord?" And in Jer. xxxii. 27, the same question is asked to silence doubts and to stimulate faith; for His name is "Wonderful," and therefore it stands as His sole prerogative, "Who alone doeth great wonders." When all this is realized, it is then we can say with verse 2 of our psalm:

"Surely I have calmed and silenced myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child."

The word rendered in the English version "behaved," and here *calmed*, is used for levelling and making a surface even and smooth.

What depth of meaning there is in that thought those will know who have felt the sweetness of a calm come in on the tempest-tossed soul, that has found itself out of its depth under some providence of God, or

under some temptation of Satan ; when He who is the rest of faith quells the storm, and the presence of God satisfies the soul that all is right, come what may, for God is there.

But not only is the soul calmed, it is *silenced* ; and there is no praise more precious than that which the silenced soul breathes forth to God, when its longings are realised and its sorrows hushed in the bosom of infinite love. It is as the sorrowing child that stops its cries and silences itself to rest on its mother's bosom. Such is the bosom of God ; a resting-place for faith, where unbelieving fears are quelled and importunate pleadings are silenced, and the satisfied soul is content with God, and finds His yoke easy and His ways pleasantness and peace.*

The psalm ends with an utterance of faith and love, a call to Israel as the result of personal experience :

“ Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever.”

Now abide faith, hope, and love ; and the call to hope is a present one, from now and unto eternity. We are prone to put off our trust to some future day, or to expect to realize it in the far-off future ; but we have to begin from just where we are, from the very circumstances in which we find ourselves, and from henceforth to learn God's great lesson, which every day is being repeated, *“ Hope in the Lord from henceforth.”*

May hope in the future so shed its glory over all the present, that we may be enabled to say, *“ Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory ; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.”* Amen and Amen.

H. G.

* The thought of silent praise is common in the Psalms, Compare the following passages with the marginal rendering, where the word here used is employed : Ps. lxxv. 1 ; lxxii. 1 ; xxxvii. 7, &c. &c.

“MY TIMES ARE IN THY HAND.”

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY R. C. C.

Portions read: Ps. xxxi.; Luke xxiii. 44-46; Acts vii. 54-60.

IN searching this treasure-house, the book of Psalms, this storehouse of the secrets of Christ's heart, and the secret dealings of His heart with God, we find that there are certain psalms, or portions, in which we can make Christ, and Christ only, the speaker. There are other portions which are common to Christ and to His people; while in some we make the sinner the speaker.

Take for example Ps. xxii. When we read the first verse, “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” instead of saying, “This is common to Christ and to me,” we say, “Oh, no! this is for Christ alone; and because for Christ, therefore not for me.” We know that Christ the Son of God must, for us, be made a curse, and to show it, these few words (“Why hast Thou forsaken me?”) have a mighty power. And because Christ uttered these words, I ought never to think of uttering them as my own. It is unlawful for one, believing in Christ, to say, “Lord, why hast Thou forsaken me?” He may charge himself for forsaking the Lord; but never the Lord for forsaking him.

There are similar words in Ps. xl.: “Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up.” It is unlawful for the child of God to take up these words. Because my iniquities *did* take hold upon Christ, they cannot take hold upon me.

There are other words, as in Ps. li., which we give to the sinner. “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity: and in sin did my mother conceive me.” We are led of the Spirit to take up such words, and they have a deep meaning if we are so led—“shapen in iniquity!” Again, “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” Again,

in Ps. xxxii. : "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." Such words belong to us, and not to Christ.

Then there is a goodly number of most precious utterances in this book of Psalms, which are common to Him and to us. And we are not to marvel at this, because the Spirit who taught Him now teaches us as His members, and as children of God.

Now, not to speak of the prophetic meaning of Ps. xxxi. as regards the children of Israel in a time yet to come, let us take it up as in part belonging to the Lord, and in part to ourselves. Nor would I take it up verse by verse, but would only speak of certain things in it, and first of the 15th verse: "*My times are in Thy hand.*" Here is something common to Christ and to us; also to the children of Israel in the future, when they shall be taken up by God for blessing, and when Jeremiah's word shall be fulfilled in them: "It is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." And also Zechariah's: "Two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire." But it is now our purpose to speak, not of them, though we should have them ever in our hearts, but of what is common to the Lord, and to us His saints.

"My times are in Thy hand." Now observe what goes before. "They took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life. But I trusted in Thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my God." My times are not in the hand of mine enemies, nor in my own hand. "My times are in Thy hand."

Now, beloved, we are commanded to consider the Lord, not only as our Great High Priest, but also as our Pattern of faith. And when we do consider that the blessed Lord had these words in His heart, when the wicked were taking counsel against Him, when He knew the end would be the death of the cross, when

He must sink beneath the waves and billows, when would be fulfilled in Him Jonah ii., Ps. xlii. and lxxxviii—when we consider this, do we not see the secret of Christ’s perfect endurance and perfect trust? He saw everything ordered, according to the counsels of the living God, from whose bosom He had come forth to be the servant of that God and Father, and therefore nothing by Pilate’s decree, or by counsels of scribes, Pharisees, and priests, but by the everlasting counsels of the living God. You observe that it does not excuse the sin of the wicked; but, on the other hand, the sin of the wicked does not hide from Him the decree of the living God.

Now let us, beloved in the Lord, bind these two things together, and we shall be enabled to take up the words, “My times are in Thy hand.” It is the secret of God’s peace ruling and keeping the heart and mind of the believer. And let us add to this what we began with. It is not lawful for us to deal with God as if the heavens were darkened to us, and closed against us; as if God had forgotten or forsaken us. If we are indulging any thoughts like these, we ought to reckon them as far worse, and greater cause of mourning and lamentation than any outward circumstances can be. Let us remember that when Christ died upon the cross the sun was darkened at noonday, when naturally it should have been shining upon that land which was a type of Christ. In the ordinary course of God’s dealings with Christ, the countenance of the Father should have been shining upon His Son and His servant. But what happened? That countenance was hid, and “Why hast Thou forsaken me?” was uttered. But also the words, “My God, my God!” What faith! Perfect suffering and perfect faith for the first time met together. And for our imitation we are told, in Heb. xii., “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily

beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus." I would venture to convey the meaning of the words thus: Looking unto Jesus, the Captain of salvation, and perfect example of faith to all the host; who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Now Christ knew that the time to die on the cross was appointed by God, and that the resurrection was equally decreed, and therefore for the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross. Observe it is not said, He despised the cross, because there He had to endure wrath from the hand of God; but He despised the shame.

And now, beloved, let us look at the other times, the times after the cross, for Christ and for us. We are never to forget what we are so apt to forget, that we are not children of Adam. We *were* that; but in God's sight, as such, we are dead and buried, and blotted out of being; and we are here as though we had been sent forth by Christ, as Christ was sent forth by the Father. "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."

Again, in Psalm xxxi. 20, we find a hiding-place, and it is the secret of God's presence: "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of man: Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues;" and in verse 19 there is an outcry of admiration: "Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men!" We remember that when Joseph had been sent before his brethren, as we read in Gen. xli. 48, it is said, "And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and *laid up* the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. And Joseph gathered corn as the

sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.” “Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou *hast laid up* for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men!” So that, in short, all the fulness of Christ is laid up; for Christ Himself is an infinite treasure at the right hand of God, and in the bosom of the Father. An unspeakable reward has already been given Him, and He in all His fulness is our storehouse; and this whole treasury belongs to the whole family of God, and, marvellous to say, the whole belongs also to each one of that family. Does it not then become us, instead of saying, “How great are our difficulties!” to say, “How great are our supplies?” Instead of saying, “How great are our troubles!” to say, “How great are our consolations?” That is what this psalm teaches us, and what Christ teaches us by the words, “My times are in thy hand.” Times of trial of faith and patience there may be when God *seems* to forsake; but I will not talk of God’s forsaking me, because He forsook Christ. I will rather say, “How great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up” for me against those trials of faith!

We speak oftentimes of God *permitting* this and *permitting* that. But what we need is the proper word—the only word which puts God on His throne—*God’s predestination*. A man of faith once said, “Let him curse,” because the Lord hath bidden him; “because the Lord hath said, Curse David.” That was the secret of the perfect patience and perfect forgiveness of David. Without apprehending the God of decrees in great and small matters, he would have listened to the man who said, “Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head.”

We observe again, dear friends, that God’s decrees can never be changed; and those who best understand them, best know the creature’s accountability. Can I

reconcile these two things? That is not for me to do. I say, "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me." But what is written I lay up in my heart. "My times are in Thy hand."

Let us see a special example of this in the book of the Acts (ii. 23): "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Here we see the predestination of God in the death of His Son full and complete, and the guilt of man at the very same time when he was fulfilling those decrees. And I would affirm, beloved in Christ, that to join these two great truths in the heart is the secret of a sound mind, and of going on with Him in the midst of all difficulties. *Then* we shall prove that word, "Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues." I doubt whether there can be any state of a believer higher than that in which he is altogether unhurt, not damaged at all, not fretted by the tongues of others. I do not say not wounded, either of God's people, or of fellow-men who speak ungraciously, without pitifulness, without gentleness. The heart craves pitifulness and gentleness, and it ought to feel a wound when it is given.

It was a wound to Christ when Judas came with a kiss. The Lord said, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" This shows that His heart felt it, but His faith was unmoved; so let it be with us. But how comes it about? how does He raise us above the arrows of the tongue? "Thou shalt hide them *in Thy presence.*" Let the child of God, let the servant of Christ, after the pattern of the blessed Lord, be running his race with patience, counting his treasure above, and looking onward to the day when he shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, and he will be raised above the arrows of the tongue. What then? We shall be fitted for the times in which we

are living, and these are perilous times, difficult times, far more so than those of Pentecost; and to behave ourselves aright in the world and in the Church is more difficult now than it was then. The Church is not now keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and the world is in its hardening course. The world seems better to the eye of those who have no hope beyond it; but spiritually and Godward, and in relation to eternity, it is far worse now than ever it has been. The act of the Jew in corrupting the law of Moses was not so bad as that of him who bears the name of Christ and corrupts the gospel. That city of worldly wisdom, saying, “What will this babbler say?” was proud enough then; but it is not to be compared with the pride of wisdom now. We have therefore greater difficulties than ever; but let us be able to take up the words, “My times are in Thy hand;” and, “How great is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee;” and, like the blessed Lord, let us indeed see the guilt of man; but let it not hide from us the decrees of God. So shall we be keeping the Spirit’s unity in the bond of peace—our affection always growing, our love to saints always increasing, because God loves them, and not because they love us; and we shall then see greater reason for loving them in Christ, than for shunning them for any thing we see in them. And as to the world, we shall see the world as the herd of swine running violently down the steep place. Can we envy them? Oh, no! We shall seek wisdom from God, that that word in the Proverbs be fulfilled in us: “He that winneth souls is wise.”

“The riches of His grace” are spoken of in connection with redemption; “the riches of His glory” in connection with sanctification.

Every unsaved soul formally worshipping God, offers the sacrifice of Cain, which God accepted not.

LIP AND LIFE.

“And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host; and they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.”—JOSHUA iii. 2, 3.

How beautiful in God’s sight must have been the feet of those officers who at His bidding went through the hosts, raising their voices to attract every eye to the ark—“*When ye see the ark!*” And shall we not learn from them gladly to yield tongue and lip, and seek to fix the gaze of God’s beloved people on Christ Himself, our glorious Ark?

“*And the priests the Levites bearing it.*” Was their silent service less precious, less acceptable to our God, as by their *actions* they exalted the ark before Israel’s eyes? Surely that holy ark, supported by staves upon the shoulders of the priests, spoke louder far in Israel’s ear *than words*, and we who read the story are more occupied with the service of the priests than with that of the officers, though *each* has its place.

The Lord has blessedly joined together the service of the officers and that of the priests, both alike occupied with the ark, and seeking to present it to Israel’s gaze; and shall we not also strive in heart and life to join these two things also?

It is our happy privilege each in our measure to tell of “Him whom our soul loveth;” but let no one fail to join with it what will add weight to our words. Let us seek by *our ways* to exalt Christ, so that something of His Spirit, His meekness, His lowliness, may be manifested by us.

“*Then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.*” While the priests in holy silence exalt the ark, Israel moves onwards, doubtless helped in this by *the words* of the officers; and mark, Israel moves not after *them*, but “after *it*.” Oh the wisdom of this counsel!

Shall not this precious portion stir up our hearts to

plead earnestly that our *lives* may so speak of Jesus that others may be constrained to follow in *His* footsteps?

Israel did not yet see their enemies subdued beneath their feet; but one object was before them, the ark of the covenant; and “forward” was God’s word. So with ourselves, “we see not yet all things put under Him;” but, blessed be God, “we see Jesus.” His people may fail in representing Him; still He Himself shines before our eyes. “We see Jesus crowned with glory and honour.” Let us gaze, and we shall be attracted onwards—we shall be constrained to walk in His footsteps.

“HIS LIPS ARE LIKE LILIES.”

“His mouth is most sweet.”—SONG OF SOLOMON v. 16.

No lips like Thine, most blessed Lord,
None ever spake like Thee;
As sweetest honey or as myrrh
Flows fragrant from the tree.

Thy lips “like lilies!” What so pure,
So lovely in their grace;
With secret power, in hours of grief,
To kindle thoughts of praise!

Into those lips rich grace is pour’d,
To comfort all who mourn;
No tongue like Thine to cheer the faint,
Thou Friend of the forlorn!

As soft’ning showers upon the grass,
Gentle as early dew,
Thy speech distils into the soul,
Its graces to renew.

Agnes have passed since at Thy voice
Men marvelled as they heard;
And still our hearts within us burn,
While listening to Thy word.

UPWARDS! ONWARDS!

“Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”—COL. iii. 1, 2.

THERE are many intense longings of our hearts which *naturally* seek their portion below, and which have been corrupted and defiled by sin, and yet which *need not* be crushed. “Bring them hither to *Me*” would be our Lord’s word concerning them. We must transplant them from earth to heaven; carry them upwards, onwards; spread them all out before Him, and “set our affection on things above;” and *He* in His patient love will purify and sanctify these longings, and then in His abundant grace will meet and gratify them.

Let us consider a few of them.

1st. *Ambition.* Look upwards! look onwards! Could ambition rise higher than the height of glory our God has given us in associating us with Christ Jesus our Lord, and making us joint-heirs with Him, to reign with Him for ever and ever, to share His riches, His honour, His glory? Could anything be higher? Oh, let our ambition lay hold of our portion in Christ, and it will ask no more! and instead of being crushed, will find a full scope for all its energies in seeking to walk worthy of our high and holy calling. Yes, let us be ambitious of being “found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

2nd. *Desire to be loved.* “As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you.” Is not this enough? Can this be equalled or surpassed? Can you measure that love? Can you tell its intensity, its fondness, its strength? Can you fathom its depths, or scan its heights? Ah; no! the well is deep indeed—

“That deep, sweet well of love.”

Then carry your longing upwards and onwards—

upwards to Christ Himself, and enjoy your *present* portion of rest in His love; *onwards* to the glory, when you shall enjoy it to the full. Do not crush it or starve it, but revel even now in the fulness and fondness of His love; and never will you be able to say, there was not enough in Him to fill your tiny vessel.

3rd. *Desire for praise or approbation.* What a paltry and despicable thing it is, when the praise of man is the ruling motive of the life! But seek the honour which comes from God only, and it becomes a mighty lever to lift you up above the worthless praise of man. Yes, live to *please* your Lord. Seek His approving smile; so act, and speak, and think, that *He* may say, "Well done;" not only crown you by-and-by, but even *now* "confess your name" before His Father, and rest in His love and joy over you with singing, as He beholds your ways. Yes, let the longing *grow*, but fix its roots in Christ Himself, and feed it with nothing short of His approving smile.

4th. *Desire to have our efforts appreciated.* Ah, mark the tenderness of Christ! What value He set upon His disciples' *little* faithfulness and love. How He prized it, how He spoke of it! Listen to His words about them: "These are they that have continued with Me in my temptations," &c. Again, about Mary: "She hath done what she could." Again, to the churches in the Revelation: "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first," &c. Again, in Canticles: "How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine!" Not even a cup of cold water, given in His name, is unheeded by Him. Oh, how He appreciates every little thing we do for Him! Well may we carry this longing upwards, onwards; enjoying *now*, by faith, the certainty that *He* knows, *He* values, *He* makes the most of all we do to please Him; and by-and-by

we shall receive from His own lips His precious words of praise and commendation.

5th. *Desire to be rich.* Who would throw away the unsearchable riches of Christ for the trumpety gold of this present evil world? Yes; we may be rich indeed; rich even *now*; handling, and enjoying, and distributing the riches of Christ. There is enough and to spare, an inexhaustible store, which we may use to our hearts' content. And when we reach our home, and dwell with Christ above, what will our riches be? How vast, how great, how varied! Let us carry *this* longing upwards, onwards, and no longer seek to have it gratified with that which decays and vanishes away.

6th. *Love of ease.* Just listen to His words: "Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." "What man is He that feareth the Lord? . . . His soul shall dwell at ease." -Yes; there is rest for us even now; real heart's-ease, if we will cling to Him, roll all our cares on Him, and look to Him to direct our steps. We may "dwell in safety by Him," "covered with His feathers," "satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord." But we must carry the longing upwards, onwards; and watch against the slothfulness that would take its ease in the devil's prison, instead of pressing into the presence of our Lord. There is a rest that remaineth for the people of God, which we shall surely have in the coming day; and there is a rest, a blessed rest, even now, for the soul that clings to Christ.

"So safe, so calm, so satisfied,
The soul that clings to Thee."

7th. *Desire to be used and made a blessing to others.* Is He not able and willing to do this? How quick is He to use those who present themselves to Him, seeking to be channels through which the riches of His grace may flow, if only they are ready to be used as He thinks fit, and in the self-forgetfulness of true

love to take the lowly place; ready to do the smallest thing heartily; ready to serve the weakest of His lambs.

“Only an instrument, ready
His praises to sound at His will;
Willing, should He not require me,
In silence to wait on Him still.”

And while thus looking “upwards” for the guidance of His eye, we may joyously look “onwards;” for in our home above “His servants shall serve Him.”

8th. *Love of power.* We may have power even now over the world, the flesh, and the devil, so that each may be resisted and conquered; our feet made like hinds’ feet, able to walk upon our high places of fellowship with our God; and sin, temptation, cares and sorrows, business and duties, all turned to profit, and used as so many opportunities of proving the fulness and power of Christ. Oh, what a sphere for the power of Christ to rest upon us now; and by-and-by, we shall share with Him in all the power and glory of His kingdom.

9th. *Love of pleasure.* Ah; yes! He has pleasures for us even now. No joy like the joy He gives—“joy unspeakable, and full of glory;” and *soon* it will be ours to drink to the full of the river of His pleasures.

And thus we might go on from thing to thing, and prove that He is able and willing to gratify every longing of our hearts; not to crush, but to *satisfy*. Truly the Lord is our portion, our present portion, and a goodly portion He is. Not only our inheritance, but the portion of our cup, waiting each day to fill it to the brim, and never weary of replenishing it again.

But, beloved children of God, there is something higher, higher; a deeper longing of our hearts than any of these things; a stronger motive power, a richer source of joy. Let all these desires be gratified, and we should still cry, “More, more!” We have spoken of the desire of *being loved*; but let the *responsive* love,

deep, true, clinging love to Christ abound, and we shall be satisfied indeed. It is that love which seeketh not its own, that gladly sacrifices itself for Him, that finds its joy in ministering to Him, and would rather glorify and gladden Him than exalt or please itself.

Who does not know the joy of loving another *better* than oneself, so that that person's comfort, gratification, and glory are dearer to us than our own? Who has not proved that in such a case, instead of its being a struggle to give up our own will, it is a greater pleasure to please the loved one than to gratify self?

Oh let us cultivate *this* love to Christ! He is verily our portion, and in His condescending grace comes down to us where we are, and presents Himself to us as able and willing to gratify every longing of our hearts; but while doing this, He would attract us, and raise us *higher*, even into fellowship with Himself, to drink into His love, to share His thoughts, and to enjoy His company. He is so truly beautiful in all His ways, so altogether lovely, that we cannot keep company with Him without *growing in love*; and as we grow in love, *self* will be swallowed up in Christ; and thus we shall be prepared to enter into *His* joy as expressed in the words, "My meat and my drink is to do the will of Him that sent me." And then, while we should find HIM a *satisfying* portion, we should not be so much occupied with what He *gives* as with the joy of *ministering to Him*.

SELF-EXALTATION is the work of the devil. It has been his one great work since he fell, and consequently our *natural* work from the cradle. *Self-abasement* was the work of Christ from the manger to the cross. He "humbled Himself;" and this should be the continual effort of the new man in Christ, to humble self. Were we thus all truly self-abased there would be no hindrance to fellowship; we should cling close together, and not bear to be torn asunder.

NOT WALKING IN LOVE.

A BELIEVER IN CHRIST NOT WALKING IN LOVE, and not continuing to do so, whatever may be the temptation to the contrary :

1st. *Breaks Christ's law* (John xiii. 24), which is greater sin than breaking God's law given by Moses at Sinai.

2nd. "*Is nothing,*" instead of being "something," in God's Church (see Gal. vi. 3); for he is not "bearing others' burdens." He is as a drone in the hive in which all should be working bees.

3rd. *Does not give "glory to God,"* according to 1 Cor. x. 31; since, however much he may "give thanks" (v. 30) over his own daily food and portion, he does not stay to "consider" his weaker fellow-saints, or his fellow-men, in the use he makes of it; and therefore stumbles some Jew or Gentile, or some saint in God's church, whom he should build up instead of weaken.

4th. *Receives "the grace of God in vain"* (see 2 Cor. vi. 1); for that grace was given him, not for himself or for his own individual salvation only, but that he might "*minister* the same as a good steward of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter iv. 10), and especially that he might henceforth know no fellow saint "after the flesh," but might value even the feeblest saint as God's new creation work in Christ, and as one "for whom *Christ died.*" (See 1 Cor. viii. 11.)

And 5th. "*Is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth*" (1 John ii. 11); for he hates his brother instead of loving him, there being no middle state of mind between these two; just as there are but two natures in God's child, the flesh and the Spirit, and "these are contrary the one to the other."

"Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." (Rom. xiii. 12.)

"Let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love." (1 Thess. v. 8.)

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." (1 John iv. 7.)

"NOT ASHAMED."

God's word is like His creation-work. The minutest and closest searching of it only shows new beauties, and teaches new lessons. His words, like His works, are "sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." (Ps. cxi. 2.) Sometimes a single word will guide to much precious and soul-stirring truth by the passages in which it occurs;* and the study of some Scripture phrase may do the same; for not only are "the words of the Lord pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times," with no dross, that is, in any number of them, but Solomon confirms this testimony of David when he says, "*Every word of God is pure*" (purified, see Hebrew): "He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him." (Prov. xxx. 5.)

A few passages of the phrase "Not ashamed" may serve to awake in us fresh praise to our gracious God, as well as fresh lessons about ourselves.

Let us begin with Gen. ii. 25, the "not ashamed" of Eden's garden, before sin marred it and degraded God's creature—man. "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were *not ashamed*." Such was the purity of our human race at their creation. No blush of shame on their unclathed bodies, either toward their Maker or toward each other, because no thought of sin had then darkened their mind, no inward motion of it had as yet stained their conscience. "To the pure all things are pure;" and their mind and conscience were not defiled.

* See a paper on the word "Bosom" in the New Testament—*Gospel Lamp*: vol v. p. 309.

The narrative of God's creation of us as a race is so brief, and is so soon read, that we need to pause and meditate, or we fail to feel the contrast of it with what now is. “God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions,” has become a readily admitted truth; but to realize that man's very clothing tells of the vast and solemn difference in him now from what he was as created by God's hand, may serve to impress on us afresh what a change sin made. A raiment-wearing race might well learn, if they would, even by the shame that bodily nakedness would cause them, how different they are from what God made them, and how *naked* their souls are of any righteousness in which to appear before God. Man finds clothing as needful for him in the outside daylight as bread is for his inside hunger; and both these things are “reproofs of instruction” (see Prov. vi. 23), intended to teach him “the way of life,” by showing him his fall and ruin as a sinner.

What a lesson also against all admiration of dress! Would that fellow-saints, and especially youthful ones, would profit by Isaac Watts's verse, learnt by many of us in our childhood—

“Why should the garments that were made
To hide our shame, provoke our pride?
The art of dress did ne'er begin
'Till Eve, our mother, learned to sin.”

Surely there is much to learn by the “not ashamed” of Eden's garden.

Turn now to a very different scene. Read Romans i. 16: “For I am *not ashamed* of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth.”

Here imperial Rome comes before us, filled with its multitude of Adam and Eve's sons and daughters—that city which by man's ways of advancement and greatness had made herself mistress of the then known world. Art and science, military power and earthly

wealth, were at that very time in her to the full. Her very plebeians lived on the spoils of other and conquered nations, eating their bread without labour, and using daily the public marble baths which queenly Rome provided for all her citizens; her patricians were as kings. But with it all, from the lowest to the highest, their conscience accused them, and they knew themselves guilty before God. The very raiment they wore told their shame, and none could dispense with it. The plebeian of the street needed it; and the emperor's "purple" was absolutely required to hide his shame all the while that its gorgeous colour was the boast of his Cæsar rank.

How true that nothing man has, or can acquire, can give boldness before God! for it cannot even restore him to his first innocence, much less give him peace with God as a sinner.

But though the "not ashamed" of Eden's garden can never be recalled, a more glorious "not ashamed" is ours in God's gospel; and it is with this that Paul delighted to come to Rome. As much a sinner in himself as either the emperor in his purple, or the beggar in his rags, and wearing, like them, the daily clothes of man's common shame; yea, more, confessing that his distinctive Jewish raiment, with all its Pharisaic phylacteries round its edge, did but show him as "the chief of sinners," he nevertheless is "*not ashamed* of the gospel." He sees in its fulness God's storehouse of "best robes" for returning sinners, whether they be Gentile or Jew; whether Greek or barbarian; wise or unwise. He joys to think of God's righteousness, put as a robe "upon all them that believe;" and as one "separated unto the gospel of God" by God Himself, he is "not ashamed" to come with it even to Rome.

And this boldness before God and man in the justifying righteousness the gospel brings, would be shared, he knew, by all that believed its testimony. In Rom.

x. he unfolds the working of this glorious gospel, and not only says that this righteousness in Christ is the end of the accusing and condemning law (v. 4), and is so nigh that every believing one has it, and is saved by confessing Christ (v. 10,) but the saved one shares the boldness of the preacher who brought it: “For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall NOT BE ASHAMED. (Rom. x. 11.)

“Ashamed of Jesus! sooner far
Let evening blush to own a star.
Ashamed of Jesus! just as soon
Let midnight be ashamed of noon.

“Ashamed of Jesus! yes, I may,
When I’ve no guilt to wash away;
No tear to wipe, no good to crave;
No fears to quell, no soul to save.

“Till then, nor is my boasting vain,
Till then I’ll boast a Saviour slain;
And oh, may this my glory be,
That Christ is NOT ASHAMED of me!”

This last line of the hymn may well turn us to passages of Christ’s not being ashamed of us. In this line of thought we come to that blessed word in Heb. xii. 2: “Looking off unto Jesus . . . who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, *despising the shame.*” In our blessed Lord it is more than “not ashamed;” for He even counted the shame as nothing, because of the joy that was before Him of rescuing sinners from the power of darkness, and of bringing them as “the many sons” unto glory, to God’s eternal delight. In comparison with this blessed result of His cross, Jesus *despised* the shame.

True, He must be put to every indignity and contempt which Satan and man could heap upon Him; for without even “the sheepskins and goatskins,” which persecuted believers in Him had had, even in the dens and caves in which they hid (see Heb. xi. 37), the very raiment of Jesus was denied Him when He hung on the tree. But when thus beyond all others in the

"shame" to which HE was put, He "who knew no sin," and had no thought in Him at that solemn hour but of divine, perfect, and infinite obedience, could "despise the shame" that man's ignorance and malice put Him to in open day. How different in this respect the tree of transgression in Eden from the tree of Christ's blessed obedience at Calvary! The former brought on man and woman the shame of a guilty nakedness, while Jesus at Calvary could give His uncovered "back to the smiters, His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; and hid not His face from *shame* and spitting." (Isa. l. 6, 7.) Yes; He could gloriously bear all the merely human shame of nakedness, for His very blood on the cross became to Him as a robe of beauty and of honour. And since all of it was for us, the flock given Him of the Father, we joy to remember that Christ at that hour was NOT ASHAMED of us. Oh that the fruit of it in our hearts might be that, like Paul, we might neither be ashamed of His gospel, nor of the feeblest of His saints!

We often sing the precious hymn—

"When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the King of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride."

And sometimes also that less-known verse of it—

"His dying crimson, *like a robe*,
Spreads o'er His body on the tree;
Then I am dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me."

But our feeble walk, as His redeemed ones in these days, tells how deeply we need in our hearts the melting and inflaming power of His love to make us bolder confessors of His Name among men.

But Hebrews ii. 11 gives us another view of Christ's being "not ashamed" of us. In this passage it is Christ as in resurrection. His "being made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death" is

past; and now resurrection has perfected Him as "the Captain of our salvation." God raised Jesus from the dead as our Sanctifier, through His death, and it is God who also has raised us up through faith in Him; for the same God who begat Jesus from His blessed sinless death, on the resurrection morning, has also begotten us, through Him, from our filthy death in trespasses and sins; and Jesus, now within the veil, rejoices to own us as the resurrection sons of His God and Father, begotten, through faith in Him, with the same glorious power that also begot Him from the dead eighteen hundred years ago.

No wonder then that we read in verse 11, that since both "He that sanctifieth," *i.e.* the risen Jesus, and we "who are sanctified," *i.e.* we all who thus far on in time's course have believed in Him, are "all of One;" *i.e.* are of God's resurrection begetting—no wonder, I say, we find it added that "He (Jesus) is NOT ASHAMED to call us brethren."

Seen as the resurrection sons of His own God and Father, how could He be ashamed of us? How could Adam be ashamed of the woman, when freshly given him as the workmanship of God, out of his own "deep sleep"? How could "the Hind of the (resurrection) morning" (see title of Ps. xxii.) be ashamed of any begotten of God through Him, and with Him, and given Him, as "the dew" of that morning (see Ps. cx. 3), to sparkle for God with Him in its resurrection light, and to refresh Him as the "willing" people in this day of God's power? Just as little could Aaron be "ashamed" of those names on his breast and on his shoulders, every one of which was a jewel, and which gave out only more and more their worth and their beauty, as the light of God's sanctuary shone on them. The names of even Reuben and Simeon shone bright and precious in that sanctuary, however failing their life had been or was in the camp of Israel and in their individual tents. (See Gen. xlix. 3, 5.)

"In heaven His blood for ever speaks
 In God the Father's ear;
 His Church, *the jewels on His heart,*
 Jesus will ever bear."

And of them, in this light, He truly is "NOT ASHAMED."

But these precious words occur again in Heb. xi. 16: "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is *not ashamed* to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city." The connection here is very different. The subject in this chapter is the mighty power of "faith," wrought by God's Spirit in saints *here below*. And as a consequence, we are told what strangers and pilgrims they are, even when possessed of the best of this world's things. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are named as some who left their native land, drawn by God's "cords of love," and the attractions of the "eternal glory." (See Acts vii. 2, and 1 Peter v. 10.) Neither would they return to it when they could have done so. They also found no true rest, even in the earthly Canaan, when they in their measure possessed it.

The truth is, earth is all too poor, and time below is utterly too short for those who know themselves blessed in Christ above, and rejoice in Him, while He delights in them. They confess themselves strangers here, and pilgrims, and in this way "they declare plainly that they seek a fatherland." (v. 14, see Greek.) And what "fatherland" is there that can ever suit their God-begotten birth, or the heavenly mind which God's Spirit teaches them, but the city which God "hath prepared for them," "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" of Heb. xii. 22, and the "continuing (*i.e.* the eternal) city" of Heb. xiii. 14. Hence God is as truly "NOT ASHAMED" of a people in the earth, whose God-wrought "desire" nothing but God's unveiled presence and His eternal glory can satisfy, as Christ is "NOT ASHAMED" to own us as His brethren even now within the veil.

This boasting world is always ashamed of God's pilgrims, when His pilgrims maintain their true pilgrim character. Jacob's shepherd-slowness was unsuited to Esau and his four hundred men (Gen. xxiii. 12-16), and Joseph had only to confess before Pharaoh that his brethren were “shepherds,” for them to be shunned by the Egyptians, to whom every shepherd was “an abomination.” (Gen. xlvi. 34.) But as, George Whitfield delighted to say, and so truly, that “God's grace welcomes the devil's castaways,” so does God's glory shine even now the light of a coming home on those who suffer reproach for Christ (see 1 Peter iv. 14); and God Himself is longing to welcome, at the pearly gates of the “continuing city,” all those who, by His grace in them, have in some measure gone forth to an earth-rejected Jesus, “outside the camp” of man's false religion, as well as of man's secular Babylon. And this is true more or less of ALL in whom, through Christ, His own Spirit dwells. No; verily. God Himself is “NOT ASHAMED” of His pilgrim people.

Other precious uses of this phrase will occur to our readers more rapidly than we can pen them; for it is one of the joys of all work of teaching in God's Church, that the listeners and readers have in them the unction that teacheth all things as truly as “pastors and teachers” have.

There is the “not ashamed” of Psalm xxxiv. 5, when those children of God who, like David in that Psalm (see its title), have wandered into the enemies' power, nevertheless look to Him, and are lightened, and their faces are “not ashamed.”

Then there is the “not ashamed” of 1 Tim. i. 12., where Paul, as “a good soldier of Jesus Christ,” was “not ashamed” of the *afflictions* of the gospel any more than he was in Rom. i. 16 of the gospel itself; and there are other passages.

But Scripture often teaches by solemn *contrast* in the use of its phrases, as well as by bright and blessed

connection. "Not ashamed" is a solemn reproof in God's word, as well as a blessed cheer.

Job reproves his friends (Job xix. 3), that in their ignorance and self-confidence they were "*not ashamed to make themselves strange to him;*" for ignorance and presumption can be bold as truly as faith can be, and childlike love.

But Jeremiah vi. 15, and viii. 12, passages in which the false prophets of Israel "were NOT AT ALL ASHAMED, neither could they blush," are scriptures painfully applicable to the days we live in; for as there were false prophets among that people, so there were to be "false teachers," says 2 Peter ii. 1, amongst us; and there now are. And the "forehead of brass," and the "neck of iron sinew" with which they advance their corruptions of God's gospel, too plainly tell that "their conscience is seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim. iv. 2); "they are past feeling" (Eph. iv. 19), and have reached the terrible state in which they are "not at all ashamed."

Alas! their eternal shame and confusion will soon cover them, unless even now they turn, like religious, persecuting Saul of Tarsus, to a risen Jesus, and to "the gospel of the glory of the blessed God."

May it be so. Amen.

H. D.

DIVINE TITLES.

[One object of Mr. Newberry's *Englishman's Hebrew Bible* is to show accurately the various Divine Titles which are more or less hidden or obscured in our ordinary Bibles; for he finds that "there are treasures of precious truth" in these Titles. We make an extract regarding some of them from the *Second Part*, just published, and commend the work to the notice of those who search the Scriptures.—Ed.]

A NAME or title is expressive of nature and character. Each separate title of God may be regarded as one letter, complete indeed in itself, yet, when arranged and combined together, spelling out in full the one grand and wondrous Name of the God of the Bible.

EL.

The title EL (God, singular) occurs about 250 times.

The first occurrence is in Gen. xiv. 18–20, 22: “Most high God (El), possessor of heaven and earth.”

El signifies “strong,” “first.” It is the title which shows God to be the Mighty One, the first great Cause of all.

This title is generally connected with some one or more of the divine attributes or perfections; as: “Almighty God” (Gen. xvii. 1); “Everlasting God” (Gen. xxi. 33); “A jealous God” (Exod. xx. 5); “A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He” (Deut. xxxii. 4); “A great God, a mighty and a terrible” (Deut. x. 19); “*The living God*” (Josh. iii. 10); “A merciful God” (Deut. iv. 31); “A faithful God” (Deut. vii. 9); “A mighty and terrible God” (Deut. vii. 21), &c.

The persons of the Godhead are three, Father, Son, and Spirit; but in nature and essence God is one. Each attribute of God is infinite—one infinite eternal love, one infinite almighty power, and so on—hence the attributes are connected generally with the singular name for God, EL.

ELOAH.

ELOAH (God, singular), from *ahlah*, to worship, to adore, presents God as the one supreme object of worship, the Adorable One.

It occurs about fifty-six times; first in Deut. xxxii. 15: “Then he forsook Eloah, which made him.” Again (v. 17): “They sacrificed to devils, not to Eloah.” It is very frequently used in the book of Job.

ELOHIM.

ELOHIM (God, plural of *Eloah*) occurs about 2,500 times; first in Gen. i. 1: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Here it is joined to a verb in the singular—“God (Elohim, plural) created” (singular)—showing Trinity acting in unity.

It also frequently occurs with adjectives, pronouns, and verbs in the plural. Gen. i. 26: "And God said; Let us make (plural) man in our image" (singular). Gen. iii. 22: "As one of us." Gen. xx. 13: "When God caused (both plural) me to wander." Josh. xxiv. 19: "He is a holy God (plural). He is a jealous God" (singular). See also Isa. vi. 3.

JEHOVAH.

JEHOVAH (*The Lord*). The title Jehovah occurs about 6,000 times; but it is generally rendered "the LORD," and only occasionally "Jehovah," as Exod. vi. 3; Ps. lxxxiii. 18; Isa. xii. 2, xxvi. 4; and in combination, as Gen. xxii. 14; Exod. xvii. 15; Judg. vi. 24—in all seven times.

It first occurs, in connection with Elohim, in Gen. ii. 4: "*The Lord* God (Jehovah Elohim) made;" and alone, Gen. iv. 1, 3, &c.

The signification is, "He that always was, that always is, and that ever is to come." We have it thus translated and interpreted in Rev. i. 4: "From Him which is" (present participle, \acute{o} $\acute{\omega}\nu$, the Ever-existing One), "and which was" (imperfect tense, \acute{o} $\eta\nu$, expressing continuance in the past), "and which is to come" (present participle, \acute{o} $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\chi\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$, the Coming One, ever to come).

It is a combination in marvellous perfection of the three periods of existence in one word—the future, the present, and the past.

First, YEHĪ, "He will be," long tense; second, HOVE, "Being," participle; third, HAHYAH, "He was," short tense used in the past.

Taking the three first letters of YEHĪ (YEH); the two middle letters of *hove* (OV); and the two last letters of *hahyah* (AH), we have YEH-OV-AH, or JEHOVAH, in full.

ADŌN.

ADŌN (Lord, singular), Lord, Master, Possessor, or

Proprietor. Root either from *dān*, to rule, govern, to judge, or from *aden*, a base. Occurs about thirty times. First occurrence, Exod. xxiii. 17: "Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Adōn Jehovah."

JEHOVAH TITLES.

JEHOVAH-JIREH, "Jehovah will see," or "provide." (Gen. xxii. 14.)

JEHOVAH-ROPHCA, "Jehovah that healeth thee." (Exod. xv. 26.)

JEHOVAH-NISSI, "Jehovah my banner." (Exod. xvii. 15.)

JEHOVAH-MEKADDESHCEM, "Jehovah that doth sanctify thee." (Exod. xxxi. 13; Lev. xx. 8, xxi. 8, xxii. 9, 16, 32; Ezek. xx. 12.)

JEHOVAH-SHALOM, "Jehovah send peace." (Judges vi. 24.)

JEHOVAH-TSEBAHOTH, "Jehovah of hosts." (1 Sam. i. 3, &c.)

JEHOVAH-ROHI, "Jehovah my shepherd." (Psalm xxiii. 1.)

JEHOVAH-HELEYŌN, "Jehovah most high." (Ps. vii. 17, xlvii. 2, xcvi. 9.)

JEHOVAH-TSIDKEENU, "Jehovah our righteousness." (Jer. xxiii. 6, xxxiii. 17.)

JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH, "Jehovah is there." (Ezek. xlvi. 35.)

NOTES AND REPLIES.

WHAT does Paul mean by saying, "*If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead*"? (Phil. iii. 11.)

In the first place the passage should be rendered "the resurrection which is from among the dead." There is to be a resurrection of just and unjust; but the resurrection *from among the dead* belongs only to those who are partakers of the first resurrection.

This, however, is the portion of all believers; for "*those who are Christ's*" will be caught up to meet Him when He comes. Here, however, the apostle writes: "If by any means," and points to what all might not and do not attain, but to that for which he laboured. That which he sought to realize was the present power of resurrection life in Christ Jesus, so that, what was an object of hope in the future, might be in the spirit an attainment now.

Does God lead into temptation?

Certainly, or we should not have had the prayer given, "Lead us not into temptation." But the leading into temptation has two different results, the one good, and the other evil. The word in itself has no bad significance, and means simply, to put to the test. Thus God did tempt Abraham (Gen. xxii. 1; Heb. xi. 7), and put his obedience to the test. He endured the temptation, and in him was fulfilled the word, "Blessed is the man who endureth temptation: for when he is tried [*or becomes approved*] he shall receive the crown of life." (James i. 12.) Therefore we can "count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations." (v. 2.) On the other hand, as we know our weakness, we are reminded of our Lord's words to the eleven in the garden, "Pray that ye enter not into temptation." We are also not to be ignorant of Satan's devices. As the tempter (Matt. iv. 3), he is ever seeking, through temptation, to lead us into sin; and regarding this we are told, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man: but every man is tempted, when he is led away of his own lust, and enticed." Such temptation is the sieve in the hand of the enemy; but he can only bring the chaff to light. (Compare Luke xxii. 31, 32 with verse 40.)

THE FLESH AS SEEN IN SENNACHERIB AND IN HEZEKIAH.

(Notes of an Address in 1841.)

WE need to be reminded that we have to do with none else than the living God, with whom nothing is impossible. This we see in the gospel, which is God's power, and in which God has triumphed, as we read in Col. ii. 15. It is with this divine power that we have to do from first to last. We begin with it at our conversion, and we have to carry the remembrance of it and the realization of it with us all our journey through, and to sing, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory." (Ps. cxv. 1.)

All through God's dealings with man He was thus revealing Himself, and in His revelations was awaiting the coming in of "the due time," when in befitting circumstances God would reveal, in the person of Christ and in His cross, what the power of God was able to accomplish. We now stand at "the end of the ages" (Heb. ix. 26), when Christ has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; and having accomplished that, He has entered into the holy place "to appear in the presence of God for us." Our gospel is thus emphatically the gospel of *resurrection power*.

God has ever and again allowed man to exercise his own power, to do or to pledge himself to obedience, as did Israel at the foot of Sinai; but it has only served to bring out into still greater prominence man's utter ruin and entire failure; and God sets aside all human power, having fully proved what it is worth, and how impotent man is to the work of his own reclamation.

Resurrection is the entire setting aside of all human power; and the raising of Christ from the dead is the witness to us of what we need, even *divine* power, to quicken the dead, and to call things that are not as

though they were. The resurrection thus takes away all glory from man, and becomes to faith the power by which we have deliverance from the world, and through which we are led into practical separation from it, in union with the risen One. It is as we are thus standing in Christ Jesus that we are able to view all the world as lying in the arms and power of the wicked one, and to know ourselves as delivered out of it; for we have been rescued therefrom by the blood that was shed, and are saved by the life of Him who liveth for us before God. It is thus that we are set at liberty, and it is according to the will of God, who would teach us what is the real liberty of His children, in which we are called to walk to the glory of His grace; for God has not only provided a Saviour to save us from our sins, but a Deliverer to bring the saved ones clean out of the place of judgment.

There is an important connection between redemption and resurrection; for while "in Him we have redemption through His blood," whereby peace is ministered to the soul, it is through being in Christ risen from the dead, that we have strength for our conflict or service by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. The death and resurrection of Christ are preached as a testimony to all, and faith therein gives peace moment by moment. But there is inwardly a conscious actual need discovered, and this is met by no less a power than that of the Holy Ghost in us, an earnest of the power that having raised up Jesus shall raise up us also. The indwelling Holy Ghost thus becomes a pledge for the future, and a power for the present, to those whom God has in spirit raised up together with Christ, and made to sit together with Him in heavenly places.

Thus while these things are given to us in testimony for our faith, they are taught us practically likewise. This we must never lose sight of, or we shall become theoretic and unreal. Paul, speaking of himself and others in a time of special trouble, says, "We had the

sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in Him who raiseth the dead." In this way we learn in reality the power that wrought in Jesus, and thus practically learning God's lessons the soul knows the power which faith has to do with; for tribulation worketh patience (or endurance), and endurance experience, and experience hope. When there is no remedy below, the soul is thrown back on God, and is able to say with Paul, We are troubled and pressed on every side, but not brought to a standstill; we are driven into a corner, but we find a way out; we are persecuted, but not forsaken by God; we are thrust down, but not destroyed by Satan. (See Gk. 2 Cor. iv. 8.) What blessed lessons! Ever cast back on God for all need and in all circumstances, for there is no other resource, and none is desired; God is sufficient.

But while this is learnt in the surroundings of actual circumstances (in which the believer may often say with Paul, in 1 Cor. xv., "I die daily"), there is a yet more blessed way of learning this power of Christ's resurrection and this conformity to His death, and that is by conscious fellowship with Him. This fellowship is independent of all circumstances, and is the fruit of our being made one with Him; and as we enter into and enjoy that oneness in the power of the Holy Ghost, we can say that in measure we know HIM, and count all else as dross and dung. (Phil. iii.)

It was not by any such testimony as this, that the Old Testament saints learnt the truth of death and resurrection, but in their own personal experiences during their pilgrimage. It was thus that Hannah learnt it, and it is thus that Hezekiah learns it in his sickness, as recorded in the book of Kings and in Isaiah xxxviii., a record which, from its importance, has been given twice, just as the history of Paul's conversion is given to us no less than three times in the Acts.

In the Scriptures of the prophets are made known to us all the great principles of our dispensation, and as our souls learn the truth of God in Christ we go back and discover truth in the word of God given to those holy men of old. They knew not these fuller truths contained in their own words; for they searched "what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ [*i.e.* bearing witness to Christ] which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow." The spirit of the prophet was above the dispensation in which he lived, and was the voice of God witnessing against it, and witnessing of the future.

The four historic chapters xxxvi.—xxxix. divide the book of Isaiah into two separate portions. The first thirty-five chapters have a character and a connection of their own, but chapter xl. opens with a different strain. It commences with, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people;" and the reason is that "all flesh is grass." This has been fully proved in Israel's history, and in God's prophetic teaching. This having been settled for ever, there is now no check to the bringing out the fulness of blessing that is to be found in God, and is revealed under the testimony of His Spirit.

In Sennacherib we see a manifestation of the unrestrained working of the flesh, in the open blasphemy, wherewith he blasphemed the living God. Human will and power, whether moral or intellectual, ever ends in rebellion and blasphemy against God, even as Pharaoh asked, "Who is Jehovah?" and as the Wilful king shall set himself up against God, and speak "marvellous things against the God of gods." Awful as this is, it is the spirit of the age in which we live, and even its fainter indications have not to be treated with lightness. We are told whereunto it will grow, and our own times bear ample witness to the rapidity of its progress. The spirit of the age is the spirit of the god of the age—the prince of darkness; and

its characteristic is man against God, through the in-working of Satan, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. But the power of God separates the redeemed from the world, whether in its good or in its evil aspect, in its philanthropy or in its oppressions, in its honour or in its dishonour; and we need to be on our guard, lest we be found denying the resurrection, by abetting the world in its endeavours to better itself. By all means let us seek the individual well-being of the perishing multitudes, for individually we have a deep responsibility; but upon the world as a whole God has passed the sentence of death, and says, "I make all things new."

In the world outside we learn what the flesh is in its grosser forms of wickedness and atheism; but there is a deeper way of learning it still, and that is in the secret of our own hearts. It is there that we learn its bitterness, and know its hatefulness, and find that the flesh in the holiest man of God is but the same as it is in the vilest sinner. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. It is a bitter school, and a bitter lesson that our own hearts teach us; but into this God led Hezekiah, that he, who had already learnt what the flesh in the person of Sennacherib was, might learn what it was *in himself*. God teaches us what the flesh is in ourselves, that we may glorify Him and justify all His dealings with us, and learn inwardly by our own experience that which we learn by the testimony of God's word, "That in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing." It is thus that when death is stamped on something we love, we can yet rejoice in a risen Lord; and if disappointed of anything in ourselves, Christ is but made the more precious to us, and we are taught that while we have nothing in ourselves, we have all in Him. This is our daily lesson, slow to be learnt and easily forgotten, and needing constant repetition.

"In those days," it is said, that is, in the days after

Hezekiah had learnt what the flesh was in a blaspheming enemy of God, he had to learn what it was in himself; and it is in ourselves that the abomination and deceitfulness of the flesh is learnt, far more than in the world. Would that this were ever remembered by the people of God; it would make them tender in their walk, gentle in their demeanour, and trembling before the word of their God. Pride and highmindedness would disappear, and the thought of each would be, "I who am less than the least of all saints," and I "the chief of sinners."

Hezekiah was "sick unto death." He heard the Lord's word, "Set thy house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live," and he "wept sore," and reminded God of all his goodness, and told Him how he had walked before Him with a perfect heart. It was all true; but there is something very wrong when man pleads his goodness to God; and very solemn is it when God meets man on that ground. God thus meets Hezekiah; for He recognizes all he pleads, and promises him fifteen more years; and these years served to prove what his boasted goodness was worth. The use God made of the time was very different from that which the king proposed to himself. Hezekiah thought he wanted a little longer time for praise, that he might tell of the riches of God's grace. "Therefore," says he, "we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord." (v. 20.) But God's purpose was to teach him himself, so that, humbled by his terrible pride and failure, he might be riper for God at the close of the fifteen years than he was at their commencement. Thus God makes our failures to praise Him, and our bitterest lessons to exalt His holy name.

We have to learn death and resurrection in our conflict with the world around; but we have to learn it also in conflict with our own hearts within, even as our blessed Master learned what the cross was in

the garden of Gethsemane. We thus learn obedience through suffering; and we learn to know that resurrection is prepared for us, and unfolded to us, to deliver us from the fear of death, enabling the faithful soul, instead of weeping sore at the prospect of death, to say, "To depart and to be with Christ is far better."

In "the writing of Hezekiah" we have a striking testimony to the helplessness of all around him: "I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years." "He will cut me off from the thrum" (as a weaver's piece of cloth that has come to the end); "from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me." "As a lion, so will he break all my bones," &c. He thought God was against him; but in the midst of all this conflict of soul he turns to God, and casting himself entirely on Him, says: "O Lord, undertake for me;" "pledge thyself on my behalf," as the word in the original beautifully and emphatically gives it. God's purpose was to bless, though little in the way he thought, and in the meanwhile to make him see what the restoring grace of God was, that He might show him His name and His glory.

It is thus we often realize the blessing of being brought to an extremity, and of having the sentence of death in ourselves. Hezekiah exclaims, "What shall I say?" and the answer comes, "He hath spoken; He also hath done it." Hezekiah needed to know that man lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. In Christ we have all; not only the promise, "He hath said it," but the performance, "He hath done it;" for God has raised Him from the dead.

Our souls find rest in what God has wrought; and to this the Holy Spirit is ever bearing witness, testifying to the value of the blood on the one hand, and to the fact of the resurrection on the other. It is there, and not to the inworking graces of the Spirit in us,

that we can look for satisfaction and rest; for when we look into ourselves we are but robbing God of His glory, although we mean it not, and self rather than Christ will be found to occupy our thoughts.

Often, under the pressure of the hand of God, in our self-confidence, we say, "I will go softly all my days," little thinking this to be a device of Satan to get our minds occupied with ourselves and our resolutions rather than with God. But when the soul has fully learnt what it is to be "in Christ," this wily device of self-occupation is seen, the subtlety of the flesh is detected, and good resolutions are measured by their proper standard, and taken at their proper value, such as we see them revealed in the events of Hezekiah's latter years.

God's record is, "He returned not unto the Lord according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up." (2 Chron. xxxii. 25.) Truly "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." God only can find it out, and He takes His own way of doing so. Of this deceitfulness of the heart we need to be specially on our guard, living as we do in the very days of the "deceivableness of unrighteousness." To say, "I will go softly," is but fleshly confidence; it is but flesh refined, which, when its opportunity comes, proves itself to be what it ever was, weak and helpless, yet ever proud and self-assured.

Hezekiah had been learning that by death we live. This is the Christian's paradox. We died with Christ and we live in Him, and read the judgment and condemnation of the flesh in the cross of Christ, and can say, "By these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." It is by seeing death stamped on all human desires, expectations, and hopes by the cross that we live. We must expect sorrow in the church, and evil in the world, and we must daily learn the practical value of resurrection in the disappointment of our fondest hopes.

God has given us so great a gift as union with a risen Christ, and how would His love be fully displayed did He not lead us into circumstances to value His gift? Therefore it is that He disappoints us ever and again, that we may go to Christ for all our need; and that as hereafter, so now, we may sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." The world is seeking to draw our souls away from Christ, and God's end is that through earthly disappointments we might ever find the life of our spirit in Him.

The flesh in the child of God comes not out in open blasphemy, as in Sennacherib; but he has to learn the value of forgiving grace, and to say, "Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." God must put away sin before He quickens; for He cannot make us alive in our sins, and we have thus to learn the value of redemption. There are various stages in learning redemption's lessons, but all must be learnt under the shelter of the precious blood. Redemption is really the greatest of all truths, and its estimate should increase in our hearts day by day, as we are so often reminded that we have been brought up out of the horrible pit and miry clay.

The knowledge of God's truth exalts while it humbles. God is the living God, and Hezekiah had to learn Him as such, and to know that it is only in life that God can be worshipped. Israel sought to worship God in the flesh, on which death had been stamped; but God can only be worshipped in spirit and in truth. Hezekiah's writing was not only a lesson of death and resurrection in himself, but it also teaches that real worship belongs to the living alone. "The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day."

Yet, after all that he had learned of God, and all his resolutions, what complete failure is seen in chap. xxxix! Truly we are slow to remember that in the saint "all flesh is grass" still, and resurrection is God's

only remedy, involving as it does a new life in a new Headship.

And, alas! as Hezekiah misused God's grace and mercy, so does the flesh in us ever misuse God's blessings, exalting itself and not God. This led to Paul getting "the thorn in the flesh" in which he gloried, that the power of Christ might rest on him, and that he might not be exalted above measure at the abundance of God's gracious revelations to him.

God's setting up of man in the flesh has been to prove what the flesh is; and when man is brought back to God, it must be by regeneration, and this is what is preached to us in the gospel. Hezekiah is restored to health of body; and when the ambassadors come God leaves him, in order to let him see what was in his heart. Does he speak of the Lord his God, of the manifestation of His power? Still less does he tell them of the deep lessons he had been learning. We hear nothing of this; but he shows them all that was in his house, and then the sentence comes from the righteous God, "All shall be carried to Babylon."

So it is with us in the Church of God. If we are proud of anything, it all goes to help on the world, and all that appears of so much advantage and glory only proves so much loss to us, and so much glory for Babylon. The real value of anything is to lay it at the foot of the cross; and if we lay it not there, the devil will use it in ways we little dream of.

Wrath came down upon the folly of the king; the flesh is again judged; but he learns to say, "Good is the word of the Lord." Well is it for us when we can accept the punishment of our folly, and own the goodness of Him who afflicts not willingly nor grieves the children of men. May we learn to accept God's rebuke, and willingly be made base in our own eyes; and seeing Christ to be our all in all, be content ever to be recipients of His favour—"poor and needy," yet thought upon by Him.

GOD'S JEWELS.

God has in His word blessed expressions of the *value* to Him of the objects of His grace, as well as of His *affection* for them. What can more express His tender love and care than His speaking of us as "the apple of His eye"? The scriptures that thus describe His saints were considered lately;* but the same Israel was also to Him His "peculiar treasure," His "special people," and His "jewels;" for the Hebrew word employed is the same in all these three varieties of translation. God *values* His people as truly as He also *loves* them.

In Ephesians i. 18 the apostle prays that we may know what are "the *riches* of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints," just as he also prays, in chapter iii. 17, that we may be "rooted and grounded in *love*," and may "know the *love of Christ*" (the love, that is, with which God loves Christ—see John xvii. 23), "which passeth knowledge," and may thus "be filled unto all the fulness of God." In John xvii. also our blessed Lord not only says, "All mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them" (v. 10), and hence prays that, as God's "special treasure" and His "jewels," we may be "kept," but He prays also "that the *love* wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them." (v. 26.) In the epistles, too, we are as much His holy "temple" collectively (1 Cor. iii. 16), and our bodies His "temple" individually (1 Cor. vi. 19), as we are also His "*dear children*" (Eph. v. 1); and in the very furthest unfolding of God's blessed joy over us, when all His redeemed are His for ever in "a new earth and new heavens" (Rev. xxi. 1-7), it not only tells that "the tabernacle of

* See *Golden Lamp*, vol. vii.

God is with men," and that "they are His people, and God Himself is with them, their God;" but also, "He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son" (*v.* 7)—the delight of God's *heart*, that is, as well as "to the praise of His glory."

These are distinct and different teachings of our gracious God for us, though so closely linked together; and each is intended to operate even now with its own definiteness both upon our affections and upon our outward lives.

Our Lord's parables of the grace of God to the unsaved were in the same twofold strain. In Luke xv. He reveals to us this grace, not only in the shepherd going after the *sheep* he valued, and the woman searching for the piece of *silver* she prized, but it is also set forth in the heart of a father welcoming back the, as it were, dead and long-lost *son*. God finds His riches in His saved ones, as truly as He does His objects of inmost affection.

Let us then search out the Old Testament passages on the subject of Israel as God's "peculiar treasure" and His "jewels," as we have already dwelt on them as "the apple of His eye."

The passages are as follow: Ex. xix. 5; Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2; xxvi. 18; Ps. cxxxv. 4; Mal. iii. 17. The first of these, Ex. xix. 5, was given at the foot of mount Sinai—at the very outset, as it were, of their distinctness and their separation by God as a people to Himself. The "eagles' wings" (see *v.* 4) on which He had borne them out of Egypt and through the Red Sea, and had in so short a time separated them so completely from its slavery, and made them so truly His own, told of His *love* to them, as did also the "fiery law" He was about to give them: "From His right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, He loved the people; all His saints are in thy hand." (Deut. xxxiii. 2, 3.) But He prized as well as loved them, and made

provision for their being of *precious* value to Him by saying, "Now therefore" (that is, since I do thus love you), "IF ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a *peculiar treasure* unto Me above all people; for all the earth is mine."

Observe, God's love for Israel as a nation had begun, and to the very end of time it could neither cease nor change, nor has it; but His *value* for them in the earth, His estimate of them as a witness for His name and a pleasure to Him among men, which none of the Gentiles could be, must of necessity depend on whether they kept the "fiery law" which now in love He gave them. They *must* be dear to Him, whether they would or not; but they *might be* to Him a treasure and a "special treasure"—yea, His "jewels."

Pass on now to Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2; and xxvi. 18. The book of Deuteronomy is that repetition to Israel of the law which was an especial token of Jehovah's love to them, and of His desire that they should profit to the full by having had it given them; and in each of these Deuteronomy passages, in which they are reminded of their privilege in being a "peculiar people" to God—*i.e.* a "special treasure"—this honour to be attained is put before them in the path of obedience.

In Deut. vii. 6 it stands in connection with the forbidding of intermarriages with the Canaanite nations, which would surely lead to mingling them with Canaanite idolatry, whereas, says Moses, "Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a *special people*" (a "peculiar treasure") "unto Himself above all the people that are upon the face of the earth," implying, of course, that they could not be such to God, however much chosen for that purpose, unless they kept themselves from such unhallowed marriages. Compare with this Paul's eloquent and burning words to the Corinthians (2 Cor. vi. 11-18), where God's promise of showing Himself as "a Father" to His own saints, and of their being to Him as His "sons and daughters," is connected

with their not unequally yoking themselves with unbelievers, but coming out from the unclean thing and not touching it.

Again, in Deut. xiv. 2, the same precious privilege of Israel stands linked with their not dishonouring their own bodies, neither by penances nor any other self-inflicted mortification of man's religion on the one hand (see Deut. xiv. 1), nor on the other by indulgence of the appetite in any unclean food. (See verse 3, &c.) And to these holy and happy obediences Moses urges them by again saying, "Jehovah hath chosen thee to be a *peculiar people*" (*i.e.* a special treasure) "unto Himself above all the nations that are upon the earth."

And are there no New Testament blessings to God's children linked with, and therefore dependent upon, our also denying the flesh with its lusts? Surely there are. In Romans viii., after stating (*vv.* 1-11) that inalienable blessing in Christ Jesus of the feeblest of God's saved ones—*viz.*, the having the Holy Ghost—does not Paul say (*vv.* 12, 13) that children of God though we are, if we "live after the flesh we shall die?" that is, we are treading a path which *ends* in death; but "if through the [indwelling] Spirit we mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live;" that is to say, life springs up afresh within the believer's soul at every step of keeping the body under.

Deut. xxvi. 18 is the third and last place in this book in which Israel is reminded of this high honour; and here again it stands alongside of their bringing not only their "basket of first-fruits" as their *worship*, but also that more substantial and costly offering of the *tithes* of all their increase. It was to encourage Israel to this that Moses reminded them first that they had publicly "avouched Jehovah that day to be their God" (*v.* 17), and that Jehovah had "avouched them that day to be His *peculiar people*"—*i.e.* His special treasure—in order to make them "high above all nations . . . in praise and in name and in honour."

And in the New Testament we read: "Of His own will begat He us by the Word of truth" (not only that we might be His for ever, but also) "that we should be" (even now) "a kind of *first-fruits* of His creatures" (James i. 18); and in James iv. it adds, in order to check "the friendship of the world," which is so ready to defile the saints, not only that the Spirit who dwelleth in us is jealous over us (compare Gal. v. 17), but bids us also as His first-fruits thus "draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to us." (James v. 8.)

And do not the words "praise" and "name" and "honour" in the Deuteronomy passage remind us of the "*praise and honour and glory* at the appearing of Jesus Christ," which is what Peter says our gracious God intends the trial of our faith should result in?

Surely, then, there are privileges and blessings, whether to Israel or to ourselves, which are made blessedly dependent upon our fulfilling the conditions on which they rest.

How utterly Israel failed in obtaining theirs we all know! As a nation they were not, and have never even yet been, this "peculiar treasure," these "jewels" to God, which He proposed to them to be. And we know why; it was because they "made flesh their arm" in the matter; they unanimously undertook it in their own strength; for—"all the people answered together, and said, All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do." (Ex. xix. 8.) And how sadly has a similar self-reliance robbed "the Israel of God" of this present time—even ourselves as saints—of our proper witness for God in the earth, by making us shorn of those locks of our Nazariteship which are our real strength!

But while the nation as a whole so utterly failed to be God's "peculiar treasure" and His "jewels" in the earth, the godly few of Israel's latest and darkest Old Testament days had that same term of value and honour from their God graciously applied to them. (See Psalm cxxxv. 4.) This psalm belongs apparently to the time

of the godly remnant who returned from Babylon in Ezra's and Nehemiah's days, and the writer of it cheers his own and others' souls by calling to mind that early grace of God to the nation in which He "chose Jacob to Himself, and Israel for His *peculiar treasure*." And then he adds to it his own individual experience: "For I know" (literally, I am one that knows) "that Jehovah is great, and that our Lord is above all gods." (v. 5.)

How blessed it is that a feeble few at the end of an age, or even a single godly one, may still prove the truth that

"Nothing changeth God's affection!"

But Malachi's days were still worse. The very remnant itself that had come out from Babylon 150 years before, at so much toil and cost, and with so much blessing of God upon them, had again sunk, in Malachi's days, to a mere orthodox formality. Once more God declared His abhorrence of their pretence of worship—just as He had by Isaiah long before their captivity. (Compare Mal. i. 10 with Isaiah i. 10–15.) It was therefore a still lower depth of evil; but amidst it there were frequent assemblings together of some "who feared Jehovah, and who thought upon" (or rather counted or reckoned upon) "His Name." They knew, that is, the Jehovah Name—"I am Jehovah, I change not" (Mal. iii. 6)—and counting that the God of all past grace to Israel was still the same, they "spake often one to another" of HIM. And Israel's "great King" (see Mal. i. 14) is seen causing His heavenly chroniclers (or recorders) to have "a book of remembrance written before Him" on their behalf.

And no wonder, for, few in number, and outwardly feeble though they were, they were all the more precious in His sight, because they were so unlike the then state of the nation and the times in which they lived. They were, in their measure, just what

God had meant at mount Sinai the whole nation should be; for they did, by His grace working in them, "obey His voice and keep His covenant" (see Ex. xix. 5); and they did "remember the law of Moses, Jehovah's servant," which had been "commanded in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments." (See Mal. iv. 4.) They were, in short, as far as in their weakness they could be, the "peculiar treasure"—the "jewels" to God, which the nation, as such, had so utterly failed to be. And God delights to tell them so (v. 17): "And they shall be MY JEWELS, saith Jehovah of hosts, against the day that I am about to make"*—the day that is spoken of in chapter iv. 1, which "shall burn as an oven;" for God's jewels will stand the test of that day, when all the "wood, and hay, and stubble" of man's carnal religion will perish. Thus a godly remnant was to God just what He had meant the whole nation should be; viz., His "special treasure." And grace divine accomplishes that which the law of Moses had been utterly unable to bring about. (See Romans viii. 3.)

How cheering is all this to us as children of God! And what encouragement to any few in our own sad days who gather together in obedience to the Lord Jesus only—and who, Christ-like, fear God, and have no other fear. All such do as truly fulfil God's gracious mind and purpose concerning them as to being witnesses for Him in the earth—and for Christ—as if the whole Church were similarly obedient: they are "jewels" and "special treasure" in God's account. They have once and for ever trusted in Christ for salvation, and now "the gold, and silver, and precious stones," which they build upon this once laid foundation of Jesus Christ, is all of it something which will stand the fire of Christ's

* We have here given the correct translation of verse 17. To be God's jewels in that day is precious; but to be His jewels *now*, ere that day comes, and in view and expectation of it, is still more precious. (Compare I Cor. iii. 12, 13.)

judgment-seat; and in that day will be found written in God's book of remembrance to their account. Surely if our being to Him "the apple of His eye" draws our hearts as with cords of love, our being His jewels and His peculiar treasure may well awake our zeal to serve Him better and witness for Him more. Be it so. Amen. H. D.

HONOUR FROM ABOVE.

LUKE vii. 36, etc.

WE know the music of the foot-fall of those we love, and have heard one friend say of another, "I loved the very ground on which he trod." If this is true when spoken by one creature of another, what should be said of Him, and of His ways, who is altogether lovely, Christ Jesus our Lord!

Reading the gospel narratives with anointed eyes, and tracing His footsteps, we perceive them to be bright with glory, and fragrant with grace and truth.

The narrative before us in Luke vii. is fraught with the perfections of that wonderful person, Emmanuel, God with us, the Son of God, the Man Christ Jesus. In Him the mystery of godliness is manifest in flesh; and heaven's brightness shines in the darkness of sin and sorrow, among those who for the most part could neither comprehend nor appreciate it.

He could and did appreciate the recognitions of true love, yet lived not on human appreciation. It sufficed Him that the Father's eye beheld, and that He approved, "Surely my work is with the Lord, and my judgment is with my God;" and "for the joy set before Him He endured."

Let us, beloved, seek to imitate our Lord as we trace His steps in the scene before us; and first we notice

THE INVITATION.

“One of the Pharisees *desired* Him that He would eat with him.” Yes, He would be invited; He was accessible, repelling only evil. He can still be invited, and still receive a welcome. From the seeking soul He cannot hide Himself, nor will He withhold His presence from those who keep His words. He accepted the invitation, went in and sat down.

Infalible in judgment, He was always correct in His steps; quick of scent in the fear of Jehovah, He was never misled. In accepting Simon's invitation, and entering his house, He acted in fellowship with the Father, and the sequel proved him right. That sequel brought out Simon's real mind, as it also revealed the beauty of those ways of grace to which I wish to draw attention.

THE SLIGHT.

On Simon's part we see a cold reception—a forced act of apparent kindness (which to a discerning, sensitive spirit is worse than none); more than half a suspicion underlying all he said and did: “*Is He a prophet?*” No kiss of welcome, no water for His feet, nor ointment for His head.

Dear reader, how should we have borne such conduct if, when invited to a meal, we had been received with a fnger, instead of the *hand* of warm, sincere love; with the dry expression, “Pray walk in,” instead of, “Welcome! welcome!” and if instead of being guided to a seat we had been left to find our own, while every look of the host betrayed a lack of confidence? Such, in substance, was the reception Simon gave the Lord.

Our temptation surely would have been (although grace might have given us the victory) to resent it in some way; nor can we imagine that blessed One to have been insensible to the wrong. Indeed His after words prove that He was not; but His ways are

perfect, and He sat quietly down to meat, waiting for

THE HONOUR WHICH COMETH FROM ABOVE.

“I seek not,” said He, “mine own glory: there is One that seeketh and judgeth.” The Father gave Him honour, and He needed not to *seek* it. The single eye to God’s glory in all things would save *us* also the toil of seeking our own things.

The Father honoured Him. He drew one whom He had given to Jesus into His presence to supply poor Simon’s lack. “A woman that was a sinner” came into the house, and stood behind Him weeping, washing His feet with her tears, wiping them with her hair, and anointing them with ointment.

Blessed sight! bright example of faith, of love and gratitude; of *faith* to enter and stand as a branded sinner in the presence of Pharisees, and be despised; to stand also in the presence of a Saviour, and be comforted; of *love* which found out its object, content to bear anything in order to be with Him; of *gratitude* that counted nothing too good for His service, nothing too precious to be laid at His feet.

There she stood, and who shall describe her feelings? We may faintly conceive of *His* joy; and I would confidently assert that no Cæsar ever wore the robe and diadem with such delight as Jesus knew when He felt the sinner’s tear-drops falling on His feet, and the gentle passing of that rare and costly towel, the woman’s hair, followed by the ointment soft and fragrant; honours these such as Simon could not have given with his then present mind. And it must ever be so; the *less* we have of creature recompense, the *more* of God’s.

But what was the effect of all this on Simon? Did it convince him of his fault? Did it reprove him, or rather did he feel the rebuke? Alas! it only confirmed his suspicion; for he said within himself, “*If* this man *were* a prophet, He would know who and what

manner of woman this is that toucheth Him; for she is a sinner." Surely this proves that Simon invited Jesus with a doubtful mind as to His prophetic character. Simon said this to himself; but it could not pass unnoticed by the Lord, who proceeded to give him the clearest proof of His being a prophet; viz., that He read his unuttered thoughts: "Simon, I have something to say unto thee." Simon listened, and the Lord, by a parable, instructed and reproved him. "A certain creditor had two debtors: the one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both." Both debtors alike in the creditor's hands, both penniless, and therefore at his mercy; both the objects of his pity and forgiveness.

Their liabilities differed, and so did their sense of mercy and measure of love. At the Lord's demand, Simon determined the difference—the *largest* debtor would be the *warmest* lover. Whether or not Simon felt the point of the question we are not told. It must be seen and *felt*; therefore the Lord applied the parable for his

INSTRUCTION.

Pointing to the woman, He said, "Seest thou this woman? I entered thy house, thou gavest me no water for My feet: but she hath washed My feet with tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed My feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto Thee, Her sins, which are *many*, are all forgiven; for she loved *much*." Then turning to the woman, He said now to her, "Thy sins are forgiven."

Yes, she was forgiven; therefore she loved. Her sins were many, and Jesus *knew* it; for she loved *much*. "To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."

Perceiving that the company questioned His word,

saying within themselves, "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" Jesus again addressed the woman, saying, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

Thus did the Father honour Him who sought not His own glory. He who bore the slight wore the crown. Bright example to all His followers! Oh for grace to imitate Him evermore!

Let us also learn from the woman how to honour, how to delight the Lord. Let us never fear to know how much we owed; for as is the debt, so is the grace that forgave, and so also the love and gratitude for such an act of mercy. Let us not be afraid nor ashamed to wisely show our love, even if our conduct should be questioned, and even censured by the self-righteous sinner, or the cold-hearted believer. Let us bear these as Jesus bore His slight, and Christ will honour us as surely as the Father honoured Him.

H. H.

THE PLACE OF HIS FEET.

"I will make the place of My feet glorious."—ISAIAH lx. 13.

Two women at the Saviour's feet
 Drank deeply of His grace;
 Sundered in life, they there could meet,
 And find a welcome place.

One came unbidden from the street,
 With mingled hopes and fears,
 But found relief at His dear feet,
 Amidst her falling tears.

The other oft sat at His feet,
 And heard His gracious word,
 And now poured forth her ointment sweet
 Upon her dying Lord.

A glorious place e'en here below,
 This place at Jesus' feet!
 Forgiven sinners there brought low,
 Find happiness complete.

M. W.

ON ELDERS AND RULE.

BY THE LATE W. H. WILLIAMS.*

“MINISTRY and Rule in the Church of God” is an expression we often hear; and although I am going to speak of the latter rather than the former, I would place ministry before rule as being the more important. In the original Scriptures the words in John xxi. 15, 16, 17 vary thus: 1. “*Feed My lambs.*” 2. “*Shepherd*” (or tend, or rule) “*My sheep.*” 3. “*Feed My sheep.*” (The word in the middle verse is the same as “rule” in Rev. ii. 27.) For once that the Lord tells Peter to rule or tend, He *twice* bids him *feed* the lambs or sheep. It has been truly remarked that men now-a-days pay more attention to rule in the Church than to feeding, and the result is the divisions which are so rife in Christendom.

Let us then look at the passages in the New Testament about *rule*, and to this end let us trace the occurrence of the word *elders*, and seek to learn who they are, how made, where they come from, &c.

Acts xi. 30. Here we get the first mention of elders *in connection with the Church*. Before this we simply read of “elders of the Jews,” “chief priests and elders,” &c. Money collected by the Gentile believers at Antioch for the poor saints in Judæa was sent by the hands of Barnabas and Saul to “the *elders*,” men evidently known as such in the church at Jerusalem.

Acts xiv. 23. “And when they had ordained them *elders* in every church.” Paul and Barnabas, as apostles (*both* are so called in verses 4, 14), by divine power *ordained* elders in every church. See how much light we get in this one verse. 1st. That there were more elders than

* A friend sends these rough notes of a recent address by this beloved young servant of Christ. They tell of that careful, reverent, searching of Scripture which is so much needed in these days.—Ed.

one. 2nd. That elders were ordained by divine authority, and not appointed or chosen by the church. There is no thought of people electing them. 3rd. That in *every* church elders were ordained. Elders are necessary to the *well-being* of a church, and should be in *every* church; but they are not, as some say, necessary to the *existence* of a church. There must be a church first, and *then* elders. It was on the return journey, when the apostles came back to confirm the churches, that these elders were ordained. Let souls be saved, and then God will raise up elders. There may be sheep without a shepherd; but a shepherd is necessary to the *well-being* of the sheep.

Acts xv. Here we find that the brethren at Antioch send up to the apostles and elders at Jerusalem regarding the question of circumcision, which had been brought in by certain men from Judæa. In verse 4 we have a general meeting of the church, the apostles, and the elders, to welcome the messengers, who included Paul and Barnabas. Evidently all the saints were present; but (v. 5) as soon as the question about which they came begins to be *discussed*, we see (v. 6) that a *special* meeting is held: "The apostles and elders *came together* for to *consider* of this matter." Much "disputing" follows, one and another speak, &c. This would not have been edifying for young converts. Experience as well as Scripture teaches how undesirable it is to discuss questions before an assembly of men, women, and children. But when a conclusion is arrived at (v. 22), all again meet, and "it pleased the apostles and elders, *with the whole church*, to send forth chosen men," &c. These things are important. On the one hand, they check the republican spirit that leads people to think "one is as good as another, and everybody is to do everything;" and on the other hand, the aristocratic tendency to override everybody, and decide all questions without the consent of the church. All are *not* called upon to investigate regarding questions, but all should

be *intelligent*. The youngest believer should seek to know from the word what his or her place is, and would surely find that he or she had no part in the *discussion* of questions, though they may be and should be intelligent about the matter when stated to them.

Acts xx. 17. Again we find elders known and recognized. Paul does not send for the "saints" or the "church" at Ephesus to come to him (though it was not far from Miletus), but *to the elders*, the responsible men. I would say here that the *foot-notes* at the end of the epistles are *not inspired*, and the one at the end of 2 Timothy has led to wrong conclusions. It is said there that Timothy was the *first* bishop (or overseer) of the church at Ephesus; but in Acts xx., when Timothy was quite a young man, we find he was *with Paul* at Ephesus, at the time when several elders and *overseers* (or bishops) came from Ephesus to meet Paul!

Acts xxi. 17. Here Paul and those with him were received at Jerusalem by *all the brethren*; but the day following (v. 18) there was another special meeting of Paul with James, "and *all the elders* were present," to consult together about Paul's ministry to the Gentiles, &c.

From this point we do not meet with the word "elders" until we come to the first epistle to Timothy.

1 Tim. v. 1. From the connection with "younger" men, and elder and younger women, I think that the command, "Rebuke not an elder," refers chiefly to an elder *in age*.

1 Tim. v. 17. "Elders that *rule well*." "Rule" here means, to take the lead; but it is the same word as in chap. iii. 5, and therefore, though in a less absolute sense than a father in his own house, an elder does rule. But, lest any should attempt to be a "lord over God's heritage," the word is changed and softened in verse 5: "For if a man know not how to RULE in his own house, how shall he TAKE CARE of the Church of God?" There are, so to speak, "elders *and* elders."

Some rule "well," some not so well. If well, they are worthy of double "honour;" it is scarcely likely to mean "pay" here, though the word sometimes has that meaning. From Acts xx. 35 we see that elders are encouraged to diligence in the things of this life: "So labouring *ye ought* to support the weak," &c. Though some elders might "labour in word and doctrine," and if so, were to be "specially" honoured, yet a man *might* be an elder without ability for this.

1 Tim. v. 9. "Against an elder" be very slow to receive an accusation, very slow to impugn the character of one so prominent in the church; wait for proof.

Titus i. 5, 7. By comparing these verses you will see that elder and bishop are the same thing. Paul speaks about ordaining elders, and adds, "*for a bishop*," &c. Acts xx. 17, 28 also shows that elders *are* "overseers," and this is *the same word* as "bishop." They were made or ordained *by the Holy Ghost*. (v. 28.) Their appointment by the apostles was in truth the Holy Ghost's appointment; but none can pretend to *this* power now, any more than any one now could sit down to write an inspired epistle. Also notice, it is "the flock *in* which" (not *over* which) "the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (or bishops), "to *feed*" (or shepherd) "the Church of God."

1 Peter v. 1, 2. Elders are to feed and *oversee* ("taking the oversight," the same word as "looking diligently" in Heb. xii. 15). It is "the elders which are *among* you." They are not to take the oversight as "lords over God's heritage," nor by constraint. It is not, "No one else does it, so *I must*;" nor is it to be undertaken as a hard task, but as a delight, "willingly." Neither is hope of gain to be an object, but there must be the promptness of a "ready mind." Some one may think it is much easier work to look after God's people than to work at his trade, but he does not know. It is work to be delighted in, but it is no easy work. This passage in Peter is the last in which "elders" on earth

are named. The word occurs again in the book of Revelation, where the elders are spoken of as before the throne, &c.

I will now briefly mention the Scriptures that give the qualifications of an elder or overseer.

1 Tim. iii. 1. One who *desires* to take oversight should be apt to *teach*, not necessarily in public, though it may be so. He must rule his own house; he must *not* be a novice or young convert; he must have a good report of them that are without, &c.

Titus i. 7, 8 again gives his character. He must be *sound* in doctrine, able to exhort; but this *might* be privately.

1 Peter v. 2 also gives the characteristics of an overseer.

Ruling is the work of elders and bishops, and we get a reference to their work, though, they are not named, in Rom. xii. 8: "He that ruleth, *with diligence*," a very important point, for lack of which evil greatly spreads. Ruling is a gift. See "governments" in 1 Cor. xii. 28.

At first, as we have seen, elders were appointed by the apostles; but in Titus i. the apostle says to him, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that *thou* shouldst . . . ordain elders in every city, *as I had appointed thee*." Titus was not an apostle. The apostles had divine power to single out in a new assembly those fit for rule, and here we see that Paul gave Titus authority to do so. But in this epistle and in 1 Timothy the Holy Ghost lays out in full the qualifications of an elder—lays open, as it were, what was before locked up in the mind of an apostle. *As soon as the apostles go, the Word is left to us*. The mind of the Holy Ghost is thus stereotyped for ever, for our use; as Job would say, "with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever." And just in proportion as there is continual appeal to that Word, there is prosperity in a church. If we have not the laying on of hands, we have the inspired

word of God. Bring the man to the word of God, and if he answer to the test, he *is* an elder. We do not now need living apostles; we must watch the development of God's gifts, and as obedient children we must bow to those who have them.

1 Cor. xvi. 15, 16 gives us a picture of rule, and how suitable that these "first-fruits," these first converted ones in Achaia, should *addict* (or, as it might be, *ordain*) *themselves* to this work. How suitable that those longest converted, unless disqualified by incapacity, should do so. There was here a readiness on the part of the house of Stephanas to give themselves to the work, and there was to be a readiness to submit to such, which is very beautiful; and it is so simple. An evangelist feels he must speak to souls; he begins in a quiet, unobtrusive way to use the gift God has given him, and then gradually will get recognized by his brethren; and so with teachers and elders. The church needs nearly as much rule and care as teaching; and when ability for rule is developed, we should submit to those who exercise it, not by any wonderful ceremony and procession, but by just recognizing what God has bestowed.

Lastly, we notice four precepts respecting our behaviour to those who thus rule or guide:

1. "*Know* them that . . . are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." (1 Thess. v. 12.) This implies that time and care are needed to recognize them.

2. *Remember* them when taken to be with Christ, and follow their faith. (Heb. xiii. 7.)

3. *Obey* them while you still have them. (Heb. xiii. 17.)

4. *Salute* them *all*, even the last raised up. Greet them with affection, and yet with respect, not as those possessed of some dreadful power, but as those who are known lovingly to care for the flock, and to watch for souls. (Heb. xiii. 24.)

JOHN IN PATMOS.

Rev. i. 9-20.

(NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY T. NEWBERRY.)

"I JOHN, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, was in the isle that is called Patmos." (Rev. i. 9.) John was shut up in Patmos, banished there by the rage of a wicked king; but God overruled all for His own purposes of blessing. His servant was shut out from active service, taken away from work in the midst of the Church he loved, and shut up in lonely solitude, a prisoner of Jesus Christ; but God had work for him there. God was with him, as He was with Joseph, and He brightened the lonely hours of His wearied, and it may be, perplexed servant by special revelations from Himself.

Had John Bunyan never been shut up in Bedford jail, we should not have had the wonderful *Pilgrim's Progress*, that book which has spoken to so many hearts.

Had Luther not been snatched from his enemies, and placed for safety by his friends in the castle of Wartburg, Germany might long have waited for the word of God in her own tongue. Reluctantly compelled to leave his work, and finding himself shut up in solitude, and condemned to inaction, he beguiled the lonely hours by translating the word of God for his countrymen; and from that dark fortress, through the goodness of God, flowed out for Germany the pure river of living water.

So also had John, the beloved disciple, never been banished to Patmos, the Church would have been deprived of one of the most wonderful and precious portions of the inspired volume. God has His own means to bring about His own ends.

"He works in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform."

The rage of the king would make him get rid of John. God overrules it all for blessing. "He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him." His servant, though shut out from fellowship with his brethren, his fellow-labourers, and fellow-sufferers, had blessed communion with the great Head of the Church.

Is it not often thus? God's door is open when man's is shut. We may be shut out from the outward sign of fellowship; circumstances or human rules and regulations may impose a barrier to full communion; but, blessed be God, heaven's door is open to us, and the spirit can mount up, and by faith enter the very presence of God, and enjoy full and sweet communion with Him. Have we not proved how true this is? How often, when denied the outward symbol of the bread and wine, our hearts have been in loving fellowship with our Lord, and *He* has revealed Himself, and refreshed and blessed us.

It was thus with John. Alone, desolate, discouraged perhaps, Jesus drew near to him, and cheered his fainting spirit with a special revelation of Himself, and His purposes with regard to that very Church, for faithful service in which John was thus a lonely captive.

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's-day." (*v.* 10.) The blessed first day of the week. John could not join the assembled saints, but he was in the Spirit. Expressive words! Would that we all knew more of their meaning! Surely, if we did, we should find a larger, deeper blessing than, alas! we too often do, whether alone or gathered together.

If we were in the Spirit on the Lord's-day, we should find, as John did, that our Lord would speak to us, and bless us. How often are we in the spirit of the world on the Lord's-day? In the spirit of our sect, or of our party? in the spirit of self-will? Consequently we lose blessing. It is a thing not to be explained, but the words convey a deep meaning to

every Spirit-taught heart. The carnal professor, the worldly believer, understands them not; but to many of us they tell of precious seasons of refreshment and blessing.

I believe the expression, "the Lord's-day," besides being actually the blessed first day of the week, has also a typical and symbolic meaning; for this book is full of symbols. It speaks to us of resurrection—that wondrous eighth day, the day of glory and of blessing for which we wait; and John here is put forward, as it were, into that time. He sees things from the glory side; he takes a retrospective glance of things on earth. He sees the Church in its militant state from a divine standpoint. He hears a great voice behind him. The Lord first calls his attention to Himself: "I am Alpha and Omega." He then tells him that what he sees is to be communicated to the seven churches in Asia. Seven, the typical number of perfection, standing here for the *whole* Church.

We then get the vision: seven golden lamp-stands, and in the midst one like unto the Son of man.

"In the *midst*:" the place of pre-eminence, the place which the Lord ever takes. When, after His resurrection, He appeared to the little company in the upper room, He stood *in the midst*. So here, when He shows His servant a picture of His Church, He is seen "in the midst," the centre, the rallying-point. We gather unto Him, unto His name. All other centres are wrong. Jesus our Lord is to be our gathering-point.

"One like unto the Son of man." (v. 13.) The Lord here comforts the heart of His tried and desponding disciple. He shows Himself in the midst of His Church as the Son of man, in all the tender love and sympathy of the heart John had known and loved so well. He is with His people still; with them to cheer, to comfort, to help. *In their midst* as the patient, condescending, loving, lowly Son of man.

“Clothed with a garment down to the foot.” That priestly robe of glory and beauty, the robe which covers every member of the mystic body; reminding us of the beautiful figure in Ps. cxxxiii., the oil put upon the high priest’s head flowing down to the skirts of his garments.

“Girt about the paps with a golden girdle.” Not the loins, the seat of strength, but rather the seat of the affections. The “golden girdle,” divine faithfulness and love: “Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end;” unchanging love, because divinely perfect.

“His head and His hairs white like wool.” This seems to remind us of the vision in Daniel. It tells us of Him who is from everlasting to everlasting; the Ancient of days, as well as the Infant of days; the Immanuel, *God with us*.

“His eyes as a flame of fire.” Piercing, keen, penetrating the inmost heart. “All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” It gives the idea too of vigilance. The ever-watchful guardian of His Church; nothing escapes His eye; no outward foe, no hidden evil.

“His feet like unto fine brass.” Strength, stability, and purity: “as if they burned in a furnace” seven times purified.

“His voice as the sound of many waters.” What a beautiful and expressive symbol! Many waters. We have heard a little stream rippling over its bed, or a tiny jet of water dropping from a pipe; but what must it be to stand beneath the majestic falls of Niagara, where a whole river rolls its mighty volume of water, with the noise of thunder, into the chasm beneath? What a confluence of sounds! what endless variety, as we turn from side to side in wondering amazement! When could we come to the end? How could we describe the blending of those thousand voices? This then is the figure the Spirit uses to

designate the voice of Jesus, the voice of our Beloved. Not a feeble, uniform sound. No; His voice is the sound of many waters.

Is it not so? Have we not heard the voice of Jesus speak in many tones? Is it not ever new, ever varied? Does He not adapt His voice to our individual need and state, and speak in tones of reproof, warning, or encouragement, as He sees most suited to our condition? We can say, "His voice is most sweet." Is not this true of all His recorded utterances, His teachings, His sermons, even His simplest parables? Is there not a depth, a variety, a richness, an inexhaustible mine of wealth and fulness we never get to the bottom of? Do we not discover fresh beauties, hidden truths, every time we study His written words? Ah, yes! His voice is to our souls as the sound of many waters—rich, varied, full in all its tones.

"In His right hand seven stars," the fulness of spiritual gift. The Lord shows Himself to John as possessing the plenitude of gift and power for His Church. "Seven stars!" He, as the Head of His body, controls and upholds His gifted servants for the building up of that body. The same hand, the right hand of His power, by which the stars are upheld in the firmament, is here shown in symbol to John as sustaining the various gifts in His Church.

John was inactive, no longer serving that Church in its path of difficulty and danger here; but his heart is cheered and encouraged by the vision of the Lord Himself in the midst of that Church—the ascended Head in the glory, holding in His right hand the seven stars.

"Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword." The word of God is quick and powerful; it penetrates the heart, reaches the conscience, lays bare the hidden springs of evil, goes to the root of things, discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart.

"His countenance was as the sun shineth in his

strength." This is the climax. His countenance in its glory and majesty taxes the apostle's powers to describe; it was too glorious, too wonderful for words. He takes the symbol of that which is most wonderful and glorious in creation, the centre of light and brilliance, and says, "His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength."

"And I fell at His feet as one dead." The vision of the Lord, the manifestation of His glorious Person, overwhelmed the apostle; it was too great, too wonderful, and he sinks in the dust before it. Ah, beloved, this is the secret of self-abasement, of self-mortification. Get a sight of Jesus, your glorious Lord. It was this same glory, though in a less degree, which struck Saul of Tarsus to the earth, withered up all his pride and haughty self-reliance, and caused him in deep humility to cry, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The sight of Jesus glorified weaned him from earth and self, and set him on the race-course as one who must win Christ.

Oh how the brightness of those stars paled before the glory of His countenance! We hear much of the Church, and her glory, and her place; but how she sinks into the shade before her Lord. As the stars pale before the mid-day sun, so does the Church's glory wane in the presence of her Lord. There has been too much church worshipping, I fear; too much made of *our* place and *our* privileges, and too little place given to the Lord, who is the Sun and Centre of all.

"And He laid His right hand upon me." Here we have another use of the right hand. The same hand which was seen just now holding the seven stars is now stretched out to raise His fainting disciple, to reassure the heart, overwhelmed and overpowered with the sight and sense of His glory, with one of those matchless "FEAR NOTS" which we get so often from His lips.

"Fear not; *I* am . . . *I* am He that liveth, and

was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore," to which the Spirit adds a hearty "Amen." "Alive for evermore!" Even so, the work done, sin put away, death hath no more dominion over Him, and He has the keys of death and hades. Hell is not meant here. It is no question of sin and its punishment. The Lord would remind John that the keys of hades were in His hand.

"Not a single shaft can hit
Till the Lord of life sees fit."

He has all His loved ones in safe keeping. Men might persecute, kill, and threaten, but the keys are in His hand, "who shuts, and no man opens; and opens, and no man shuts." He keeps the keys. He opens the gates to let His worn and wearied servants in, and He will unlock them again on the glad resurrection morning, and bring them forth to join those who have waited for the same day on earth.

"Soon shall our eyes behold Thee
With rapture face to face;
One half hath not been told us
Of all Thy power and grace.

"Thy beauty, Lord, and glory,
The wonders of Thy love,
Shall be the endless story
Of all Thy saints above."

BLESSINGS OF HAVING A "REDEEMER."

"Ah! should we, while thus musing
On our Redeemer's cross,
E'en life itself be losing,
Great gain would be that loss."

THE word "Redeemer" does not occur in the New Testament, it being a character of Christ special to Israel. But it is good to see that in Israel *any one who had a redeemer*—

1st. Could not be brought to *poverty*; for if through poverty he lost his land, his redeemer *bought it back*. (See Lev. xxv. 25.)

2nd. Could not be kept in *bondage or slavery*; for if he had sold himself to a stranger, his redeemer *purchased him back*. (Lev. xxv. 48.)

3rd. Could not have his life or person wantonly injured; for his redeemer took up his cause, and avenged it on the wanton injurer. Knowing that this would be done, all would be careful how they touched such an one. (See Num. xxxv. 12, 19, 20.)*

4th. Could not be forgotten *even when in his grave*; for Boaz was departed Elimelech's and departed Chilion's kinsman-redeemer, and owned the tie, and married Ruth "to raise up the name of *the dead* upon his inheritance." (See Ruth iv. 5.)†

What lessons in all this of our true "Goël," Jesus, our Kinsman-Redeemer!

Blest in Him, we cannot be *poor*.

"While Christ is rich, can I be poor?
What can I want beside?"

Blest in Him, we cannot be held in *bondage*; "for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. viii. 2.)

Blest in Him, none can *touch* us and He not *feel* it. (See Zech. ii. 8.)

Blest in Him, our *dust* is precious, and He will preserve our name in the "land of the living," however long we lie unremembered by a busy Moabite world. (Rom. viii. 11. See margin.)

And we may add—

Blest in Him, *those dear to us* whom we leave behind are objects of *His* special care; as Ruth was for her departed husband's sake, and as Jonathan's son Mephibosheth was to David.

H. D.

* "Avenger" in these verses should be "redeemer." It is the same word as in Leviticus xxv. 25, 48.

† The words "perform the part of a kinsman" (Ruth iii. 13) are in Hebrew the same as "redeemer" in chap. iv. 4; and "kinsman" in chap. iv. 1 is also "redeemer."

"RECEIVE ONE ANOTHER."

ROM. xiv. 1 to xv. 13.

Most subjects much treated of in the word of God are brought out plainly in fundamental passages, around which other secondary texts may rally. Rom. xiv. 1 to xv. 13 is of this character, where the subject of receiving one another is not only plainly stated, but exemplified.

We would particularly call attention to this Scripture at the present time, because in many cases a godly desire to come back to the law and to the testimony of the written Word is leading faithful followers of the Lord Jesus into a forgetfulness of that consideration, which is due to those who do not see as they do, nor act as they believe the Scriptures command.

Before entering on the passage before us, we would recall a remark of the apostle Paul in Phil. iii. He there says, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be contrariwise minded" (the Greek implies more than simply otherwise), "God shall reveal even this unto you."

The "thus minded" refers to what had gone before—the mind that was in Paul to "win Christ," to "know Him" in the power of resurrection, and in the fellowship of His sufferings. Thus his heart was always set on following after and pressing forward to the mark of the prize of this goal, which is our high calling in Christ Jesus, so that as from a mirror he might reflect HIM, and beholding HIM, be transformed into His likeness from glory to glory.

This is the mind that needs be in those who are men in Christ, and *herein* must lie our agreement; and then, in spite of the realities of the conflict and the eagerness of the race, the object presented to us for personal attainment will be regarded as of such transcendent glory that the desire would ever be to press forward,

To those with minds and hearts *thus* occupied with Christ, differences on all other points would not be forgotten, nor would there be an agreement to differ (the devil's last resource amongst us); but they would be brought before the Lord, remembering the promise, "God shall reveal even this unto you."

All truth needs a revelation from God to make it real to the soul. This is often forgotten, and in self-sufficiency and pride we attempt to stand in God's place to one another; and hence oftentimes, instead of our differences of judgment being lessened, they are rather increased.

Then follows the important injunction, "Nevertheless, whereunto we have already attained, let us walk in the same rule" (*στοιχεω* to walk by a line or rule).

Differences there will be as long as attainments differ, and the flesh has power; and while these are not to be thought lightly of, infinite care is needed that we thrust not ourselves between another's conscience and his God.

Christian life is a reality in its deeper and inner aspects; and where that reality is understood and felt, the sense of personal shortcoming and failure will be so real, that forbearance towards others will be the rule, and not the exception. The want of this leads to a dogmatic Christianity, that necessarily becomes cold, severe, and un-Christlike. This the Spirit of God has foreseen, and warns us against as the sunken rock on which our fellowship one with another will ever be prone to make shipwreck.

Rom. xiv. begins with this precept: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye;" and the reason is given, "for God hath received him." What an unanswerable argument! God has given him a place among those who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Such have a place around the throne. They will sit around the marriage-table of the Lamb in glory; therefore receive them to the

fellowship of the table around which you gather “till He come”—to the communion of saints on earth, awaiting its consummation in glory. The precious blood that suffices *there* suffices here, and the title to the higher fellowship is an abundant title to the lower. If one is fit for heaven’s table, surely he is fit for earth’s. “God hath received him.”

But while the command here given is clear and broad, we have equally the command *not* to have fellowship with those who are unholy in their lives, with those who have not the doctrine of Christ, or who hold doctrines subversive of the truth of God. God has made *His* exceptions, and we must not disregard them. It is needful to say thus much, lest false and lax views creep into our fellowship, to mar its holiness and to dishonour our Lord.

“Him that is weak in the faith receive ye.” But when receiving such an one, we are told not to judge his thoughts, which is, as Alford puts it, not for “disputes to settle the points on which he has scruples.” As we have already seen, “God shall reveal it;” and therefore leave it with God. The apostle further illustrates what he means by introducing the subject of eating, and of the observance of days.

It were easy to show that fundamental principles might underlie both these questions; as when the apostle says to the Galatians, “Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.” (Chap. iv. 10, 11.) So also to the Corinthians, to whom he explains, in reference to eating, that its rightness or its wrongness depends upon the question of fellowship with idols. Some had conscience of the idol, and therefore in partaking of certain food had fellowship with devils; others being strong in the consciousness of the nothingness of the idol, had no such fellowship.

Such were the questions that arose in those days, and they are left on record for us, that we may, in

godly uprightness of soul, draw principles of action which are to guide us in our intercourse with our fellow-saints.

As already intimated, the question is one of fellowship with evil. To some fellowship with evil is felt, when to another it is not felt. This difference may result from a higher sense of obedience, or from a firmer grasp of truth. The one may necessitate a narrow line of conduct; the other may give greater comprehensiveness in action. The one may see mountains and difficulties everywhere, under a godly sense of what is due to the Lord we love; the other may see them nowhere, under a godly desire to serve the same Lord, our common Saviour.

We would not say which is weak, or which is strong. The measures are different, and it will be for Another, with unerring judgment, to award to each his befitting meed of praise; but we would seek, deeply and lovingly, to impress upon all hearts the Lord's memorable words, "Forbid him not: for there is no man who can do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me." (Mark ix. 39.) We are not commanded to follow; but we must not forbid, nor allow the thought, "he followeth not us," to lead to an antagonism among those who do what they accomplish "in His name," and therefore should be owned as *on Christ's side*, because *not against Him*.

This may appear very negative ground to take in regard to our relation to others; but it is divine ground. It is Christ's. And yet we must not for a moment satisfy our consciences with negative ground for our own actions; the positive side of truth must be enforced against ourselves with all solemnity—"He that is not with me is against me."

This divine distinction cannot be too frequently brought before us, because we see so many godly, earnest, Christian men who, while seeking to walk themselves in the blessed and narrow path that they

find in the Word, forget this divine rule, and think and speak and act with unbecoming severity about those who walk not with them.

Has the narrow path lost its pleasantness, and the closer fellowship its sweetness, that it is sought thus to compel and to drive, where love can only wisely exhort and draw? Truth is ever attractive to the renewed soul; and if in any case it be not so, it is either because the apple of gold is not presented, as it should be, in a silver platter, or because the full soul loatheth the honeycomb. In the first case, seek grace to commend the truth by the use made of it, and the vessel in which it is presented; and in the other, seek the restoration of the poor soul which has filled itself with what the world can give, so that empty and hungry it may again seek the sweetness and the freshness of the truth of God.

To increase the force of what the apostle had been saying, he adds, "Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand." "How darest thou," says God to us through His servant, "what right hast thou, to judge my servant, in that in which I have given thee no command?" There are thoughts of jealousy in that question that we do well to ponder. God will hand over His rights to none. All the servants in the household are His, and He has delegated to none the right of judgment over another.

And yet in another sense we are bound to judge the conduct of another, so as to get guidance for ourselves as to how far we ought to follow in his steps. But while doing this, we must be careful not to take the active place of condemning another in that in which we think his conscience is unduly exercised, or perhaps not exercised as we believe it ought to be. Hence the respective commands, "Judge not," and, "Despise not."

Every man ought to be fully persuaded in his own

mind.* Let this be duly remembered, and then we shall see not only the sin against God of taking the place of judge, but the folly towards our brother of pressing him to go beyond his conscience, until he is fully persuaded, through the word of God, as to the matter in dispute. If we feel stronger, let us remember it is all of grace. God has made us to differ; but if we cannot bear, it is *we* who are weak, and not they.

Another fundamental principle is, that "we are the Lord's." "For," says the apostle, "whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died and lived, that He might be Lord [or rule] both of the dead and living." (vv. 8, 9.)†

Christ's life and death for us are here given as the reason why He should rule over us, and why we in our lives should follow His example, and live for Him, and die for Him. Yea, more, this is the reason why *we* should be ready to lay down our lives for our brethren, and consecrate life and death for them for whom Christ consecrated His life and His death. What an argument against hard judgment, or any action towards another that does not correspond with Christ's way of dealing towards ourselves.

We may remind one another here of that solemn word of our Lord's, "With the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." (Luke vi. 38.) How very seldom do we remember this, and

* The fully persuaded, *πληροφορεῖσθαι* is the opposite of *διακρῖνεσθαι*, to be wavering or doubting; as in verse 1 *faith* stands opposite to *doubt*. See the same contrast in Rom. iv. 20, 21, where Abraham is said not to have staggered or doubted (*οὐ διεκρίθη*) through unbelief, but was fully persuaded (*πληροφορηθεὶς*) that God would fulfil His word.

† The above is the translation of the correct Greek reading of this passage. The expression "lived" in the past tense seems distinctly to point to the life of Christ on earth, and probably the inversion of the natural order "He lived and died" is because the idea of dying immediately preceded it.

how many a dark cloud often hangs over a Christian's life, because of dark thoughts, words, or actions towards another!

But not only does the Spirit of God point us to the death and life of Christ in the past; He also points us onwards to the judgment-seat of Christ; and again we have searching questions put to us, “Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” (vv. 10, 11.)

Surely the remembrance of the judgment-seat should awaken holier and lowlier thoughts in our hearts with regard to one another than we are wont to encourage. We shall all bow the knee to HIM, and not to another, however exalted. We shall confess to God, and own His claim as sole and undivided. We shall all stand then accepted in the Beloved, and owned in Christ; but, alas! for the beam in the eye that has been unconfessed and unremoved, while the proud heart and the unloving eye have been ready to see the mote in the eye of another.

We shall not only stand at the judgment-seat, but we shall be manifested there (2 Cor. v. 10); the light of that divine glory will reveal *all*, and we shall see at once the divine estimate of everything we have been or done, and the wood and the hay and the stubble shall all be consumed, and, thank God, be no more.

The more the thought of the judgment-seat occupies our minds in its holy separating power, the less shall we be disposed to forestall that day in our relation to others, while we shall seek so to forestall it for ourselves, that there may be nothing unconfessed or unforsaken to be brought out then; for “if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” “If we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged.”

It would be well if, in view of that tribunal, we made short accounts with God in all matters connected with our treatment of each other; because it is on that point that this subject, so solemn, and so hallowing, is brought before us by the apostle; and he adds to the words already quoted, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Each one shall render his account, not of another, but of himself, and of the way in which he has judged or despised one for whom the Shepherd shed His precious blood. Were this remembered we "should not judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." (*v.* 13.) The cup of cold water will not lose its reward when given in the name of Christ, but neither will an offence given to one of the Lord's little ones be forgotten.

Thus have all matters between us and fellow-saints to be looked at and weighed in the light of the judgment-seat. Twice only have we the judgment-seat mentioned in the epistles—here in regard to our fellowship, and in 2 Cor. v. in regard to our service, which is also further dwelt on in 1 Cor. iii., where we are told that "every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

The next point before us is, as to that wherein the kingdom of God consists; and here perhaps is a danger we are little conscious of, the danger of incorporating into our conception of the kingdom things which are not essential elements of it. We read: "Let not then your good be evil spoken of: for the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that herein (Tischendorf, Alford) serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men." (*vv.* 16-18.)

What then is the kingdom of God in its present

realization but Holy Ghost power wrought out in us, “in righteousness, in peace, and in joy”—a threefold exhibition of the power of the Spirit that comes to the soul, not in word, but in power, and in much assurance? All that is received otherwise than “in the Holy Ghost” is not only valueless to the recipient, but leads to fleshly liberty and licence. Such licence is spiritually destructive, because it demoralizes conscience, and tends to separate faith from conscience, and thus leads to shipwreck and ruin.

There is promised to the erring child of God a voice behind, that says, “This is the way,” when he turns to the right or to the left; and this the voice of the Spirit through the Word—the voice of God to the conscience—when heeded is the believer’s constant safeguard. Here, as in all else, we may co-operate with God in seeking, not to lord it over a conscience, but to awaken that conscience to the voice of God; and unless this be done, our judging and our despising will only confirm the individual in his course, or else lead him to act on the faith and in the light of another, and thus he will be subject to the power of man, instead of the power of the Holy Ghost.

In verse 16 the faith of the strong and the liberty of the established believer is the “good thing;” for “I know,” says Paul (v. 14), “and am persuaded in Jesus Christ the Lord, there is nothing unclean in itself;” for in Christ and His resurrection all outward distinctions are gone. It is not denied that in itself the one was right; but the good becomes evil spoken of when he who has it cannot bear with one who has it not; for the kingdom of God does not consist in such matters, but in righteousness in the Holy Ghost, in peace in the Holy Ghost, in joy in the Holy Ghost. We need not here stop to consider what this righteousness, peace, and joy of the Christian are; inwrought by the Spirit of God, they yield the fruit of the Spirit, and conform the believer to his Lord; “for the Lord

is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;" and "we, with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory." (2 Cor. iii. 17, 18.) Thus it is, that he who in the spirit serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and not only so, he is also approved by his fellow-believers.

May this approval be much thought of; as essential to the fellowship of saints; and, with Paul, may all who seek to commend themselves to every man's conscience, "follow after those things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another." (v. 19.)

What then is to be our position with regard to our faith? May we enforce it on the conscience of another? "Hast thou faith?" asks the apostle; then "have it to thyself in the presence of God." It is between you and God. Hold it then in the presence of God. Seek the edification of the weak, as commanded in verse 19; and ever remember that "happy is he that condemneth not himself" in the use he makes of "that which He alloweth." "And he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (vv. 22, 23.)

This is a word to the strong and to the weak. He gives the solemn warning not to be influenced by others however instructed, unless they can prove to our conscience that their conduct or counsel is in accordance with the word of God. Hence the wickedness of judging another when his conscience is unenlightened; for unless he knows he is acting in obedience to the Lord he must sin, because he cannot act in faith. Hence also the folly of subjection to man in the things of God; for he who merely follows man must sin, whichever path he takes, because he has not sought to know the mind of the Lord, and the path is therefore not trod in faith.

H. G.

(To be continued.) 322.

THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY GHOST.

Notes of an Address by H. H. at Leominster Conference,
October 11th, 1877.

I WISH to say a few words on behalf of that glorious Person who has taken up His abode in our hearts, the Holy Ghost.

We were reminded by one brother where we are in the economy of God, as shown to us by the three feasts mentioned in Deut. xvi. The passover is behind us, and also the day of Pentecost; and we are gathered to-night between the day of Pentecost and the feast which we are waiting for, the great ingathering—our gathering to Christ above.

We are drawing near to the close of this year. Its mercies we cannot number, any more than we can number our faults; nor can we estimate as we should the constant, the tender, the mighty, unfailing, unchanging and unchangeable love of our God and Father towards us. But this we ought to be able to say, that as we are nearer the feast of ingathering as to time, so are we nearer to it in the affections of our souls.

Can we say so? Does our expectation of the speedy coming of our Lord tell its tale in our separation of heart and life from this present evil world? It ought, and it must do so, if we are truly waiting to be taken. And if it be not so, we ought to judge ourselves; for the fault is in us, and not in Him who has promised to come.

His bounding heart knows but one restraint, and that is the will of the Father. Were this the time appointed of the Father, He would come this evening; we should find Him, swifter than the roes upon the mountains, leaving the Father's throne, and stepping into the air. And what for? To speak from thence with His almighty voice as of thunder, with the archangel's trump to wake the sleeping saints, and with His mighty transforming touch to change the living

ones, and to gather us all up together in the clouds, to be like Him, and with Him, and that for ever.

This is our hope. Oh, let us hold it fast! The longer He tarries, the stronger will be the temptation to let it slip. But, brethren, grip it, grasp it, cling to it, like the limpet to the rock. If you touch the limpet ever so gently, as if conscious of your intention to separate it from the rock, it clings the closer. So let us be holding fast to this hope, "I will come again, and will receive you unto myself."

But how do I know that I shall inherit my portion? How do I know that I shall be with Him, and like Him? He has given me the earnest. When He ascended He received and sent down the Holy Ghost.

Let us read one or two passages in connection with this wondrous Person. (Read Eph. i. 12-14.)

We here learn that each believer, even the babe in Christ only born yesterday, carries about in him the earnest of the inheritance, the earnest and pledge of the glory. He carries in him that Holy Spirit who by His indwelling is God's mark upon him, and is the earnest of that which has been bought by Christ.

The price was paid down in death; God accepted it, and testified to it by resurrection. My soul is bought, my body is bought, the Church is bought, Israel is bought, the land is bought—all purchased. The Son of God, made flesh, has paid the price that satisfies God; and the very justice and power of God are debtors to Christ to give Him that which He purchased. And the earnest of all that He has purchased is the indwelling of the Spirit of God in the believer.

What a blessing to have Him dwelling in us! And remember what a holy thing it is. My body is a member of Christ, so is yours; not only you, but your body. "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" We ought to take care of the body then for Him. But we ought not to deck a member of Christ with the trappings of the world's fashion. Oh, if we

could see the mind of Christ concerning us when He sees us acknowledging the world's ways as superior to His ways, the world's principles to be superior to His, and the world's fashions more beautiful than the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit! Oh, may God remind us of what we are; and when we are tempted to deck the body, may He remind us, Do you not know that your body is a member of Christ? What are you going to do with it? "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?"

Beloved brethren, we do not think enough of ourselves; and one reason is, we think too much of ourselves as of the first Adam. We want higher and more dignified views of ourselves, as the members of Christ and temples of the Holy Ghost.

Now let us read another passage: "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man." Here is the source of power. We have heard what we ought to be, and what we ought not to be; and we can never reach what we are called to be by natural power. But here our need is met: "Strengthened with all might by His Spirit in the inner man."

We are subjects of the new creation. We have the outer man that bears the traces of our connection with the first Adam (the wrinkled brow, the grey hair, the failing limb, the shooting pain—all these show our connection with the first Adam); but we have another man, created after the image of God, the inner man. The inner man is not the Holy Ghost; but the Holy Ghost dwells in him to nourish him, to strengthen and feed him, to be the source of endurance and conquest. And is there any limit to His power, His knowledge, His understanding? Ah, no. And that glorious Person, with might immeasurable, dwells in the inner man to be our Source of strength, our Guide, our Teacher.

If you and I had never grieved Him, what should we not have been in knowledge and power! Then let

us judge ourselves for our dwarfishness, let us take the low place; for we are indwelt by the omniscient, almighty Holy Ghost. Oh, may He wither up our carnal strength, and all our high thoughts of ourselves! May He also show us the hideousness of the flesh in ourselves, and then we shall be able to see it in others, and be fitted to speak of it, to touch and deal with it in others, without being defiled by it.

Let us look at another passage: "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Rom. viii. 26.)

We have at times sorrows too deep for any language to describe; temptations which if told to others they could not understand; desires too big for human utterance; and yet we wish God to know them all. But you say, He does know them. So He does; but if you do not tell them to Him, He carries Himself towards you as if He were ignorant of them.

I can give you examples: "Woman, why weepest thou?" Did He not know? Of course He did; but He must have it told out; and as soon as she opened her heart He calls her "Mary," and her sorrow is turned into joy.

Take another instance—the disciples going to Emmaus. He joins their company as a stranger; they cannot discern Him. He begins as a stranger to enquire, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?" Did He not know? Surely He did; but they had not told Him. Then He draws out the tale, part of which was a confession of their unbelief, which drew from Him the gentle reproach, "O fools, and slow of heart."

Dear brethren, you know it is true. If you have had a burden on your heart, if you have been in the depths of sorrow, and have kept it pent up from Christ, you have had to carry the burden, and endure the shaft, as though there were no Christ in existence. But

when you have told it out to Him, He has opened His heart to you, and poured in the consolations of His sympathy and love.

Oh, treat Christ as a friend, I beseech you! His heart is tender, and He is faithful. We can trust Christ; He never betrays us, never exposes us, if we expose ourselves to Him. May we so treat Him.

But some one may say, "My case is an exception. I cannot tell Him; I do not know where to begin." Open your heart to Him. "I cannot; if I attempt it, I am shut up." There is One who can do it for you. Listen. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." Are you unable to speak? Go upon your face, and be dumb. Is your groan too big for language? Let the Holy Ghost breathe out to God the burden of your soul, and that groan goes straight up. The devil may oppose it if he will, the principalities and powers may oppose it if they will; but it goes straight to the heart and ear of Christ, and He puts it in His own language to the ear of the Father. An Intercessor in heaven, and the Holy Ghost interceding within you, how can you fail? It is better to be silent, and let Him talk, than to talk and choke His voice.

But what is the chief desire that the Holy Ghost groans out to Christ, and the chief desire that He begets in your soul and mine? Ah, you know it before I remind you of it! If you are tempted, He will ask that you may be succoured; if you are in straits, that you may be delivered; if in sorrow, that your tears may be dried, and your wounded spirit bound up; but beyond all this, "The Spirit and the bride say, COME."

The heart of Christ is more full of joy in the anticipation of His coming, than we are in expectation of Him. His heart never sleeps with respect to it. He never allows any thing to divert Him from it. He is

waiting, expecting, and unsatisfied till He has His bride with Him. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." Oh this glorious unity of mind between the Holy Ghost and the bride in which He dwells!

Satan is trying his utmost to lead us to forget this blessed hope of the coming of the Lord, and practically to stamp out the line of separation between us and the world. The Lord by His Spirit revive this hope in my soul and in yours, beloved brethren and sisters, so that every day the line of demarcation be rendered plainer and plainer to all who see us, instead of its being stamped out.

The Lord enable us to have the ready answer to the threefold declaration of the promise of Christ :

"AMEN! EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS."

"WHATSOEVER IS NOT OF FAITH IS SIN."

FAITH must rest upon a revelation from God. "Thus saith the Lord" is the ground of faith, and anything short of this is not faith.

We are redeemed to be obedient children, and should have the assurance that we are doing His will in every thing we do. Without this assurance we cannot act in faith, and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

We are not our own; we are "bought with a price," and should glorify God in our bodies and our spirits, which are God's. We have no right to do our own will in anything; no right to form a judgment of our own, or to mark out a path for ourselves. We are separated unto God, sanctified in Christ Jesus, to be His holy ones, His delight, His joy.

What traitors we are to the Lord who has bought us, when in independence and pride we please ourselves instead of Him. On the other hand, what honour He has put upon us, what a place of nearness to Himself He has given us, and what a rich provision He has made for us!—"Sanctified in Christ Jesus," united to

Him, brought into fellowship with Him, and privileged to use all His stores of wisdom, grace, and strength.

Surely we will not call it bondage to be subject to Him? Rather will we esteem it our special joy and honour to be His servants; and in the glad gratitude and deep affection of our hearts thoroughly surrender ourselves to Him. We *are* His—His loved ones, His portion, His garden of pleasant plants where He comes to regale Himself; and with what delight He feeds upon our loving obedience, our ready self-sacrifice for Him.

Nor has He left us in darkness as to His will. He has given us His word as a lamp for our feet and a light for our path, and promised that if our eye be single (our one aim to do His will), our whole body shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light; *therefore* “whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”

We ought to have a “Thus saith the Lord” for everything we do; and if it be not so, it either proves disobedience to the Lord’s will when we know it, or a carelessness of soul that makes us negligent in searching out His will that we may do it.

True, we may be in great perplexity for a season about many things because of our ignorance of, or want of subjection to the written Word. But our blessed God has not left us without a guide. There is light for our path, and He is always waiting to meet the humble, obedient soul, and lead it in His ways. We may have to *wait* for His guidance, but as surely as we wait upon Him, He will show us the good and the right way wherein we may walk, in the full assurance of “faith” that we are pleasing Him.

Full, true subjection to His word and to His will is what is needed. *In* keeping His commandments there is great reward; and great indeed is the rest and peace of that soul which can look up to its God in the full assurance that it is pleasing Him, and walking in obedience to His revealed will.

This is faith, true faith—a faith that rests upon His written Word; and thus whatsoever we do, we may do in faith, because we know we are acting in obedience to Him.

THE BURDEN - BEARER.

Note on Psalm lv. 22.

“CAST thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.” Not only *it*, but *thee*. God delights in manifold blessing. He giveth grace for grace: first the grace of obedience, then the free grace of reward. He wants to teach His saints to put Christ between them and everything; not that He may bear their burdens only, but that He may have an opportunity of bringing them into fuller, deeper fellowship with Himself. The word “cast” implies the thought of rolling away vehemently; as in Rev. iv. 10, they “cast their crowns before the throne,” hasting to give Him back the glory.

The secret of the evenness and beauty of the life of Christ as our example, lay in the undivided purpose of His heart, revealed to us in Ps. xvi. 8: “I have set the LORD always before me.” Not service, however blessed; nothing outside the will of His Father. This was His life-aim. If we learned of Him more of the preciousness of yielded hearts we should bear fewer burdens. We should find it easier to let Him choose our path, careless where it may lead if only we please Him. If we abide in Him, the weight of our care rests upon the shoulder on which the government of the universe is set. (Isa. ix. 6.) It is only when we leave our place upon His bosom that we can feel its load again. The secret of “no care” is just abiding, dwelling there; yielding ourselves to the skilfulness of His hands (Ps. lxxviii. 72); resting in His love for the present hour, looking for His coming the next. What have we left to fear? Only the danger of leaving the place of rest and security where God has put us—in Him.

A. E. W.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

How are we to regard the "sermon on the mount"?

It contains the principles of the kingdom of God and its code of laws. It forms the rule of Christian life for us, to whom the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost. May nothing rob the church of these most precious chapters of precept and of promise; for the Lord here unfolds the character of God as Father, in a way he does nowhere else, and of this He says in John xvii: "I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it." The precepts of Matt. v. vi. vii. are very clear, and they cut very close. The sword is two-edged, sharp, and piercing, separating and dividing, and the flesh trembles as we read it. But the higher the calling, the profounder will be the preceptive word that is connected with it, and the richer and the sweeter the promises. Let us not get drawn away from the unworldly simplicity of Christ shown us in those chapters, and may the prayer the Lord has therein taught be our model and our guide in matter, in order, in character, and in end.

What are we to understand by the *two staves* in Zech. xi.?

The word rendered "staff" in this passage is not to be confounded with the shepherd's staff, it signifies simply a *stick*. The two sticks are designed to represent a double relation; the one, that which Israel was to hold toward God; and the other, that which they were to hold to one another. The first is called *Beauty*, and represents God's covenant relation to Israel, whereby the beauty of the Lord rested on them (Ps. xc. 17), and Israel became a pleasant plant to God; and the breaking of *Beauty* is connected with the rejection of Christ, or the selling of the Shepherd for thirty pieces of silver. The second stick

is called *Bands*, representing the bonds of brotherhood subsisting between the various tribes. When, however, the first stick was broken, because Israel's relation to God had been forfeited, the second must be broken likewise, because the relation of the tribes to each other can no longer be maintained. But do we not see in the present day, a desire to re-create unity among Christians, without a due regard to covenant obedience to God, as if it were possible to secure the former independently of the latter? Compare this with Ezekiel xxxvii., where the Spirit is poured out on Israel after they are brought out of their graves. (v. 14.) By this their *Beauty* characteristic is restored, and this takes place before the stick of Judah and the stick of Joseph, become one in his prophet's hand, given as a token that God will make them one nation again, and put one king over them. (v. 22.) The word "stick," however, is not the same as in Zech. xi., but simply means "a piece of wood."

Who are meant by the *three shepherds* in Zech. ii. 8?

The verse should be read, "And I will cut off *the* three shepherds," &c. The three shepherds probably refer to the three anointed heads of the people—the *king*, the *priest*, and the *prophet*—who being cut off, the nation comes under the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet of Rev. xii. and xiii. The idol shepherd in verses 16, 17 doubtless refers to Antichrist, the man who shall "come in his own name," whom Christ says the Jews will receive. It is solemn to notice in the present day the terrible spread of infidelity among the Jews. As long as they were persecuted for their faith, they adhered to it amidst all suffering; but now that they are rather courted than persecuted, their worldly prosperity is leading them into atheism; and this is an important feature in the progress of events that are hastening on the end, and preparing the way for the advent of the Man of sin.

“PRAISE YE JAH.”

Psalm cxlix.

(NOTES OF AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT LEOMINSTER BY T. N.)

You remember the language of the apostle Paul, when he said, “What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”

Now in our songs of praise the first thing is, to sing with the spirit; for “God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” In all our songs of praise let it be the sincere purpose of our hearts to sing with the spirit. But not only that, let us sing with the understanding also. Not only spiritual and real, but intelligent worship becometh the worshippers of the one true God.

One reason why “hosannahs languish on our tongues” is, that we do not sing with the understanding. I believe there are many who do not know what the word hosannah means. It is a pretty word, and they like to sing it. Now, properly speaking, the word is prayer rather than praise. It means, *Save now*—“Save now, I beseech thee, O Jehovah!” And so with hallelujah. Do we know what it means? It means, “Praise ye Jah,” and is embodied in that beautiful verse of Psalm lxxviii., “Extol Him that rideth upon the heavens by His name JAH, and rejoice before Him.”

It is remarkable that the word for heavens there is not the ordinary word, but another, that gives us the idea of those vast infinitudes beyond creation’s limits. Space is one thing, infinitude is another. Time also is one thing, and eternity is another. Now God not only fills the heavens and space, but those vast untenanted heavens. He rides upon these infinitudes by His name Jah. The word Jah conveys another idea from Jehovah.

Jehovah presents God to us in His past, present, and future existence. Jah means that one eternal now who *inhabits* all past, present, and future; it presents God in His infinity.

Then mark, it is not simply Praise Him, but, "*Extol Him that rideth upon the heavens,*" who fills eternity. You and I are born for eternity, and, blessed be God, we are called to share His eternal joys. But, as children of Adam, how much do we fill of time? Do we fill a moment? I trow not. It is only a small portion of time that we pass through, and then we die; but we do not fill it. But,

" O God, how infinite art Thou,
Who fill'st eternity!"

The Psalms are divided into five books, and these books are progressive; and towards the close of this last book we reach the great consummation of all things, the grand hallelujah chorus, when every thing that hath breath comes in to swell the song.

Hallelujah is the first word of Psalm cxlix. The saints of old had no dread of the *name* of God. We can prove this, because they interwove the name El, or Jah, in some way or other into the names of almost all their children. Jehovah means, "He that is, and was, and is to come."

First, "Praise ye Jah;" then, "Sing to Jehovah a new song." What is the new song? We find it in the book of Revelation; and with regard to that book, I believe it to be the most simple of all; and if we understand it, we have the key of the whole Bible. The book of Revelation throws back light upon the whole book of God. It was written by Jah, who gave us the book of Genesis, a book of infinite foreknowledge; and the key to Genesis is the book of Revelation.

But what is the new song? Do angels know it? The song of creation was theirs, "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." The first song was the song of creation—adoring

God ; but the new song is always connected with the new creation, resurrection, and redemption. Redemption brings it in, and the Lord Jesus Christ—the Speaker of Psalm xxii., the One who stands in the midst of the assembly of His saints—fixes the first note, and leads on the new song of the new creation in resurrection. We must come into the new creation to sing it aright.

The Spirit of God makes a difference between the word “assembly” and “congregation,” just as we have two meanings for the word church. In some passages it means an assembly in a certain located place, and in others the whole congregation or Church of God. Now in the Hebrew there are two words ; and in this psalm it is the whole assembly of saints. It is a millennial psalm ; and unless we see that, we cannot understand it. The Psalms go on from the first half week of Antichrist till the covenant is broken, and then through the tribulation till we come into the full tide of millennial blessing with its new song.

“Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him.” Israel has now become the branch of God’s planting, the work of His hands, that He may be glorified. God has created them anew—a new creation—the stony heart taken away, and a heart of flesh given unto them. “Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him : let the sons of Zion be joyful in their King.” The rightful heir is enthroned on the hill of Zion. Let the sons rejoice ! He that re-made them says, “Behold, I make all things new”—new heavens, a new earth, and a new people. There is one Lord over all the earth. His name is one. His people rejoice ; the shout of a King is among them.

“Let them praise His name in the dance.” Yes, there is a time for dancing ; it will soon come ; but it is not now. If you get the dancing now, it is a daughter of Herodias that dances. But there is a time to come when Israel, a new creation, will praise Him in the dance. Every power renewed will join in the

expression of their praise. "Timbrel and harp," instruments of music, will then be used. The devil is now the prince of the air, so Nebuchadnezzar and the kings of the earth bring in music to act upon the flesh.

What is the effect of instrumental music? It stirs up the feelings of the flesh. The flesh is not renewed, and this is not the time for instrumental music. I would not go to extremes, and do not deny the use of instruments for helping to tune the voice, or to learn tunes, &c. But when we enter within the veil, and enjoy the sweet consciousness of the presence of the Lord, we want nature to be quiet and in abeyance. We do not want instrumental music then; and why? Because we are flesh, and music interferes with our spirituality, and drags us down to earth; and at such seasons we prove that we are better without it. But in Israel's time, when *nature* will be renewed, *it* may be acted upon to the full, and will only sound out the praises of their God and King. It will not be hammering then on a cracked piece of metal, but on a sound piece, to show forth His praise. "Let them sing praises unto Him with the timbrel and harp."

"For the Lord taketh pleasure in His people;" that is, in Israel, for it is in the singular. Their land will then be a delight. "Thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." These will be true of them when the new song shall be sung.

"He will beautify the meek with salvation." Their language then will be, "My soul is even as a weaned child." No longer the proud and self-righteous people; but brought down to be meek and lowly in heart, and clothed with garments of salvation, their song will be the new song, even praise to our God.

There is such a thing as rightly dividing the word of truth. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." That is, to divide it as

with a line ; and we can only have light to do this, in the light of God’s own countenance.

The division of this psalm is, I believe, at verse 5. “Let the saints be joyful in glory.” Here “saints” means “gracious ones ;” let them be joyful in glory. They sing the new song in the upper gallery. The saints in glory, the white-robed choir—those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb—“Let them be joyful in glory : let them sing aloud upon their couches.” Bed gives the idea of slumber, but the thought here is of reclining. They shall come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and shall recline. The saints in glory recline on their couches ; the day’s toil over, the passover fulfilled in the kingdom of God, when the Lamb partakes of it with them. There will be no slumber there, but everlasting rest. And what an idea it gives us ! Not only rest, but singing praises. Their singing will not interfere with their profoundest rest. No toil there ; they never grow weary ; they sing upon their couches ; they have entered into the rest of their God. “There remaineth therefore a sabbatism for the people of God.”

“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth.” Here it is God in the singular number, the one true God. Let them praise Him. “And a two-edged sword in their hands.” The time looked at in heaven is the marriage supper of the Lamb ! Rev. xix. throws light upon this. After they have entered into the marriage supper, and reclined as Jesus said they should, He comes forth upon His white horse to execute judgment, and the armies in heaven follow Him.

“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand.” The sword proceeds out of *His* mouth, but it is in their hand to execute the judgments, the vengeance, on the nations. The word “heathen” ought to be “nations.” We think of heathen as cannibals, or pagans. But it is the

nations, it is France, Britain, and Germany, the nations of the Roman empire especially.

“And punishments upon the peoples.” In verse 4 it was the people Israel; but here it is plural; it is the “peoples.”

“To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron.” What! you and I share in that? Yes. “Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world?” And what is the promise to the overcomer? “To him that overcometh will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I have received of my Father.” Yes, beloved friends, “let them sing praises. Let the two-edged sword be in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the nations, and punishments upon the peoples; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written.”

Have we thought of this? Have we realized that we are to be the executors of these judgments on the apostate earth? “This honour have all His saints.” Hence, said Paul, “Put them who are least esteemed in the Church to judge things pertaining to this life.” “Know ye not that ye shall judge angels?”

“Praise ye JAH.”

HABAKKUK'S WATCH-TOWER.

HAB. ii. 1.

WE know nothing of the prophet Habakkuk beyond the book of his prophecy. But just as Nahum foretold the punishment and captivity of the ten tribes by the Assyrians, Habakkuk foresaw a similar captivity for Judah and Benjamin, by the Chaldeans. Hence his prophesying may have been during the wicked reigns of either Manasseh, or Amon, or Jehoiakim.

In any case Habakkuk had to witness for God, and

to serve Christ in most painful scenes. His opening words (chap. i. 1-4) show this. His soul was saddened by the low and sinful state of God's own people, who were his own nation, and his spirit trembled at the judgments about to be brought upon them—judgments, he well knew, so richly deserved. He surveys Judah's evil state as a kingdom and a people, and pleads with God as to the "violence" (*i.e.* the oppressions) done in her midst, the "strife and contention" which her own sons were "raising up" within her, so that the authority of God's word was set aside. Mark his words: "The law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth," &c. (v. 4.)

But Habakkuk is not pleading with God "*against* Israel" as Elijah once was (see Rom. xi. 2), which God had to reprove. Habakkuk's is a "taking hold of God" (Isa. lxiv. 7); and, Moses like (see Exod. xxxiii. 13, xxxiv. 9), he pleads for the deliverance of God's people from it all. "How long, O Jehovah?" is his cry; and "how long" is faith's mighty question as truly as it is sorrow's deepest cry; for it shows the soul's confidence in God that salvation must come in the end.

"Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, It shall be done."

Very solemn, however, is God's answer to his cry (see *vv.* 5-11); for it tells of such a terrible work of judgment as no one could have believed would be. "Behold ye among the heathen, and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you;" and then follows a heart-rending description of the coming Chaldean invasion.

David's words in Psalm lxxv. 5 would have suited Habakkuk just then: "By terrible things in righteousness wilt Thou answer us, O God of our salvation;

who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea . . . which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and *the tumult of the people.*" Thus David's faith triumphed blessedly amidst wars and bloodshed, and so did Habakkuk's.

Both of them knew the mighty name of Jehovah, God's covenant name of unchangeable love and grace to His people; and that name of Jehovah was to both of them as "a strong tower, into which the righteous runneth, and is set aloft." (Prov. xviii. 10; see marg.) Many a psalm of David's shows this, and so does Habakkuk's response in chap. i. 12: "Art thou not from everlasting, O Jehovah my God, mine holy One? we shall not die."

This precious utterance shows that Israel's unchanging Jehovah was Habakkuk's strong tower. He knew the nation could not perish. "We shall not die." It might be sorely chastened, but could not be "given over unto death." (See Ps. cxviii. 17, 18.) God's covenant with it was "as the waters of Noah" (Isa. liv. 9), and could be no more taken away from them than day and night could cease.

Nay, more; Habakkuk's faith went further than this. The "strong tower" of Jehovah's name did more than defend him and the nation from death; it also, as the proverb says, "set him aloft," so that he could overlook the whole scene of this wicked invasion, and could say of the cruel and merciless Chaldeans, "O Jehovah, thou hast *ordained them* for judgment, and, O Rock (see marg.), thou hast *established them* for (our) correction." The prophet could see God in it all, and knew that He had appointed these wicked invaders as His own scourge, and as His discipline for the people whom He so loved.

Had not God ages before made the wickedness of Pharaoh and Egypt to be His "iron furnace" (Deut. iv. 20), in which to keep His Israel-bush still burning,

but not consumed? Moses worshipped at the vision of the burning bush, and never forgot its teaching. (See Deut. xxxiii. 16.) He stood before Pharaoh in the strength of it, and delivered Israel; and now Habakkuk surveys the terrible scene before him, of armies "marching through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling-places that were not theirs . . . swifter than leopards, and fiercer than evening wolves . . . gathering the captivity as the sand . . . and deriding every stronghold;" and as he witnesses all these "wars and rumours of wars," he still sees God, even Israel's God, sitting "upon the flood; yea, Jehovah sitteth King for ever." (Ps. xxix. 10.)

God is essentially the same in all ages, and faith in Him ever gives the same spirit of triumph; therefore this blessed utterance of Habakkuk's may give comfort and strength to suffering saints of our own days. Dispensational commands and circumstances may have greatly changed; but it is as true now as then, that the world is hostile to God's people. Nevertheless "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith;" and the triumphant language, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose," is just the joy and triumph of Habakkuk over again.

The truth is, Paul read Habakkuk, and blessedly quotes and uses his words for comfort and exhortation (see Rom. i. 17; Gal. iii. 10; Heb. x. 37), and also for solemn warning, as in Acts xiii. 40, 41, just as Habakkuk himself seems to have read Moses, if we may judge from his calling on God as "O Rock," an emblem so taught by Moses both in his living acts and in his writings.

Thus God links together His own different dispensations to man, by the one stream of His un failing grace to His people, and by their one characteristic of trust in Himself alone. We have no other "strong tower"

now to run into and get "set aloft" but that blessed threefold Jehovah-name which they also had. True, the door of entrance into it is, so to speak, flung wider open, and the road to this our "city of refuge" is "raised up now as a causeway" (Prov. xv. 19), so that no tried child of God need now be baffled by Satan's craft, nor overcome by temptation's power, before he enters it; but the "strong tower" itself is the same now as then.

The safely-sheltered one in this "strong tower" has now a further "trial of his faith." It comes thus: The scene of evil around him *continues longer* than he had expected. He knows that God has no pleasure in the wickedness of these oppressors of His people, and therefore says (Hab. i. 13), "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." Yet, wearied with the length of the wickedness, he asks, "Wherefore lookest thou on them that deal treacherously," and by it "make their portion fat, and their meat plenteous?" and he ends with asking, "Shall they therefore empty their net" (*i.e.* as fishermen do, to fill it again), "and not spare *continually* to slay the nations?" (v. 17.) That is, "Shall this scene of woe around go on much longer? shall it continue always?"

Here then is another trial of faith; viz., the *long continuance* of this "mighty hand of God" upon His saints. And it is this that so greatly tests their faith. Job submitted to his afflictions blessedly for "seven days and seven nights" (Job ii. 13); but when it still continued, and was aggravated rather than lessened by the ill-behaviour of others, he could no longer bear it patiently. The same truth is taught us in Psalm lxxiii.

Habakkuk asks, "Is this wickedness around me, and the misery it causes to sufferers, and the trial it brings to God's patient saints, to go on always?" Happily, as soon as he had asked the question, he stands upon his "watch," and sets himself upon his "tower," to see

what Jehovah's answer will be. His "strong tower" thus becomes his "watch-tower" (see Isa. xxi. 8), from which he scans the horizon for the first streaks of the morning, and the light of a brighter day. Nor does he wait there long. God answered him as quickly with a cheering word as He had in chap. i. 5 with a solemn word.

"And Jehovah answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it" ("run," that is, to tell to others the good news he has so plainly read. Compare 2 Kings vii. 9). "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." (Hab. ii. 2, 3.)

The *certainty* of the vision being fulfilled, and the *nearness* of the day when it would come to pass, were the cheering things so plainly seen by Habakkuk. And is not this the very cheer which we also want? Hence the awakening use Paul makes of this passage for us as New Testament saints, who, like John in Patmos, are "in the kingdom and patience of Jesus." (Rev. i. 9.) He quotes it in Heb. x. 37 with sufficient exactness to connect our experience with that of the Old Testament saints, yet with such alteration as befits our more favoured days. Instead of only a "*vision*," and "*it will come*," Paul changes the words to "HE that shall come will come," and omits all that speaks of any delay whatever—"Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

Thus in every age God has delighted to cheer the hearts of His faithful and waiting saints with the vision of what He has in store for them; but has never so fully unveiled it, and never brought it so near at hand, as now. The far greater development of His purposes, the visiting of nearly all nations with the gospel (see Acts xv. 14), the "despite done to the Spirit of grace" (Heb. x. 29) by every corruption of

the truth of God—all this, and much else of like kind, tells how near the time is of Christ's coming kingdom, previous to which *must be* our being caught up as His waiting saints. But, best of all, the gaze of faith into a blessed eternity is clearer now than in any age before; for the Son of God is come, and is now Himself the waiting One at God's right hand.

Habakkuk's watch-tower therefore may well be ours; for we look for Him with a nearness that leaves no room for any such words as, "Though it tarry, wait for it;" and, "*At the end* it shall speak." (Hab. ii. 3.)

This same difference of dispensations in the matter of the "blessed hope" may be seen by comparing Daniel xii. 4 with Rev. xxii. 10: "Shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end," was the word to Daniel; "Seal *not* the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand," was the word to John in Patmos.

How different also the spiritual and dispensational light granted to John from that given to Daniel. "A new heaven and a new earth;" "the Bride, the Lamb's wife, the holy Jerusalem," all of them things divine and eternal, were filling the eye and ear and the gladdened heart of John. Jesus Christ Himself, the Lord of glory, "the King eternal" (1 Tim. i. 17), was his teacher; and as a learner John was "in the Spirit." What wonder then that to him "time and sense were all no more." The temporal was as nothing in the presence of the eternal. Oh for more of this telescope-power of faith's steady gaze into our blissful and everlasting future! for, telescope-like, faith's eye nears the object to the view as well as clears it.

"Art Thou not from everlasting, O Jehovah my God, mine Holy One?" This was the glorious sum and centre of Habakkuk's "vision," and the source of all the rest. In the presence of their own Jehovah, he sees Israel as a people that would not die; for they could not nationally be "cast away." More than this,

the day must come when every one of them would possess eternal life. "Thy dead men shall live, my dead body shall they arise." (Isa. xxvi. 19.) The millennial Israel will all of them be "written among the living in Jerusalem." (Isa. iv. 3.)

The same pages of Zechariah which teach us that Jerusalem will be so populous that walls around it will be impossible (Zech. ii. 4), and that old men and old women will be leaning on their staff for very age (compare Isa. lxxv. 22), as well as the streets "full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof" (Zech. viii. 4, 5), teach us also that they will all have mourned for sin, and will have washed in "the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness." (Zech. xii. 10; xiii. 1.) They will all know the Lord, "from the least of them unto the greatest of them: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. xxxi. 34); and in their midst will be their Saviour-King, "the Rock of Ages."

What a fulfilling of Habakkuk's vision from his watch-tower—"Art not Thou from everlasting, O Jehovah my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die."

But Habakkuk sees another blessed sight, which shall equally be fulfilled. He sees "the earth filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea." (Chap. ii. 14.)

Observe, "the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah" does not necessarily imply the *spiritual* blessing of all the earth's inhabitants. Christ's glory will be fully made known to all the vast multitudes of that peaceful age, whether they believe in Him savingly or no. Rev. xx. teaches us that the Gog and Magog multitude will perish; but the Father's name will have been hallowed in His Son, and the kingdom will have fully come. All this is the result of Israel's blessing. See Ps. lxxvii.: "God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him."

Blessed for Habakkuk to have seen all this from his

"watch-tower," even in the days of Israel's weakness, and the wickedness of the Gentiles. Truly the word of prophecy is "as a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts." Habakkuk found it so in his Old Testament measure; and we may do so still more by the Spirit's teaching, if we will but be on our watch-tower.

And what is our vision of *heavenly* things as New Testament saints? It begins in the same way that Habakkuk's did, of things below. The first thing shown to John in Patmos of things that are to be "after these things" was the firmly-set throne, and God and the Lamb filling it (see Rev. iv. v.), and around it the living creatures and the elders full of life and immortality. All that followed, even to a new heaven and a new earth, might well ensue as the result of this.

The practical results to Habakkuk of this his vision, as seen in chap. iii., may be the subject of another paper, if the Lord will. H. D.

"RECEIVE ONE ANOTHER."

ROMANS xiv. 1 to xv. 13.

(*Continued from page 298.*)

WE have seen how in Romans xiv. the Spirit of God unfolds our relation towards the weak. The weak believer is one who fails to realize the fulness of his standing in Christ—dead and risen—and hence sees not his relation to the world or to the Church aright, and yet is godly and consistent in life and doctrine. Such a one must be distinguished from him who acts presumptuously with a high hand against the word of God and his own conscience.

In regard to the weak, the apostle would remind us of the keeping and strengthening grace of God as referred to in his doxology: "Now to Him that is of

power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ. . . .” (Chap. xvi. 25–27.)*
 What a rest for the apostle’s heart in reference to the weakness of the saints of God! God has power to stablish, and God alone.

“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.” Notice the obligation contained in the word “ought.” It is a debt of love we owe to Christ, and it should be discharged on that ground: “He laid down His life for us: and *we ought*” (*i.e.* are indebted to HIM) “to lay down our lives for the brethren.” (1 John iii. 16.) We are not to please ourselves, even as “Christ pleased not Himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.”

What is it that makes it so hard to bear the burdens of our fellowship with saints? Is it not our unwillingness to follow the footsteps of our Lord, who bore the failings and infirmities of His disciples with such long-suffering patience—a patience that ought to put us to shame, because we so little seek to “please our neighbour for his good to edification”?

We are not to please him carnally or ignorantly. His edification must be our aim and object; but that can only be effected by building him up in Christ. In our ministry of the gospel to the sinner we realize the essential importance of preaching a Person, and not merely a doctrine. And it is equally important so to present Christ to believers, that they “may grow up into HIM in all things.”

There is no greater source of weakness in the Church of God than the building up of the understanding in doctrines and principles, without building up the believer himself into Christ. It is Christ the sinner needs, and it is Christ the believer needs; and it is

* It is interesting to know that this doxology, in some Greek MSS., stands at the end of chapter xiv., as if it had been felt to be peculiarly appropriate there.

only as Christ is known by the one or the other that either will profit by the unfoldings of doctrinal truth.

Christ is given to us as our example in our relation to one another. Let us mark His ways with His disciples *when upon earth*. What words of comfort and of reproof! What loving appreciation of service and of faithfulness to Himself do we see! "They have kept Thy word," He tells the Father, as if it were His great joy to speak well of His people, and thus explains in His ways and words what 1 Cor. xiii. really means. He bore all things; He believed all things; He hoped all things; He endured all things.

We might especially recall our Lord's forbearance with Judas, bearing with him to the end, as if hoping to have turned him back from the evil of his way. Alas for us, of whom it may often be truly said, we bear little, believe little, hope little, and endure little.

The Scriptures, we are told, were written aforetime for our learning, that we, through the patience or endurance which it exemplifies and requires, and the comfort which it ministers, might have hope. John in Patmos was the companion of all saints in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.

Patience is the power of endurance, and is one of the essential elements of Christian character. Paul says, "Tribulation worketh patience," and whether in the Church or in the world, patience is wrought out by the constant friction which tribulation produces. Like good seed, it grows not in the unploughed field. Paul's great tribulation about the Corinthians, and the anxiety and care they caused him, yielded such abundant fruit of patience and love that, though he possessed apostolic power, he came among them, and wrote to them in the meekness and gentleness of Christ.

One great lesson to be learnt in our church-fellowship is patience; and the want of it will ever produce its own baneful fruit—pride, self-will, and confusion. No doubt James had abundant occasion for patience in

Jerusalem, and therefore writes, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” The Bible is a book of patience. Our relation to both the Church and the world calls for it; and the closer our relation becomes, the more shall we need to cultivate its growth.

“But,” says James, “let patience have her perfect work.” Do not hinder its inworking. This we do the moment we give way to the impatience of our spirit, and the unsubduedness of our own will; and hence the call there is at every step for God’s sustaining grace, who *can* make us what He made Moses, the meekest one on the earth. Nothing but patience can produce meekness, or make us like the meek and lowly One; and our church-fellowship and its trials are specially designed by God to help us in the attainment of this grace.

The aim is high, and the difficulties great; for the enemy, who ever seeks to lead the saints into fellowship with the world, also strives continually to mar their fellowship one with another by making it either narrower or broader than God would have it. But as we are not left without guidance and direction in the Scriptures, so neither are we left without power from God.

The beautiful prayer in verses 5, 6, points to this. “Now the God of the patience and of the comfort” (same word as in verse 4) “grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth (or better, “unanimously with one mouth”) glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Patience and consolation are not only attributes of God, but they are in Him to impart to us, so that our spiritual requirements may all be met. Likemindedness *is* possible, because our help is in God; but to

attain it we need to be cast upon Him, and then we may prove that what is hard for God's people is yet among the all things that are possible in Christ.

The likemindedness here spoken of is not conformity or agreement in opinion, but a unanimity, resulting from grace, to bear and to forbear after the example of Jesus Christ. The result of this would be, oneness of mind would increase, and oneness of mouth would follow. Here again notice the order; the inward precedes the outward. Unanimity is wrought out by steadfastly looking at and following the Lord, by growing up into *Christ*; and agreement in word necessarily follows. We do not agree to differ, but we agree to look at Christ, to follow His example. Outward uniformity without inward unity is but "an earthen potsherd covered over with silver dross." It is unreal. It is a lie.

A desire to secure the outward, by something short of inward growth and power has been a rock on which church-fellowship has ever made shipwreck. This has led to usurpations and schisms innumerable, whether in small or large communities; usurpations that have coerced the consciences of the weak, and made them subservient to an unlawful lordship, or that have driven away the strong, who know too much of God to bow to anything short of His written Word.

What then is the outcome of all this? Nothing short of—"Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ has received you (so the best Greek MSS., not "us,") to the glory of God." (v. 7.) As in all else, Christ is our example and our measure.

In chap. xiv. 3, we are told to receive the weak because God has received him, weak though he be; and here we are told that we are to receive one another because Christ has received us. And what is the ground of that acceptance? Faith in Himself, having obtained redemption through His blood.

When the elder told John who the white-robed

multitude were that stood before the throne, he said : “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Their title was the blood, and that title was acknowledged in heaven ; and that which satisfies there, must surely satisfy here. We know no other title, and can introduce no other claim.

We will turn to Romans x. 8-10, as meeting the practical difficulty, which we continually prove, in carrying out the truth that the blood of Christ is an all-sufficient claim for fellowship here. We there read : “The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart ; that is, the word of faith which we preach ; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

We here see, that when *faith* and *confession* go together, we ought to own that person’s claim to the cleansing by the precious blood. The chewing of the cud, and the dividing of the hoof, were the double mark of the clean animal under the Mosaic law. The cloven foot gave evidence to the outward walk, and the ruminating to the inward character.

The two points that mark the saved soul are, first, the confession of Christ as Lord and Saviour, so that we say “LORD JESUS ;” and second, the life of faith, as manifested in an obedient walk. Thus *faith* in Christ, and *subjection* to Christ, become the evidence to us of the claim to fellowship.

These evidences are sufficient to guide the single eye and the loving heart to a right decision in every case that presents itself. But if there be not the single eye and the loving heart, it is easy to construe these evidences so as to allow of a laxity in fellowship which is not according to the mind of God ; and it is equally easy to construe them into a narrowness of

communion which is opposed to every principle of that grace and truth in which Christ came, and of which He is the exponent.

The Bible is a test to our heart, as well as a lamp to our path. If the heart be right, and the eye single, we shall be guided aright, but not otherwise. He who is in the wrong path may say, as Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, did to Michaiiah, "Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak to thee?" and faith's patient answer, pointing onward to the future, may be, "Behold, thou shalt see it in that day." (1 Kings xxii. 25.) That day will declare it. True-hearted obedience will receive its vindication then; but true-heartedness that steps outside "the obedience of faith" will not be crowned, because it strove not according to the law.

In the concluding verses (8-13) the apostle takes up the difficulty in the reception of one another in those days, arising from the reciprocal jealousies of the Jew and the Gentile; and quoting from the Old Testament, he shows how Christ was a minister of circumcision to the Jew to fulfil the promises made to them, and also the bringer in of salvation to the Gentile, so that in Christ Jesus there was neither Jew nor Gentile, neither bond nor free. All religious distinctions were set aside, and all social differences swallowed up in Him who harmonized all, and united all in one New Man—in Himself—so making peace.

There was much pride of religion among the Jews, and much pride of wisdom among the Gentiles, and this pride made it hard for them to recognize what their new relation to the risen Christ had done for them both. Thus there was much in this high and precious truth, which they found very humbling and very hard to be received; but as Moses' rod swallowed up the rods of the wise men of Egypt, so will the truth of God swallow up all else when that truth is received as the word and power of God.

The apostle knew well the difficulties which existed then, and which ever will be in the Church of God, to hinder fellowship and to sow discord, and therefore concludes with these mighty words of comfort and prayer: "Now the God of the hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in the hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." As we had the God of the patience and comfort in verse 5, so here we have the "God of the hope"—the hope of the future glory, and of the ultimate consummation of all fellowship, when the Lord shall come to receive us unto Himself, and then fulfil His own blessed prayer in John xvii.

This hope is ours, and we must seek to abound in it through the power of the Holy Ghost, and thus obtain power to maintain heaven's fellowship on earth. This joy and peace in believing will bind us together around the person of our Lord, and will unite us in a fellowship that will be deep, inward, and real, the work of the Holy Ghost in the heart of each quickened saint.

May we all be thus taught of God, that, bearing one another's burdens, we may fulfil the law of Christ, and walk in the footsteps of Him who pleased not Himself, but ever did the will of Him that sent Him. H. G.

PSALM CXIX.

THE SPECIAL MEANING OF THE VARIOUS WORDS USED IN PSALM CXIX.
IN CONNECTION WITH THE WORD OF GOD.

The words used are the following:

1. *Law* (תורה). This word comes from the verb "to point out." It is God's will pointed out to us from heaven; His law. Greek *νομος*.

2. *Testimonies* (עדות). God's witness to us of what God is, and of what pleases Him; as also His witness against man and his ways. Greek *μαρτυρια*.

3. *Precepts* (פקודים). Directions given by an overseer to those who are executing his work, in which God is regarded as a Master, and we as His workmen,

called to obey His directions to the minutest detail. This Hebrew word occurs only in the Psalms.

4. *Statutes* (חֻקֹּת). The verb signifies to "engrave on stone," and hence marks out the immutability of God's decrees, as in the passage, "He hath declared for a *decree*," unalterably. They represent the decrees of a king. Greek *δικαίωμα*.

5. *Commandments* (מִצְוֹת). The commands of a father; often used of God's appointments for our obedience or for our acquiescence. Greek *εντολη*.

6. *Judgments* (מִשְׁפָּטִים). That which comes from the decision of a judge as to what is right or wrong, and as to reward or punishment. The judicial aspect of the word of God. Greek *κριμα*.

7. *Word* (דְּבַר). The word, or the thing about which the word is spoken.

8. *Word* (אִמְרָה). A promise. The word looked at as a verbal utterance, that on which faith has to be exercised, and hence it differs from the preceding, where the thing spoken of, rather than the word of the speaker, is the point. As this is always translated "word" in this psalm, the same as the preceding, the following passages where it occurs are given: *vs.* 11, 38, 41, 50, 58, 67, 76, 82, 103, 116, 123, 133, 140, 148, 154, 158, 162, 170, 172. It occurs in the following passages where the purity and tried character of God's word, or promise, is the subject: 2 Sam. xxii. 31; Ps. xii. 6; xviii. 30; cv. 19; Prov. xxx. 5; and is only found in about eight other places. Ps. cv. 19 illustrates the difference between these two words. "Until the time that His word (דְּבַר) came" (*i.e.* until the thing spoken of was fulfilled): "the word (אִמְרָה) of the Lord tried him;" *i.e.* the promise of God to him tested his faith in God while in captivity.

9. *Way* (דֶּרֶךְ). The inward principle of action; that which God showed to Moses, as distinguished from the outward acts which were showed to Israel. (Ps. ciii. 7.)

10. *Way* (אֶרֶץ). Properly *path*, the outward con-

duct. It occurs only in the following passages in this psalm: *vv.* 9, 15, 101, 104, 128. A comparison between *v.* 1 and *v.* 9 will illustrate the difference of meaning to be given to the two words rendered "way."

May a careful perusal of this psalm lead all saints into a greater value for the word of God, and stir them to gather up its hidden treasures, which, however, are opened up only to the careful and prayerful searcher after truth, as God has revealed it unto us.

H. G.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

WHAT is the meaning of Col. i. 24?

In contemplating the sufferings he had to pass through, Paul rejoiced that he was filling up his measure of that which was left of the sufferings of Christ, for His body's sake, the Church. Not, of course, those connected with atonement; that was past; but sufferings of obedience to God's will in service. Each individual, in service for the Church of God, has thus to labour, and to suffer, in order to accomplish the ingathering of the elect, for whose sake Paul says elsewhere: "I endure all things, that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. ii. 10.) The tears of him who goes forth with the seed-basket of the gospel (Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6) are needed to water the seed sown, and Paul told the Ephesian elders (Acts xx. 19) that he had watered his ministry with his tears. All gospel ministry in the world and in the church will entail more or less of the sufferings of Christ on him who is engaged in it, if the ministry is to be one of ultimate joy to him who ministers, and of real profit to those who are ministered to.

Does 2 Cor. v. 6-9 refer to the intermediate state?

We think it does, because of verses 6, 7, 9, where "present" seems to refer to being here in the body, and "absent" to the intermediate condition between

the putting off of the "earthly house" and the putting on of "the house not made with hands eternal in the heavens." Some, however, consider the "present" as referring to being present with the Lord hereafter, and the "absent" to our condition on earth now as separated from Him."

What is the meaning of Ps. cxxv. 3?

We would translate the verse as follows: "For the sceptre of wickedness shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous ones, because the righteous will not put forth their hands to iniquity." The power of the wicked now overspreads every thing, and the earth, which the righteous and the meek shall inherit, is now under a rebel sway. Satan rules, but his rule shall not rest there; it shall not abide; it passes away. Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36, explains this verse, where we read, "I have seen the wicked in great power, spreading himself as a tree that groweth in its own soil (see marg.). Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." The sceptre of evil rests on the lot of those who stretch out their hands to iniquity, even as now Satan's rule is over man's inheritance; and the Lord owns him as the prince of this world, because he is the god of the age, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

In what language was the writing on the wall at Belshazzar's feast?

The language was Aramæan, but written evidently in divine hieroglyphics, which it needed a divinely-taught person to read aright, and a prophet also rightly to interpret. Daniel read it first (*v.* 25), and then explained what the prophetic words signified (*vv.* 26-28); under which lies a foreshadowing of God's estimate of Babylon's rule, and of the doom that awaits it, as more fully unfolded in the book of Revelation.