

THE
GOLDEN LAMP;

OR,

Truth in Love

FOR

THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

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

John viii. 12.

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

Ephesians v. 8.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Matthew v. 16.

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CONTENTS.

	Page
Unfailing Mercy	1
Faith's Comfort in Dark Days	25
Wilderness Lessons	29
Israel's Present State and Course	49
Human Confederacy	73
Quietness and Confidence	80
“ Without the Camp ”	83
“ The Gospel of the Kingdom ”	92
Ministry Godward and Manward	97, 121
Sin and Repentance	103
Some of Satan's Devices	108
The Heavenly	116
Prayer and Expectation	127
Baptism and the Lord's Supper in their Church Aspects	132
Fellowship	145
“ The Law of the Sin-offering ”	154
“ A Good Man ”	161
The Songs of Scripture	169
The Lord Jesus as the Shepherd	172
Sons and Children	176
Christ Established on His Throne	183
A Letter on Pride and Humility	189
“ My Servant Job ”	193
The Onward Path of Faith	201
A Comprehensive Prayer	207
The Friendship of Christ	210
The Sanctification of Believers	217, 252
Christ in the Psalms	223
An Untrodden Way	229
The Compassion and the Sufficiency of Christ	235
Emmanuel, which is, God with Us	241
The Mote and the Beam	246
A Sevenfold Mention of “ Sins ”	258
Obed-Edom	262
David and Paul	265
Christ and the Scriptures	273
“ Fruit in Old Age ”—A Bright Close to a Very Long Pilgrimage	281
Closing Words	282

	Page
NOTES OF LEOMINSTER CONFERENCE—	
Unity of Worship and Service	7
Drawing Nigh to God	8
“Our Father”	9
Song of Solomon, ii. 9	11
The Passover	13
Dependence upon the Spirit of God	18
Gifts in the Church	32
Elijah and Elisha	37
Crucified with Christ	40
Righteousness and Love	62
Conformity to Christ	63
The Importance of Secret Prayer	67
Confidence before God	68
Christ our Example in Prayer	69
FRAGMENTS—	46, 72, 107, 234, 251
THE REVISED VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT—	
Psalms lxxiii.—cl.	24, 47, 95, 118, 143, 167, 190, 215
POETRY—	
A Quiet Mind	94
“He Ever Liveth”	167
“Be not Dismayed”	182
The Veil of Love	239
“When I am Weak, Then am I Strong”	264
NOTES AND REPLIES—	
Lev. xvi. 24.—Why did Aaron wash his flesh before putting on his garments?	216
Ps. xxxviii. and lxix.—Is the language of these Psalms the language of Christ?	191
Ecc. xii. 11.—How are we to understand this verse?	240
Matt. v. 19.—What is meant by “these least commandments”?	144
„ xvi. 23.—Why did the Lord address Peter as Satan?	192
„ xxvii. 34.—Why did the soldiers give the Lord “vinegar to drink mingled with gall”?	120
Rev. vii. 15; xxi. 25.—How are we to understand “they serve Him day and night”?	48
Can worship in any way be called service?	168
Is it correct to say that the Lord Jesus kept the law for us, and that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us?	216

THE GOLDEN LAMP.

UNFAILING MERCY.

PSALM CXXXVI.

THIS psalm is a call to thanksgiving, and a celebration of the mighty acts of the Lord. It first declares His goodness and supremacy, and then sets forth His works—the display of His wisdom in creation, and of His goodness in the redemption and restoration of His people. Its chief peculiarity consists in the repetition of the great temple acknowledgment of God's mercy: "*His mercy endureth for ever.*" The word for mercy properly means *loving-kindness*, and implies *covenant grace*, or the special favour of Jehovah to His own people. This explains the use of the word after the record of terrible acts of judgment on the enemies of Israel; for judgment on their enemies meant mercy to them.

A reference to the historical passages in which this beautiful expression occurs will justify the description of it as the great *temple song*, and also bring out some very precious lessons for us. It first occurs when David, being established in the kingdom over all Israel, took "the ark of the covenant" to Jerusalem. Knowing that "the Lord hath chosen Zion, He hath desired it for His habitation" (Ps. cxxxii. 13), he takes to the city of God's choice the

great symbol of His presence ; and with a deep sense of God's goodness as shown in the fulfilment of His promises to His people he delivers a psalm "to thank the Lord into the hand of Asaph and his brethren." (1 Ch. xvi. 7.) In that psalm he calls to mind God's covenant with Abraham, and His fulfilment of it ; and, having ascribed glory and praise to Him as the covenant God of Israel, he closes with the word, "Oh, give thanks unto the Lord : *for He is good ; for His mercy endureth for ever*" (v. 34). In this acknowledgment of what God *is*, and of what He *has done*, we have true worship. "He is *good*," and thus the fountain of all goodness ; and the display of His *loving-kindness* is just the flowing forth of the stream that ever enriches His people, and never impoverishes Him.

The next occurrence of this song is at the consecration of the temple. Here we have a still further evidence of God's faithfulness, as acknowledged by Solomon : "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath with His hands fulfilled that which He spake with His mouth to my father David." (2 Ch. vi. 4.) The son of David was on the throne of a united people ; the *peaceful* one had built the house for which the *warrior* had prepared ; and, with all enemies subdued, the people gathered in joy and triumph to the dedication of that magnificent building in which Jehovah would be pleased to receive their worship. Once again *the ark* was removed, this time from the tent in which David had placed it to the temple in which it was to abide ; and once again the worship of the rejoicing multitude found expression in the words, "For He is good ; for His mercy endureth for ever." (2 Ch. v. 13.) Jehovah showed His good pleasure in their song by filling the house with His glory, and then, after Solomon had prayed, and "the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices ; and the glory

of the Lord filled the house," the people "bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the Lord, saying, *For He is good ; for His mercy endureth for ever.*" (2 Ch. vii. 1-3.)

The next recorded use of the word is in a very different scene. A century had passed, and the glory of Solomon's reign had become a matter of history. The kingdom had been rent asunder ; the ten tribes had apostatised from the God of Israel, and Judah had been far from faithful to Him. At this time the throne was occupied by a man of faith, though he was not without his failures. Ammon and Moab were making an unprovoked attack upon Judah, and Jehoshaphat, acknowledging his own weakness, simply put the matter into the hand of God, and proved—as all must prove who follow his example—the truth of the word, "O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee." God answered him with the promise of deliverance, and he, accepting the promise, charged the people, "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established ; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper." (2 Ch. xx. 20.) And, in this "spirit of faith," "when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord ; *for His mercy endureth for ever*" (v. 21).

We pass over four centuries of Israel's eventful history. The provocation of the people had led to the great Babylonish captivity, but God had not forgotten His covenant, or suffered His faithfulness to fail. (Ps. lxxxix. 33.) "That the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia," so that he both gave the people liberty to return to the land of their fathers, and encouraged them to go and build a house for their God at

Jerusalem. Under the leadership of Zerubbabel the governor, and Joshua the high priest, the foundation of that house was laid ; but in what different circumstances from those in which, five centuries before, the first temple was erected ! They had not the multitudes that gathered around Solomon ; they had not the dominion over surrounding countries, but were themselves subject to a foreign power ; they had not the wealth and magnificence to which David's reign had led ; but they had GOD, and His lovingkindness they could still acknowledge. It may be that with even deeper gratitude than filled the hearts of the multitude at the dedication of the temple in all its first glory, "they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord ; *because He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever toward Israel.*" (Ezra iii. 11.)

What lessons there are for us here when we are tempted to say, "the former days were better than these" ! We may look back to Pentecost and think of the glory of the church in its first estate, and then, beholding the contrast, may be tempted to say that all is lost. But let us remember that we have GOD, and saints of early days could have no more. *They* were but recipients of His mercy, and of that mercy *we* too can sing. We read of no Ezra or Nehemiah in the days of Solomon—of none who turned from the comforts of Babylon to the poverty of Jerusalem from simple love to the Lord, and His people, and His house. The very depression of the people only gave opportunities for the manifestation of faith and love. And though we may not draw a parallel between the ease of the days of Solomon and the early days of the church with its "noble army of martyrs," yet we may say that the *present condition* of things gives special occasion for the display of that faith which "overcometh the world," as the condition of Israel gave occasion for the exercise of

the faith of Zerubbabel and others. We are in days of weakness and failure, but "His mercy endureth for ever," and "having received mercy we faint not."

Israel has not done with this song yet; for God speaks to us of the time when it shall again be sung. Of the restoration foretold by Jeremiah that narrated in the book of Ezra was but an earnest. The promise has yet to be fulfilled, "I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first; and I will cleanse them from all their iniquity." (Jer. xxxiii. 7, 8.) "Thus saith the Lord: Again there shall be heard in this place . . . the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness . . . the voice of them that say, Praise the Lord of hosts: *for the Lord is good; for His mercy endureth for ever*: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord" (*vv.* 10, 11). Then will Israel, in a temple whose glory shall surpass that of the temple of Solomon, sing their *temple song*, and, in the language of this psalm, own "the loving-kindness of the Lord," both as proved in the early days of their nation's history, and still more fully by His remembering of them in their "low estate," delivering them from their enemies, and bringing them into possession of the full blessings promised to their fathers.

It is in fellowship with Christ that we look forward to the fulfilment of these promises to Israel; but we know that before they are thus blessed we shall come to the end of our pilgrimage, and shall find our abiding rest in the presence of our God—in His holy city, and His holy paradise. There shall we perfectly learn and sing the song we have begun to learn below. We shall sing it with a depth of feeling and a height of intelligence with which we never sang it before; for with His perfect light shed upon our wilderness pathway we shall mark the wisdom

and love of all His dealings with us. We shall see then as we see not now the trespasses against that love that have been forgiven; the deliverances from unseen snares and temptations that have been wrought for us; the interpositions of our God for us in circumstances of difficulty and of sorrow; and how things that seemed to be *against* us were caused by Him to "work together for good." After the pattern of this psalm we shall in each particular dealing of God see a display of the same eternal mercy that saved us at the beginning, and then at the end set us in eternal glory in His own blessed presence. This seems to be the lesson for us in the *repetition* of this beautiful expression; for there are no *vain* repetitions in the Book of God. As we think of His countless mercies, and seek to number them up, we shall say with reference to *each one*, "For His lovingkindness endureth for ever"; it never failed while we so tested it below, and now it is our abiding portion. (Eph. ii. 7.)

We shall see all this *then*; but the thing is to see it *now*, so that we may "walk by faith and not by sight," and, as those who already have access in spirit to the heavenly temple, ever be raising our temple song. We look *back* upon the year that is—the years that are—past, and, however much we have to be humbled about ourselves, we can say that His mercy has never failed: we look *forward*, and can say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." And though we may be beset by foes that are both subtle and mighty, and are weak in ourselves and our surroundings, let us be assured that we have to do with a God who changes not. Therefore, confiding in Him to give us the victory over all that opposes us, and to make us strong out of weakness, let us press onward in diligence and obedience, still raising the

song we shall soon sing in such different circumstances,
 "FOR HE IS GOOD ; FOR HIS LOVINGKINDNESS ENDURETH
 FOR EVER."
 W. H. B.

NOTES OF LEOMINSTER CONFERENCE,

OCTOBER 7TH TO 11TH, 1889.

THERE were meetings for prayer on Monday evening and Tuesday morning. A morning word was given on

UNITY OF WORSHIP AND UNITY OF SERVICE.

Mr. H. DYER read Psalm cxxxiii., and said : The root of the joy and blessing of this psalm is found in the depth of two previous ones. They are all songs of the "goings up," and the unity here spoken of reminds us of John xvii.—"that they all may be one." There are two symbols of that unity—one for worship, and one for work. The first is "the precious ointment upon the head . . . that ran down to the *collar* of his garments." The garments were attached to the collar, and in the anointing of the collar they were anointed. This is the symbol of unity of worship. The other is the dew of Hermon, the symbol of unity of service. *One oil, one dew. One dew* in the north of the land, stretching down to the south—to Zion ; *one oil* for the head flowing down to the collar and anointing all the garments thereby. The dew abroad everywhere ; the oil in the sanctuary ; and "there Jehovah commanded the blessing." May we now be filled with the grace of this psalm, which Israel will so fully prove when they gather in their Ezekiel temple, and have not an unregenerate person among them ! May the worship of the assemblies be according to the heavenly oil, and the footsteps of the flock according to the freshness of the morning dew !

This psalm sets forth the very acme of spiritual prosperity, but the pathway to it lies through Psalms cxxx. and cxxxi. In the first we read, "Out of the depths have I cried unto the, O Lord"—*self-judgment*; and "there is forgiveness with thee"—debtorship to grace in the soul; then comes worship in the soul and worship in the assembly. Few words then; but they are tender words, and the saints will be profited. In the next psalm we read "My heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty." I do not think myself the chief person in the company where I worship; I keep the low place. The other verses of the psalm show the proper attitude for the blessing of Ps. cxxxiii.

In Ephesians we are reminded that we who are raised so high were "children of wrath even as others." Paul says, "I am made a minister"; but he speaks of himself as "the least of all the apostles," and not only so, but "less than the least of all saints." He did not say "the churches of God cannot be edified while I am in prison." As he saw himself the biggest of sinners, he judged himself the least of all saints. The Lord give us all more of this; that we may remember it is not by eating the bread of self-sufficiency that we shall attain unity of worship and service, but by eating the Bread of Bethlehem—"He that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me," not only for worship but for service also.

During the meeting for Confession and Prayer, 11 o'clock to 4.30, some brief words were spoken.

DRAWING NIGH TO GOD.

Mr. J. STANCOMB read Hebrews x. 21, 22—"Having an High Priest . . . let us draw near . . . having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience"; and Exodus xxviii. 36, "Thou shalt make a plate of pure gold and

grave upon it HOLINESS TO THE LORD.” What we need in order to draw near to God is a pure conscience. Sin has been entirely put away; God has dealt with that once and for ever, and in receiving that truth the conscience is perfected by the one offering of Christ. Then we have, not only a perfect sacrifice, but a Priest with “*Holiness to the Lord*” on His brow. He was the holy One when He hung for us on the cross. There His holiness was tested and proved, and in Psalm xxii. He acknowledged the holiness of God—“Thou art holy”—in thus dealing with Him on the cross. Now upon His brow, as our High Priest, there is presented before God perfect, unsullied holiness. “Such an High Priest became us who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” (Heb. vii. 26.) So that whilst God has given us perfect righteousness, through the death of Christ, He has also made a provision for our drawing nigh to Him continually in the person of our High Priest. Therefore may we be encouraged and strengthened by God’s blessed Spirit, by whom we have access, to draw near with a true heart!

“OUR FATHER.”

Mr. H. GROVES called attention to the word “*Father*.” We can only maintain our testimony for Christ in the world as we realize that God has made us all one in Christ Jesus—one in Him who is our great High Priest, and who carries holiness on His forehead for the weakest and most erring of God’s children. It would be well for us to have that wonderful prayer of Luke xi. in our hearts. “When ye pray say, *Our Father*.” Would that we entered into that marvellous word, “*Our Father!*” What a harmonising power that name would have over our difficulties and divisions! We should not hold the truth

one whit less firmly, but we should hold it with tenderness—that tenderness that is conveyed to our souls in the word “Father.” “*Hallowed be Thy name.*” Let His name occupy our thoughts. And again, “*Thy kingdom come.*” Oh! friends, let our thoughts be more of God, as God’s thoughts are so much about us. One little word, one little prayer only, for life’s long list of wants, “*Give us this day our daily bread*”; and it includes all necessary things for this poor passing life. Then, “*Lead us not into temptation.*” They asked to be taught to pray, and He gives them—Thy name, Thy kingdom, Thy will; then He comes down to our temporal wants, our sins and our temptations. He knew what temptations were, but often times we do not know where our temptations lie, and hence we are beguiled. We have also here deliverance from Satan—the Evil One. May the Lord grant that in these several particulars we may be taught by Him how to pray!

Mr. H. DYER recalled a saying of Augustine, “Be thyself a temple, and thou shalt never want a temple in which to worship.” If I am personally a temple, I shall always give personal worship. If we see ourselves linked to all saints through Christ Jesus, we shall always give thanks in prayer for all saints, for the love of Christ will constrain us.

Mr. H. GROVES asked prayer for the whole church of God, and that He would raise up a testimony for the church at large against the iniquities, false doctrines, and heresies that are abroad on all sides.

During the meeting the following portions were also read: Acts ii. 42; Jer. ii. 1–8; Luke vii. 37, 38; Ezra x. 1; Dan. ix. 3–19; 2 Ch. xxix. 5; 1 Sam. vii.; Prov. xxviii. 13; Job. xxxi. 18; Ps. xix. 12–14; 2 Cor. viii. 1; Ps. cxxxviii. and Hosea xiv.

Tuesday evening : Worship and the Lord's Supper.

Mr. T. NEWBERRY read, "Behold, He standeth behind our wall, He looketh forth at the windows, showing Himself through the lattice." (Song of Solomon ii. 9.) "Behold I stand at the door and knock." (Rev. iii. 20.) The language of the bride; the response of the Bridegroom. Behold, take notice, He standeth behind our wall; *our* wall, not His. That which hides Him from our view is of our own building, not of His. But whatever that wall may be, of whatever materials built, there is One standing behind it. The Lord "is not far from every one of us." "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb. xiii. 5) is true "yesterday, to-day and for ever." If He is not seen, if His presence is not realised, there is some wall of separation; but notwithstanding that, He "standeth behind" it—you know who *He* is. But if we have built a wall, let us see to it that there is a window and a door to that wall.

"He looketh in at the windows." If He were within He could look out; but as He is standing without He is waiting to show Himself through the lattice. It is a latticed window. The figure is drawn, I believe, from the latticed windows of the temple; and what corresponds to those latticed windows? The types of the sacred Word; the ordinances of His own appointment. These are the lattice through which the anointed eye can see Him, and through which He can manifest Himself to the waiting soul. When we read these things we must be careful not to fix our eye upon the type, as though that were the end—not to look at the beautiful lattice work and admire the workmanship, but to look *through* and see the One who stands before the lattice work. If we read the type, let us look beyond to the Person. If we deal with the doctrine, look through and see the Person.

If you look *at* the lattice work you can see nothing beyond; if you look *through* you can see what is to be seen. There is a carnal observance of the Lord's supper, in which Christ is hidden; there is an unworthy breaking of bread, not discerning the Lord's body, but being occupied with the emblems. Oh, beloved friends, look through the lattice work, that you may be able to say with Yeddie, "I have seen yon lovely Man." In prayer we want to see the heavens opened, the Father there, the High Priest there, in the holiest of all. Oh, to look through the ordinance of prayer and hold fellowship with the Father and with the Son in the communion of the Holy Ghost!

" While heaven comes down our souls to greet,
And glory crowns the mercy seat."

"Behold, He standeth behind our wall," ready to manifest Himself, to be recognised, to be greeted, to be embraced. Use, then, the ordinance, the Scripture, the type, the parable, the illustration, whatever it may be, to get a clearer view of the person of our Immanuel. It is one thing to look through the shadow, the ordinance, through the breaking of bread, and another for Him to manifest Himself to us through that Scripture, that ordinance, in the breaking of bread. That is what we want; that He should manifest Himself to us, showing Himself glittering through the lattice, as He did at Emmaus on the day of His resurrection, when as He sat with the two disciples "He was known of them"—He showed Himself to them—"in the breaking of bread."

The Bride says, "Behold, He standeth behind our wall"; and His response is, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." These very ordinances may be made a wall to shut Him out. This was the case in Laodicea. It is the church door He is knocking at; not the door of the sinner's heart, though that is true in another place. There

were His disciples, gathered together to break bread, and He was shut out. "I came to L——, you received Me not. I came to B——, you received Me not. I went to G——, you received Me not." "When saw we Thee and did not receive Thee?" "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of these ye did it not to Me." Oh, there is a knock at the door! "If any man hear My voice." It may be a muffled voice at first, because it is a voice behind a door, but He says, "I will come in." We are called to open the door and admit Him—the whole Person; not simply allowing Him to put His head in, but letting Him in at full length—the Head and every member.

"I will come in." It is individual, while it is collective. It is not only that we meet with others to break bread, but that in the breaking of bread we discern the Lord's body; the Lord manifests Himself to us, and we enjoy His realised presence; then He says, "I will come in and will sup with him." The Father and the Son are personally present. The Father manifests Himself in the Son, who is the brightness of His glory, and the Son manifests Himself through the Spirit. It is the *triune* presence; the Father manifested in the Son, and the Father and the Son manifested to us by the Spirit, according to the word, "He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John xvi. 15.) Oh, to behold and to realize that sunbeam, that the Sun of righteousness may glitter in! It is only the glittering now. We cannot gaze upon the Sun in its beauteous meridian brightness as we shall by-and-by.

THE PASSOVER.

Mr. J. STANCOMB read Exodus xii. 43-45, "This is the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof: but every man's servant that is bought with money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat

thereof. A foreigner and a hired servant shall not eat thereof." We have been circumcised, as we read, "We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." (Phil. iii. 3.) All who believe in the Lord Jesus are circumcised "with the circumcision made without hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ." (Col. ii. 11, R.V.) That blessed One took upon Himself the whole body of our sin and our sins, and bore it in His own body on the tree; but as raised from the dead He is freed from the charge of sin, and we know Him as our blessed and glorious Substitute. Thus, it is only those who by grace have accepted Christ that can keep the passover, for they have been circumcised by the circumcision which is "of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter." (Rom. ii. 29.)

"No stranger" was to eat of the Passover. We have been made nigh by the blood of Christ, though we were formerly afar off and strangers. We do not come here to make our acquaintance with God. We have made acquaintance with Him through Christ, and peace has been made for us through the precious blood of Christ. No hired servant was to eat thereof. When the prodigal came back he thought to be received as a "hired servant." The father met that thought by embracing him, as though he could not receive him into his house until the thought of the "hired servant" had been completely banished from his heart. The father's kiss, embrace and best robe assured him that his place was that of a child beloved and not that of a hired servant. So we come to the Lord's table as *children* of God, as those who are dear to Him in the person of His dear Son, who have received the reconciliation, and in whom the Spirit of God has shed abroad the love of God. We are "no more strangers and

foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God." (Eph. ii. 19.)

We come to the table in a spirit of humility. We have all broken this bread, and thus testified that we were guilty of death—all concerned in the death of Christ. We own our participation in that death, and with lowliness and humility should we do this as we remember that it was our sins that nailed Him to the cross. When we think of all the sorrow, shame, ignominy, spitting and scourging which He endured, and the taunts with which His sufferings were treated by those who surrounded His cross, we remember that we were the cause of it all. As we bear this in mind surely it will produce humility of heart. However great the blessings and privileges we derive from that death, we were the cause of it; and now in the very glory Jesus says, as it were, "I am Joseph your brother"; and He would assuage our grief by reminding us that we intended it for evil, but God for good.

Joseph brought his brethren near to him and caused them to speak with him. That is communion. We take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord with thanksgiving. And is it not due to our blessed Lord that He should be greeted with thanksgiving? It is the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks. (1 Cor. x. 16.) By His Spirit and by His grace we do thank our blessed Lord for all His shame, sorrow and ignominy, and for that inconceivable depth to which He went down. "Unto Him that loveth us and washed us from our sins in His own blood . . . be glory and dominion for ever and ever." (Rev. i. 5, 6.) By-and-by we shall praise Him without hindrance. How it becomes us now to take revenge upon ourselves as seeing what our sins have cost our blessed Lord; to make no league with the enemy;

to be loyal to Christ. He has bought us, therefore we are not our own; we belong to Him. The blood of His atonement is upon our persons—the right ear, the right hand, and the right foot. The whole person has been consecrated to God by the precious blood of Christ.

And, again, it is through that precious blood that we receive the Holy Ghost. That is one fruit of the death of the Lord Jesus. He was made a curse for us; and, as the risen One, said, "Peace be to you," and "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." (John xx. 19-22.) On the ground of that death on the cross, that endurance of the curse, the blessed Lord, on ascending to the Father, received the Holy Ghost for us, and sent Him down. Oh, what thanksgiving ought we to give for this wondrous gift of His blessed Spirit to dwell in us! It is because the blood has gone in that the Holy Ghost has come forth—the living water, pure as crystal, from the throne of God and of the Lamb, which will never cease to flow. It refreshes us here, and will refresh us in glory. What need we but to drink into that Spirit? "Drink abundantly, O beloved." (Song v. 1.) We are so straitened through our own narrowness. There is so much land before us to be possessed, and we are so slow to go in to possess it. Our faith does so little respond to what God has given, what His power and the blood of Christ have accomplished for us. Oh, that we might drink deeply into the Spirit of Christ! "If any man thirst let Him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." (John vii. 37, 38.)

That blessed Spirit attracts us to Jesus in the heavens as our Head there in resurrection. We are blessed in Him with all spiritual blessings, and we have access to God by the Spirit through Him. That Spirit is the one power by which communion is carried on between us and

God. He reveals the Father's love, and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, what thanks we ought to render to God for the gift of the Holy Ghost, the Revealer of the things of God! The gift of the Holy Ghost is a fruit of redemption. We read of God visiting Abraham and communing with him, but not of His *dwelling* upon the earth until He says of a redeemed people, "Let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." (Exodus xxv. 8.) He brought them out of Egypt, and Moses in appreciation of this could say, "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." (Exodus xxxiii. 15.) What we want is the *manifestation* of this divine power—in us individually and in us collectively—that the Holy Ghost who has been given to us, who does dwell in us, may *manifestly* dwell in us; as the apostle says, "*worketh in me mightily.*" (Col. i. 29.)

We have to search and try our ways to discover what is the hindrance to the manifestation of the Spirit of God. May our hearts be enlarged to be looking out for the true manifestation of this indwelling Spirit! How feeble is the manifestation of His power to what it might be—whether in the fruit of the Spirit or the gifts of the Spirit. It is only by spiritual gifts that the church of God can be edified. The more the gifts of the Holy Spirit are manifested through grace, the more shall the church of God be preserved from the evils of these last days and the winds of doctrine that now blow from every quarter. The apostle tells us to "desire spiritual gifts." (1 Cor. xiv. 1.) I do not often hear them prayed for. To acknowledge that the Holy Ghost dwells in us is but the first step; we want the power. "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power," and God "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

On Wednesday the morning address was on

DEPENDENCE UPON THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

Mr. T. NEWBERRY drew attention to the words, "Follow after charity [*or* divine love], and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." (1 Cor. xiv. 1.) This is the "more excellent way," for if we "speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, we are become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." (1 Cor. xiii. 1.) This charity is not natural affection, nor philanthropy simply, though it includes both; but *divine love*, the divine nature; for God is love. While dwelling in this divine love we dwell in God and God dwells in us, so that ministry flows, as it were, from a goblet filled with the divine element of love. First, and pre-eminently, "*follow after love.*" That which characterises the evangelist is love for *souls*; the pastor, love to *saints*; the teacher, love to *the Word of God*. In neither case exclusively, but in each pre-eminently—love to souls, love to saints, love to the Word of God.

"Desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." Among the best gifts the more excellent one is prophecy, just as love divine is the "more excellent way." But what is it to prophesy? What are we to understand by desiring and coveting to prophesy? This we learn from the second chapter of this epistle, where the subject is put before us in detail.

"It is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." (1 Cor. ii. 9.) These things are spiritually discerned; the natural man understandeth them not, they are foolishness unto him, and the carnal reasoning powers even in the believer fail to grasp them. The human intellect or imaginative

powers of the human mind, however active, cultivated and diligent, are insufficient for this. But that which our natural faculties fail to grasp "God hath revealed unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things; yea, the deep things of God." Those things which God hath prepared for them that love Him are matters of revelation only. Those hidden mysteries, those deep thoughts, purposes and designs God reveals to us in His Word by His Spirit. The eternal Spirit was one with the Father and the Son in the forming of the eternal purpose before the foundation of the world. He "searcheth all things"; not only all things in nature, providence and grace, but the purposes, designs and innermost thoughts of the mind divine. Those things which "eye hath not seen" He hath seen; those things which "ear hath not heard" He makes known; those things which "have not entered into the heart of man" He has entered into.

How simple, how clear, how satisfactory the illustration that follows! "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (v. 11). You can see what I show you; you can hear what I speak to you; but what is passing in my heart is a hidden mystery, which the stranger intermeddleth not with. I may misguide you by my actions, mislead you by my words, but the secret purposes of the heart no human eye can penetrate: "so the things of God knoweth no one, but the Spirit of God." We are absolutely dependent upon the divine eternal Spirit for the revelation of the deep thoughts and purposes, the deep affections and designs of our God. "No one hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." (John i. 18.) But how does He declare Him? When He was here on

earth, "God, who spake in time past . . . by the prophets" (Heb. i. 1), spake "in His Son"; and those words of His are now brought to remembrance—phonographed to us—by the divine eternal Spirit. He phonographs to us the words of Jesus, and He Himself speaks, giving us the tone, the very accent, emphasis and power of the words themselves. He receives from Him, and shows unto us all the glory and fulness of the Father; He "searcheth the deep things of God." He brings forth the things of Jesus and communicates them to us, and He is the only One who can do it. We may have thoughts about God, speculations about truth, beautiful illustrations of things divine, but the reality—the mind of God, the will of God, the deep things, the precious things of God and of Christ—can only be communicated to us by the divine eternal Spirit.

"Now we have received" (v. 12)—if we are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, if through faith in Him we have been begotten again, born of God, born of the Spirit, we have *received* "the Spirit which is of God." "What! know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?" (1 Cor. vi. 19.) We have "an unction from the Holy One," that we might "know all things" (1 John ii. 20); and the "anointing we have received of Him abideth in us, and we need not that any man teach us, but the same anointing teacheth us of all things, and is truth, and is no lie" (v. 27); and according as we have been taught we abide in the Father and in the Son.

What have we received? We have received a religious education; we have been brought up in this denomination or that; we have been to such a school; we have a university education; we have passed a course of theological training; we have received all the knowledge of

the past, and can forecast the future; we have done with the old superstitions; we are no longer held by former trammels; we are not entangled with creeds and antiquated notions; we have received the light—the religious light of the nineteenth century? No! We have received *not* the wisdom of this world; “*not* the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God.”

Oh! beloved friends, “try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” (1 John iv. 1.) Try the spirits, and keep out the lying spirit that is abroad. Turn a deaf ear to those lying spirits that are so busy in their Babel tongues, for there is a sense in which Satan has the gift of tongues. We will have nothing to do with the “down-grade” doctrines of the day; we will not enter into the speculations, the reasonings, the grand discoveries, inward consciousness, evolution or the like, “for we have received not the spirit of the world.” What then? “Oh, you are behind the age; you are superstitious.” Never mind. “We have received the Spirit which is of God.” “We have an unction from the Holy One,” and that unction teacheth us all things. We understand science; “we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God” (Heb. xi. 3); we understand the framework of the universe; we understand “the deep things of God.” Why? Because “we have received the Spirit which is of God.” For what purpose? To quicken us? Yes. To sanctify us? Yes. To lead us into communion with the Father and the Son? Yes. But, in addition to all these, we have received Him “that we might *know the things that are freely given to us of God.*” For those things which are designed in His heart and accomplished through Jesus, are by the Holy Ghost communicated unto us just in proportion as we are dependent upon Him for their communication, and no

further. He alone can lead us into the simplicity, certainty, power and divine glory of the truth.

We have *fountain, fulness, flow*. The divine *fountain* is God the Father; all *fulness* is in the Son; but the communication, the *flow*, the shedding abroad, comes only through the Spirit of God, "the Spirit of truth," "the Spirit of grace," "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him." (Eph. i. 17.)

Knowledge of the things of God is the foundation of true prophecy. "Who hath stood in the secret counsel of the Lord?" (Jer. xxiii. 18.) Those who have received the Spirit of God who "searcheth all things, even the deep things of God," and are living in direct communion with that Spirit. Who "hath perceived and heard His word?" It is by His inspired Word that the Holy Ghost communicates to us the secrets of the heart of God and the fulness of truth in Christ. "He that hath My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." "I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues and say, He saith."

We must first *have* the word from God and then *speak* it. "Which things we *speak*, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." That is *prophesying*, receiving the mind of God, as communicated by the Spirit of God, and by His power communicating those deep things of God*—the purposes of God and glories of Christ—to others. That is prophesying. Not showing a splendid intellect, a lively imagination, graphic powers; not making out beautiful theories or composing eloquent discourses, but speaking what the Spirit of God has communicated from the Word of the deep things of God and the precious things of Christ. What is the preparation for ministry? Go

* Strictly, things not previously revealed; i.e., before Scripture was completed.

into the closet, alone with God, and seek the opening up of the Word by the Holy Ghost; not determining what you shall speak, but hearing what God has to say, and depending on the Spirit to reveal the mind of God in the Word, in more or less fulness as it pleases Him.

We want words "which the Holy Ghost teacheth" *at the time*, that out of the belly may flow rivers of living water. It is not simply from the head; but what we have known, tasted and handled for ourselves, so that we can say, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen"; and "We believe, and therefore speak." This is what we want to know; the depending in our own souls' experience upon the teaching and revealing of the Spirit of God, letting in the light that it may shine out, "for God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 6.) When we rise to speak it should be like giving a turn to the phonograph that it may give forth the words that have been received, and thus proclaiming upon the housetops what has been heard in the closet.

There is a depth of meaning in the word, "*comparing spiritual things with spiritual*," at which we can only hint. The comparing of the spiritual type with the spiritual antitype is the only safe way of interpreting it. You have a model of the tabernacle, and you have wondrous thoughts and wondrous descriptions of it; but are they spiritual things compared with spiritual? Do you compare the actual facts in the life and death of Christ, and the actual doctrines of the Spirit of God in the Epistles, with these types, and explain them thereby? Then again, spiritual things are for spiritual men. Do not cast your pearls before swine; they are foolishness to

the natural mind. The preaching of the gospel is foolishness to the natural man; but it is the power of God to the salvation of every one that believeth. And there are deep things, precious things, hidden things of God, which are only to be communicated to the spiritually minded, even as they can only be learnt in the presence of God, and only revealed by the divine eternal Spirit.

(To be continued.)

REVISED VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.*

XXII.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS—BOOK III.

LXXIII. 1—“*Only good is God to Israel,*” M., *i.e.* God is nothing but good, cf. same word “*only,*” Ps. 62. v. 6—“*pride is as a chain about their neck,*” *i.e.* they glory in it. v. 8—“*They scoff, and in wickedness utter oppression.*” v. 9—“*in the heavens,*” as if they were gods. Ren. “*in the earth,*” same prep. v. 10—“*Therefore he will bring back his people: and waters . . . drained out by them,*” M., *i.e.* by his enemies. v. 12—“*being always at ease,*” for “*prosper in the world.*” v. 15—“*behold, I had dealt treacherously with.*” v. 17b—“*and considered their latter end,*” *i.e.*, their after history: cf. Ps. 37. 37, 38; Prov. 23. 18; Luke 16. 19–31. v. 22—“*So brutish.*” v. 28b—ren. “*I have made my refuge in Adonai Jehovah.*”

LXXIV. 5—Ren. “*Each seemed as they who lifted up.*” v. 19—“*Unto the wild beast: . . . the life of thy poor [rather afflicted ones].*”

LXXV. 2—“*shall take the set time,*” M. v. 3b—“*I have set up.*” The word is used in Job 28. 15, for *weighing*, and Is. 40. 12, for *measuring*; it is here the language of Christ as the re-constructor of a ruined world. v. 8—“*surely the dregs.*”

LXXVI.—To the title the LXX. add “*respecting the Assyrian.*” Such allusions show how the Jews regarded the Psalms before Christ came. v. 2a—Ren. “*his pavilion,*” as in Ps. 27. 5; only used besides of a lion’s den or covert, Ps. 10. 9; Jer. 25. 38; cf. R.M.

* All quotations from R.V. without comment are regarded as improvements. R.M. means *Revised margin*; A.M., *Authorized margin*; a denotes the first part of a verse; b, the second.

FAITH'S COMFORT IN DARK DAYS.

2 CHRON. iii. 15-17.

WE are very liable to pass over the account given us in this chapter, concerning the pillars of brass reared up by Solomon in front of the Temple, without considering it as we ought. We should, perhaps, be more attentive if we remembered that divine wisdom directed the building of the Temple with its surroundings, as truly as the setting up of the Tabernacle at the first. We read, "Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof. . . . And the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord. . . . All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by His hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern." (1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12-19.)

We must, then, regard these pillars as set up, not by divine sanction merely, but by God's explicit direction, and for the instruction of those who worshipped within His courts. Our God has His message of love and mercy for *the world*; but it is equally true that He has His words of instruction and comfort for those who seek Him in troublous times. Such will ever prove that "the Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knoweth them that trust in Him." (Nahum i. 7.)

Those pillars of brass, reared up in front of the Temple, must have arrested the attention of all who approached it. As specimens of workmanship they were remarkable. Their crowns of pomegranates and nets of checker work, and wreaths of chain work, all of bright brass, must have shown forth the wisdom that devised the plan, and

the skill that executed it. But we are not so much concerned with their beauty as with their use. They were silent witnesses for Him in whose courts they stood. Their names imply this, JACHIN, meaning "*He shall establish*"; and BOAZ, "*In it is strength.*"

We should consider the state of the nation at the time of the building of the Temple. Israel was no longer a people wandering in the wilderness; neither had they to fight for possession of the land. David's wars had brought peace, and Solomon reigned without adversary or evil occurrent. We can easily conceive how the heart of every faithful Jew must have delighted in the position of favour and blessing in which the nation stood. They were acknowledged by the living God as His people, and His presence was manifested in the midst of them. Thus were they distinguished from all other nations, according to the word of Moses, "What nation is so great, who hath God so nigh unto them?"

These pillars of brass were witnesses to the source of all this blessing. Their testimony was this: "They got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favour unto them." (Ps. xliv. 5.) They reminded the worshippers that their blessing was the outcome of divine purpose, "*He shall establish,*" and divine power, "*In it is strength.*" Thus the heart of the true Israelite was happy, because it was lowly, in the acknowledgment that his blessing was of God.

But how brief was the continuance of this state of tranquility! Before long the king's heart was turned away after other gods; he built a high place for Chemosh and for Molech, and "his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father." (1 Kings

xi. 4.) Thus early the glory began to fade, and the hearts of the faithful were made sad. This state of decline continued and increased as the nation's history was lengthened out. Godly kings there were whose example and influence stayed for a while the downward course; yet it was but for a while, for on their removal the nation returned to its evil ways.

With what different feelings the men who sighed for the abominations of Israel must have visited the temple courts! They saw disorder where divine order once had been; neglect, where aforetime the priests stood in their course, performing divine service. "Cast down," they must have been, "yet not destroyed"; for those pillars of brass, eloquent in their silence, still witnessed for God. They would remind such as in faith read their names aright, that divine establishments were not yet all declared. If deep things had been revealed, there were deeper things yet to come. If man had proved unfaithful to his trust, yet God abode faithful. *He could not deny Himself*, and therefore divine purposes must be fulfilled. Thus the heart of the upright was sustained.

During the 400 years between Solomon's reign and the Captivity, those pillars shared the fortunes of the Temple, and that again the fortunes of the nation. In days of gracious revival under Hezekiah, Josiah, and other godly kings, the Temple service was carried on in due order. The courts of Jehovah were trodden by some who esteemed them as "*amiable*," and to such those pillars witnessed of better days to come in the fulfilling of the promise made unto the fathers. And in times of decline, under wicked kings, when the Temple was shut up and its courts were deserted, the pillars still bore their testimony though few were found to hearken.

At last God, wearied with His people's sin, let loose

upon them the Chaldean king and army, who burnt the house of the Lord, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon, king of Israel, had made in the Temple of the Lord; "and the pillars of brass that were in the house of the Lord . . . did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon." (2 Kings xxv. 13.) Thus was silenced the witness which grace had set up, but still the burden of the witness abides, for truth is eternal. Therefore faith can stand amid the desolations of Temple and city, and rejoice in God's Jachin and Boaz. The land shall yet be inhabited, and the Temple courts shall be thronged by a nation in whose hearts will be the fear of Jehovah, and who themselves will be the witnesses of His establishment, and His strength, unto all generations.

In keeping with this line of thought we are led to enquire—What was God's intention in setting up His Church at first? According to His purposes it must have been a vessel of wondrous beauty, for it was meant to show forth HIS VIRTUES; not by word of doctrine only, but in life and way. It was to be a living expression of the divine character; a revelation of that God of whom we read, "God is light," and "God is love."

This it was for a while—though but for a very little while—a vessel so unique and blessed that the Holy One was not ashamed to own it. But is the church that now? Surely, with sorrowing hearts, we can only answer, no, it is not. Has the calling changed, and the obligation become less? Certainly not. Hence the church of God, purchased with His own blood, is still under obligation to "show forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvellous light" (1 Pet. ii. 9), and thus to be His witness to the world. Judging from what we hear on all sides, we might suppose the church to be

an organization set up for the improvement and special benefit of the world, to help it to get on without God—a sort of mutual improvement society. Such appear to be the ideas of many learned men when convened to discuss church matters, whether national or dissenting. They seem to look at things from a purely human point of view, and to entirely ignore the Scriptural teaching concerning the church of God.

What is the place of faith amidst all this? First, that of subjection to the Word of God, not allowing present disorder to slacken obedience; and second, a steady holding fast of the hope set before us, *i. e.*, that His church shall be a vessel for His glory for ever. The Lord will present her to Himself, a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Then will she be to angels and principalities in the heavenlies, as well as to men on earth, a witness to the divine love, wisdom, and integrity.

Amidst church ruins faith views those pillars of brass—divine purpose, and divine power—and rejoices “in hope of the glory of God.” Amen. J. CR.

WILDERNESS LESSONS.

DEUTERONOMY viii. 2.

WHATEVER mistakes we make God never makes any. He leads His people with a definite object in view, and keeps them in His school for its accomplishment. In this verse we learn that God had three objects in leading Israel in the wilderness: “Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no.”

1. "*To humble thee.*" — This implies that we are naturally proud, for one who is truly humble does not need humbling. It was through pride that Satan fell, and through pride he will fall still further. The Lord Jesus was never proud. He could be anything His Father wished Him to be, and, having received a commandment from the Father, "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. ii. 8.) A young brother once said, "I am a nobody"; an older brother replied, "Very good; but let another call you a nobody, and treat you as such, and we shall see how it is." The Lord Jesus said, "I am a worm and no man," or "a nobody," and He accepted all that that involved without a murmur. How His ways condemn ours! Well may we pray:—

"O patient, spotless One,
Our hearts in meekness train;
To bear Thy yoke and learn of Thee,
That we may rest obtain."

2. "*To prove thee.*"—It is by His Word that God tests us. That Word has itself been tested. It has passed through the furnace, and has come forth to the praise of Him who spake it, and now it is the great test for us. Man's method is to push onward, and overcome by strength. This has been tried by all the mighty of the earth, and now where are they? "Like sheep they are laid in the grave," leaving their inheritance behind them, soon to be burned. The Lord Jesus took the place of dependence, and went through the world as having nothing, though all things were His. Though by His word He had made and sustained the worlds, yet He heard as the learner, and spake as the servant of the Father. Whether He turned water into wine, or called Lazarus from the grave, it was all the same; and the word that could have called the host of heaven to His aid

was withheld that all things "which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms" being accomplished, He might say with a mighty shout, "It is finished."

So Paul, in his measure, by grace could say, "I have finished my course." The servant followed his Lord, and ever proved himself by that perfect example. We are called to test ourselves by the same standard, and when we do so we can only say "*found wanting*." How true it is in these Laodicean days that the fine gold has become dim, and the pilgrim habit has been laid aside! Still there is encouragement for us, and grace to enable us to overcome even this temptation.

3. "*To know what was in thine heart*."—The Lord searches the heart, and it is by His Word that He causes us to know it, enabling us to try our ways, and learn the measure of our obedience. There was a time when all was love, and believers were together. The word to us is, "Let brotherly love *continue*." God tests us to see whether in this we obey His commandment, or allow the natural tendencies of our hearts to assert themselves. So with the precept, "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Does not the prevalence of "*evil speaking*" prove that we are more ready to follow the dictates of our own hearts than to obey the Word of God?

It is very solemn that it should be so; but it is good if God in His grace causes His light to shine in, that He may teach us what is in our hearts, and do us good in our latter end. May we be ready to let the light in, and seek to carry out the exhortation to "be all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." (1 Pet. iii. 8.)

T. C.

NOTES OF LEOMINSTER CONFERENCE,

OCTOBER 7TH TO 11TH, 1889—(*continued*).

Wednesday Morning—Bible Reading.

It was proposed that the subject of Mr. Newberry's address should be continued, especially in its relation to gifts in the church; and Mr. Groves remarked how little prayer there was for gifts for the edifying of the church and for the proclamation of the gospel.

Mr. DYER said that the special endowments of the church should waken up the activities of the body of Christ, just as the five senses of our bodies waken up the activities of every limb. This is specially set forth in Ephesians iv. 1-16.

Dr. MACLEAN pointed out the correspondence between this passage and the verses in 1 Corinthians to which reference had been made by Mr. Newberry. Chap. xiii. of that Epistle shows the way in which the gifts are to be used, and the next chapter gives details as in Eph. iv. Before the gifts are mentioned in Ephesians the spirit in which they are to be exercised is given. The chapter begins by calling upon the saints to walk "with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering."

(The conversation then became general.)

We might say that 1 Cor. xii. teaches us about the body; then chap. xiii. corresponds with the first three verses of Eph. iv., and 1 Cor. xiv. instructs us as to the exercise of the gifts.

Do we sufficiently connect the 11th chap.—the Lord's Supper and the death of Christ—with chaps. xii., xiii. and xiv. ? In our weekly remembrance of the death of Christ our souls should be drawn on from His broken body to

the body of which He is the Head, and the caring for one another as His members.

We might go back to chap. x., for that speaks of the communion of the body of Christ.

It would be good to remember the use of the word "body" in chaps. xi., xii. It is the *Lord's* body broken in chap. xi., and the body of *Christ* in chap. xii. And the lowliness of the worship over the Lord's body is to bring us into lowliness of action when we come to deal with the body of Christ. We have blessed hours at the Lord's table, but greatly do we come short in our daily walk among the saints. To sit and remember the Lord's body is good, but to keep up the remembrance outside is another thing. We regularly break bread with scores and hundreds of God's children whom we never see at any other time. We remember to break bread, but we have not diligent footsteps for going up and down among the flock during the week. We are reminded in Eph. iv. to "*walk worthy.*"

The obligation is upon us to remember the Lord's death, but the power comes from Christ Himself.

We have to take care to remember not only that He died, but that He is *risen*, and that we are linked with the Head and all the members. But the *spirit* in which we serve is a great matter.

Paul in Acts xx. speaks of both publicly and from house to house warning believers night and day with tears.

The sevenfold unity in the early verses of Eph. iv. was pointed out; and it was remarked that the body of Christ and the unity of the Spirit are equally inclusive. When we speak of the Spirit we are to remember that the Spirit indwells the body of Christ, and that love in the Spirit is love to "all saints," not a sectarian love.

This unity is to be kept in the uniting bond of peace.

In this unity, or uniting bond, there are three elements—the Fatherhood of God, the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and the indwelling of the Spirit of God. It is a threefold cord. We are children of the same Father, redeemed by the same blood, and baptized by one Spirit; we are thus united to God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—in one uniting bond of love.

Does not the *descending* in *v.* 9 refer to Christ's having gone down into the stronghold of Satan's power; and is there not involved in that His triumph over principalities and powers?

As Israel went down into the Red Sea and when they came up received gifts for their journey through the wilderness, so Christ went down in the depths of which that sea was but a figure, and having gone up He has received gifts, and given gifts to His people.

How did He spoil principalities and powers?

Just as in the Red Sea Israel triumphed over Pharaoh and his host and there was not one left alive, so God triumphed in the resurrection of Christ over Satan and all his host.

Christ's authority to *give* all things is consequent upon His going down. Joseph was qualified to deal with his brethren by his having been himself down in the dungeon; he thus became qualified to fill a throne and to supply all his brethren's need.

Mr. NEWBERRY: Joseph's qualification for service in the prison—for he was a servant there—and his qualification for reigning when next to Pharaoh on the throne, arose from the gift of prophecy given to him. It was as inspired by God's Spirit that he interpreted the dream of his two fellow-prisoners; like Jesus on the cross, he spoke to one of condemnation and death, and to the other of exaltation and glory. It was by this Spirit of revelation

that he was exalted to the throne and enabled to fill it. It was then by interpreting the dream of Pharaoh, as one in whom the Spirit of God was, that he ruled over the empire. We have heard the quotation from Psalm lxxiii., and I should like you to notice the psalm and that which is quoted. The words are (*v.* 18): "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive; Thou hast received gifts for men (*marg. in the man*); yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Here we see how the Spirit of God who inspired the psalm applies it at present, and yet reserves an application of it for the future. In the psalm it is, "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast received gifts in the man"; that is, in "the Man Christ Jesus." It is in Him that all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily. As the risen Son of God He receives the gifts; "Thou hast *received* gifts in the man." In Ephesians we have the fact of His having ascended, and *given* gifts; as Peter said, "Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." (Acts ii. 33.) Thus the Spirit of God applies the words of the psalm to the present time—the time of the mystery—the hidden mystery not revealed in the psalm. Not only is there the ascension and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, but the Pentecostal descent of the Spirit, and the gifts given to men. Joseph at the right hand of power not only received from Pharaoh a kingdom, authority and power; but he had a wife given to him—Asenath. So the Spirit is now sent down for the formation of the bride, according to Genesis and Ephesians, His future bride—"of His flesh and of His bones." Then He receives not only a kingdom, but gifts for "the rebellious also"; and rebellious Israel who rejected Him will yet own Him

through the work of the Spirit of God. He has received the *fulness* of the Spirit—the seven Spirits sent forth into all the earth. He will pour out the Spirit upon all flesh, and Israel's sons and daughters shall prophesy. Thus has He received gifts "for the rebellious also, that *Jehovah Jah* may dwell among them."

Reference being made to *v.* 7, "But unto each one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ," some conversation took place on the word "grace," and it was defined as *favour* from the Lord. Grace is God's gift to the believer, and God's gift to the church, on the ground of the fulness in Christ. The manifestation of this grace may be in various ways. Grace is given to each individual, but there may in some be abundance of grace, and yet not any special gift, as that of pastor or teacher, while in others grace bestowed may grow, like the branch of the golden lampstand, which expanded into a knop or a flower. (*Ex.* xxv. 31.) All grace comes from God, and grace working in the heart produces a gracious condition, without which any mere ability would be fruitless.

Our great aim should be to let the truth of the body of Christ occupy the mind; our minds are so constantly occupied with a mere handful of believers. The energy of Satan is directed against the manifestation of the body—the secret that had been hidden in the bosom of eternity—which is the glory of Christ. By-and-by Satan will raise up the Man of sin, but now his whole energy is directed against the church of God.

Is not the secret of our victory over Satan faith in the fact that Christ has led captivity captive? If we live in the consciousness that He has done so, is not that vantage-ground upon which to meet Satan? Christ has obtained the victory, and we enter into His victory!

We want to get a grasp of this mystery and then to remember the tremendous conflict with Satan to which it leads, lest he should get any advantage over us. We can only resist him as we walk in lowliness of mind ; but it needs immense power to get down.

Wednesday Evening.

ELIJAH AND ELISHA : RIGHTEOUSNESS AND GRACE.

MR. H. GROVES read Romans v. 21, "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." We are not sufficiently alive to the importance of the Epistle to the Romans as bringing out the righteousness of God ; and only in proportion as the righteousness of God is understood will the grace of God be appreciated. The reason why many of God's children are shaky in their faith is that they do not remember that whilst they are saved by grace—infinite grace—it is grace built upon a foundation of righteousness. We need in our own lives as Christians to enter more deeply into the requirements of this righteousness, for there is a danger, though we perhaps do not think of it, of running into antinomianism. We often hear that God is a God of love, and nothing but love ; but in the sense in which this is meant there is no greater falsehood, while there is no deeper truth than the truth that " God is love," if rightly understood.

In the beautiful picture that the apostle John draws in his Epistle of being born of God, he gives several characteristics. What is the first ? He " that doeth righteousness is born of Him." (1 John ii. 29.) He begins there ; not he who believes, but " he that doeth righteousness." Then, " Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin " (iii., 9) ; he that " loveth is born of God " (iv. 7) ; and then, " Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ

is born of God " (v. 1). Why does he deal first with righteousness and not with faith? Because saints need to be reminded that their righteousness is a manifestation of their faith, and hence the Spirit in the apostle marks this as the first characteristic of the Christian life.

So the whole of the Epistle to the Romans is a display of grace founded upon righteousness; and it should lead us to found our lives also upon righteousness. Just in the measure in which we realize this will there be a deeper consciousness of what sin is.

The lives of Elijah and Elisha show forth these truths, in their general aspect, in the character of their ministry. What was Elijah in his ministry but a powerful manifestation of the righteousness, and Elisha a precious manifestation of the grace, of God? Elijah showed forth righteousness without any grace in it, and why? Because God wanted to draw a picture of what righteousness is. Elijah's name is characteristic of the man; it means *Jehovah is God*; and he came as the exponent of the righteousness that demanded judgment. It was in a time of apostacy that he came to the front. Where he came from is not stated; he was a stranger; but he came as from the presence of God, and could say "*Jehovah . . . before whom I stand.*" How long he had been standing there we do not know. But he had learned that the righteousness of God had a claim upon the people at the time of their apostacy; and he prayed, and God heard his prayer, for it was in sympathy with the heart of God.

What is righteousness? "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," and nothing less. If we studied the legal part of the Old Testament Scripture a little more it would give us a more profound idea of righteousness.

When God called away Elijah, He gave Elisha. But

Elisha's ministry was a ministry of grace. Where did he learn it? At the feet of Elijah; and we shall never learn the ministry of grace except as we see it based upon righteousness, as in the Epistle to the Romans. When the prophets of Baal were slain it was Elijah who slew them: and in other ways God shows forth in Elijah's history what He will do when His grace is trampled under foot. God gave to Elijah such a servant as Elisha. He poured water on his master's hands; drank into his spirit, and learned the claims of the holiness of God. It is needful for us to learn our gospel at the feet of John the Baptist, that we may have a deeper acquaintance with the heart of God.

When Elisha comes to the front Elijah has to go. But Elisha wanted a double portion of Elijah's spirit. The ministry of righteousness and grace must go together. "They went both of them together," and in a moment Elijah was taken away. His mantle fell on Elisha, but what was it? Was it a robe of blue or purple? No. It was nothing but a hair shirt. This man of righteousness had long worn it as he wept and groaned over Israel's sins. He wore the garment of repentance—the hair shirt and the leathern girdle. It is a very easy thing to scold and blame, and speak of sin. Elijah did more. When Ahab was told of the man with the hair garment and the leathern girdle, he said, "It is Elijah, I know him well." It is important to remember in the present day, in the midst of our easy surroundings, that the prophets prophesied in sackcloth. Here is the hair shirt. Are we prepared to wear it? That mantle fell upon Elisha—a mantle that spoke of judgment, sorrow, sin, and shame. And Elisha put it on. Yet we find Elisha was one of the tenderest of men. He was an apostle Paul in his sympathy.

The more one sees of the character of God the more one

feels the necessity for warning the world of judgment, but such warnings should be given with tears, as the Lord wept over Jerusalem. We want Elijah's and Elisha's characteristics blended. Elisha as Elijah's servant learned the deepest lessons of the infinite righteousness of God; but did you ever notice the difference between Elijah's servant and Elisha's? The Gehazi spirit springs up the moment the Elijah spirit is forgotten. We want the two together—righteousness and grace—but we must remember that righteousness is the foundation; grace reigns *through righteousness*. In the matter of salvation let us always remember that the debt has been paid, and reconciliation is the result of that righteous payment.

Notice in connection with this point that "remission," in Rom. iii. 25, does not mean "forgiveness." We read that God declares "His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God." The word here denotes a *passing over*. God cancelled nothing until the death of Christ. But now we read "to declare His righteousness"—not His *forbearance*—"that He might be just and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." God can be righteous in forgiving. That is God's gospel of infinite and eternal righteousness. Until we have learned what the righteousness of God is we are not prepared for the mighty revelation of grace that the Spirit of God would make to our souls. Paul prayed for the "Spirit of wisdom and revelation," and if we have not that we shall not be able to understand these deep truths.

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST.

DR. NEATBY read Galatians ii. 19, 20, "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but 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." God has not only dealt in righteousness with what *I have done*, but He has dealt in righteousness with what *I used to be*. He has weighed me in the balance, and according to His judgment He has dealt with me. I was not simply unworthy of blessing; I was very worthy of death, and He has put me to death. I stand before you now a different man. What I was by nature—in the flesh—has met its end in the cross of Christ: what *I have done* God has forgiven on the ground of His death. God thus deals with me on the ground of perfect righteousness, because He received through Christ that which made Him righteous in forgiving and saving me. I met my end in the cross of Christ; "I am crucified with Christ," "that I might live unto God."

The law that condemned me was the law of *God*, that which expressed the *claims* of *God*, and therefore it was *God* who condemned me. I never got peace, real settled peace, until I knew that I, root and branch, had been entirely displaced by the judgment of God—the righteousness of God. I could not have done more bad things in the time God left me to do them in; I was radically bad and not to be mended, and so He crucified me. In Romans vi. 10, 11, we read of Christ: "In that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God." Christ in His life had to do with sin; but He was never defiled, for He was the spotless Lamb of God; He was the Eternal Son of God. As born into this world it was said of Him, "That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." He was as spotless when He reached the cross as when He was born of the virgin. Blessed Jesus! no stain of defilement was contracted in all that path in which He had so much to do with sin.

On the cross He was made sin. He was the sacrifice—the divinely appointed sacrifice—for sin, and God thus fully dealt with sin: “For in that He died, He *died unto sin once*”; and now “in that He liveth, He liveth unto God.” The Lord Jesus has nothing more to do with the putting away of sin; the life that He lives as the Risen One is a life entirely to God, beyond the putting away of sin and the work of the cross.

Now Paul adds, “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” He bids us reckon that which is true. The only difference between what is said of Christ and what is said of me as a believer is that in my case it is “*through Jesus Christ our Lord.*” The other words are just the same. It is a real thing, and to be remembered every day of the week. God has dealt with my old man in righteousness in order that He might produce in me a life unto Himself. That He *has* dealt with it in His righteous judgment I am sure, and I own before Him and before you, that God was a righteous God when He said that not mercy but death would do for me.

Well, now I live. The “living, the living, he shall praise Thee.” It is a blessed life now—a life of liberty. People say when the gospel is preached clearly, “Then I may live as I like.” Yes, you may live as you like if you have a new life, for the new life likes the will of God. But, as often expressed, the thought is entirely a carnal thought. God has crucified our old man with Christ, not that we should go on living the old life, but that we should live the new life. He has given us a new life that we should live it out; that it should be seen in our faces and actions, and heard in our words. It is easy to praise God when the praise is in the heart. If there is a song for God within all day long and in the night too, it

is easy to praise Him ; and when God has put His law—His will—into the heart, it is easy to do the will of God. What comes in, alas ! is the sad fact that the old life is not reckoned dead. We are to reckon that dead, to maintain no communion with it, and to let every thing be taken out of the way that will prevent the Christ that God has formed within us living out His blessed self in the experience, the walk, and the conversation every day.

“I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” I do deeply desire that you and I may bear this in mind, and that it may be seen in our individual walk that “Christ liveth in me.” It is not that I may *let* Him do so. It is a *fact*, but then I am to reckon myself dead, and to yield myself to Him ; because, although this is true as a matter of right it is not always as a matter of experience. We still have the old man ; we are aware of that. I have it, but, if I am walking with God, I hold it in the place of death. I do not struggle with it. If a man is dead you can find it out in an instant. It is faith that holds my old self, what I used to be, to be dead—dead by the judgment of God. What a difference the holding of this in faith would make in our relations one with another in the Church ! Shall I stand up for my rights ? It is a contradiction. Shall I mind what people say about me ? What does it matter what people say about a dead man ? But what a precious thing I have ! “Christ liveth in me.” That is better than a thousand laws—better for God, better for me, better for heaven—and it is better than all sorts of pious resolutions. I have died with Christ, and now, in Christ risen, I live a life beyond judgment ; I live to God, and not to sin. Christ living in *me* must be essentially the same thing as Christ living in Jerusalem, or in Galilee, or in Samaria. Christ would not be one thing then and another thing now. Alas alas !

that I should hinder Christ. If I were to tell my experience it would be a very different thing from God's account of me. But I will come to God's account; and will say that anything beside it is a terrible mistake—a denial of the truth of God.

“*I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.*” The old life says, “How will it affect *me*”; the new life thinks, “How will it affect *the interests of Christ.*” The new life always makes *Him* the object and centre in every thing. If Christ is not the centre, the rallying point, of our souls; if we do not form our purposes with reference to Christ; if we do not transact our business and bring up our children with reference to Christ, let us judge ourselves. Oh! we are Christ's, body, soul, and spirit, and all our belongings—they are all Christ's. This is a new life; it must be so. Christ is everything, and the Holy Ghost which is given to dwell in us, is the power of His blessed life in a glorified Christ. May God help us every day! Speak of money! I have not a penny piece, and I will prove it to you. I need not open a ledger to show it. If called away I should not take a penny with me. I should take what does belong to me into another world: but I could not take a penny thither. If I use a penny merely for my own will I steal it from God. The 16th of Luke shows this most distinctly: “If ye have not been faithful in that which is another's who shall give you that which is your own?” (v. 12.) What I have in Christ—what eye hath not seen, what ear hath not heard; the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him—the unsearchable riches of Christ—*they are mine.* I shall never have to part with them; but all this world has I shall leave. If the Lord call me to Himself, somebody will gather up my mantle. I shall part company from it, and, thank God, I shall be

glad to do so ; but I shall not part company with the unsearchable riches of Christ. I wrap them to my heart ; *they are mine*. May God make me faithful as regards the things that are another's, that I may have a deeper enjoyment of the things that are my own !

“ *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.*” That is to say, the mighty moving principle of the new life is the love of the Son of God. Did He love me ? He *did* love me, and He gave Himself for me. Why is it in the singular I wonder ? Well, by this passage alone I know one thing for certain, if I had been the only sinner upon God's earth, Jesus Christ would have died for me. I am not lost in the crowd. You are not lost in the crowd. Each believer can say, *that* belongs to me, as if there was no other in the universe of God ; and He gave Himself for each one. Oh, it is passing sweet ! If the title deeds of all the property in the world could be laid on this table now, and offered to me to let go this one fact, I should say in an instant, “ You can set fire to them.” That He loved *me* with that full cup before Him in the garden of Gethsemane, that He looked through the ages and saw a poor boy in a country village and loved him, and gave Himself for him, will be my joy in eternity. It is my joy as I tread my way thitherward. *He* is the object before the Christian ; *He* is the object that God Himself gives the Christian.

“ *The faith of the Son of God.*” This is precious faith. It is an everlasting faith, a mighty power in the soul. Think of the apostle who says it. The eye of Christ was upon him as he looked with satisfaction on the murder of one dear to Christ, and He loved him ; and, blessed be His name ! He revealed Himself to him, and made him a pattern of all longsuffering—a model of divine grace.

From that moment when He arrested him on the way to Damascus Christ became to Saul of Tarsus the one standard by which everything was judged—the one object that he had before him. He counted all things but loss that he might win Christ, and apprehend that for which Christ had apprehended him. He was thinking about Christ when he wrote such burning words to the Galatians. It was in thinking about Christ that he suffered what he did. It was for Christ that he endured and that he wrought. The Lord help us to enter into this! May ours be no dry service; may it be living service, springing from love to Christ, and rendered under His eye! What would you do for your mother? I can only speak for myself, I would have done anything. And shall I not do anything for my Saviour, who loved me and gave Himself for me? If He called me to the wilds of Africa, should I not go? Shall I talk about the sacrifice I am making in going to a far country? Oh, beloved friends, you who are going to the foreign field, the Lord help you to do it to Christ as One whose left hand is under you, and whose right hand doth embrace you; and God grant that, whether at home or abroad, we may all know the meaning of the words, “To me to live is Christ.”

(To be continued.)

UNITY OF SCRIPTURE. — The general end both of Old and New Testament is one; the difference between them consisting in this, that the Old did make wise by teaching salvation through Christ that should come, the New by teaching that Christ the Saviour is come; and that Jesus, whom the Jews did crucify, and whom God did raise from the dead, is He.—*Hooker.*

REVISED VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.*

XXIII.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS (*continued*).

LXXVII. 2b—"my hand was stretched out in the n., and slacked not." v. 4—"eyes watching." v. 11—"I will make mention of the deeds of Jah," M. The word "wonder" (pēlē) *vv.* 11, 14, claims particular attention; the *verb* occ. often, and always in reference to divine actings of which Christ is the centre, cf. Is. 9. 6. The noun occ. in Ex. 15. 11; Pss. 78. 12; 88. 10, 12; 89. 5; 119. 129; Is. 9. 6, "Wonderful;" 25. 1; 29. 14; Lam. 1. 9; Dan. 12. 6. v. 18—"in the whirlwind." v. 19—"was" and "were" for "is" and "are."

LXXVIII. 2—In Num. 12. 8 the word here ren. "dark sayings" ref. to the prophetic revelations of the O. T., as contrasted with the "face to face" revelations of God in Christ. It here points to the "problems of eternity," and is so ren. by the LXX. Comp. the parables of the kingdom in Matt. 13., where this verse is quoted. Life's problems are solved only by Christ and His revelation. The word occ. for "riddle," Jud. 14; "hard questions," 1 Ki. 10. 1; 2 Ch. 9. 1; also in Ps. 49. 4; Prov. 1. 6; Eze. 17. 2; Dan. 8. 23; Hab. 2. 6. *vv.* 15, 16—In v. 15 the word for rock is *tzoor* as Ex. 17. 6; in v. 16 it is *selaa* (*cliff*) as Nu. 20. 8-11; the distinction points to the two occasions. v. 25—"eat the bread of the mighty"; "meat" denotes provision as for a journey. v. 26—"guided the s. wind." v. 29—"gave them that they lusted after," cf. v. 30. v. 35—"the most High God." v. 37—"faithful" for "steadfast," v. 8. should be the same. v. 40—"they rebel against," so *vv.* 17, 56. v. 42—"redeemed" for "delivered," better "ransomed"; see on 31. 5. v. 44b—"their streams;" the word is used for the Nile and its branches, and not for rivers generally. v. 49—"trouble, a band of angels of evil," or of calamities, pl. cf. the trumpets and vials of Rev. v. 50—"He made [or levelled, M.] a path for." v. 57—"dealt treacherously." v. 66—"Smote his e. backwards." v. 69—"like the heights." v. 71—"ewes that give suck."

LXXIX. 8—"Us the i. of our forefathers." v. 9—Ren. "and atone for our sins"; it is well to give *atone* for Heb. *Kippaer*.

LXXX. 1b—"That sittest upon," *i.e.* as enthroned there. v. 2b—Ren. "and go forth for salvation for us." v. 3—"Restore us," M., so *vv.* 7, 19. v. 9—The word ren. "preparedst" is not the general word, but

* All quotations from R.V. without comment are regarded as improvements. R.M. means *Revised margin*; A.M., *Authorized margin*; a denotes the first part of a verse; b, the second.

denotes clearing away, as a house is cleared of dirt before being inhabited. v. 11—"River," i.e. the Euphrates. v. 13—"field feed on it." v. 15a—"the stock," Heb. occ. here alone; cf. Is. 6. 13, where for "sub." read "stock." The Heb. for "branch," is *son* [M.], cf. v. 17, "son of man," which the Chal. par. ref. to the Messiah.

LXXXI. 3b—"the full moon;" the "s. feastday" is the Passover, which was at the full moon. v. 5—"heard the speech of one that I knew not," M., so Dr. Kay. v. 6b—"were freed from the basket." v. 12—"So I let them go after the stubbornness of their heart." vv. 13-16—All these verbs are future, expressing what God is still ready to do for Israel, if only they will hearken.

LXXXII. 1—"God [*Elohim*] standeth [the verb sig. *standeth firm*] in the c. of God [*El*]." We would ren. last clause "God shall judge in the midst [of men]." v. 5—"are moved." v. 6b—"are sons." v. 7a—Better to ren. "like Adam"; by "one of the princes," probably Satan is meant; the word is used of Christ, of Michael, and of Satan.

LXXXIII. 5b—"against thee do they make a covenant," cf. Dan. 9. 27. v. 8—"Assyria also." v. 12—Ren. "homesteads" for "houses." v. 13—"like the whirling dust." v. 15—"So pursue." v. 17—Ren. as futures.

LXXXIV. 1—"How lovely" M., better "beloved." v. 2—"flesh sing for joy unto" M., rather "shout (for victory) to"; the word denotes the cry of triumph. v. 5b—"are the highways (to Zion)." v. 6—"Passing . . . v. of Weeping they make it a place of springs; yea, the early rain covereth it with blessings." v. 7b—"every . . . ap. before God in Zion." Cf. Heb. 12. 22.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

How are we to understand the statement, they "serve Him day and night in His temple," seeing that it is said, "There shall be no night there"? (Rev. vii. 15; xxi. 25.)

The expression "day and night" simply means *continually*. If it be thought necessary to understand it more literally, it may be borne in mind that, as Rev. xxii. 2 speaks of "months," it seems almost needful to think of revolutions which involve the alternations of day and night, as well as the sequence of months. If so, the expression "no night" may simply mean that there will be no *darkness*, and none of those things which we are accustomed to as connected with night in the present state. The expression in chap. x. 6, "time no longer," is often misunderstood; it means (as in margin) "There shall be no longer delay."

ISRAEL'S PRESENT STATE AND COURSE.

INDICATIONS OF THE NEARNESS OF THE LORD'S COMING.

THE Lord charged the Jews with wilful blindness because, while they were ready enough to "discern the face of the sky," and to expect fair weather or foul, according to the indications there given, they *would not* "discern the signs of the times," nor recognise in Him Israel's Messiah. (Matt. xvi. 1-3; Lu. xii. 54-57.)

By the "parable of the fig tree" our Lord warns His own disciples against a similar disregard of things around them. Having told them of many things that should come to pass, He refers to the fact that when men see the fig tree put forth leaves they know that summer is at hand, and adds, "So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." (Lu. xxi. 31.) In the Epistle to the Hebrews the apostle similarly exhorts believers to be more constant in their assembling together, and more zealous in exhorting one another as they "*see the day approaching*" (x. 26)—that day when all will be finally gathered to the Lord. (2 Thess. ii. 1.) Thus the spirit of waiting for the Son of God from heaven is to be kept fervent by love within and by providences without.

There have been and are many signs that foretell coming events. All growth of evil and of apostacy is surely tending to the development of the man of sin, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." One important premonitory sign of the coming of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords, to which we would draw attention is afforded by *the present condi-*

tion of the Jewish nation. Even during their apostacy God reigns over them in a very remarkable way, as we read in Eze. xx. 33, where the word "rule" denotes *reign as king*: "As I live, saith the Lord God [*Adonai Jehovah*], surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I be king over you" (R.V.). Thus, while the history of the church, according to her calling, should have been the history of a heavenly people, separated from the world, the history of Israel ever has been, and even now is, closely linked with God's dealings with the earth.

Israel is God's earthly witness, for they are still His people, and He has given us their past history and prophecies concerning their future. But the coming of *their King* tells us of the coming of *our Bridegroom*. We do not here touch the question whether the Lord will come as the Bridegroom for the church *before* He comes as Israel's King. Important as this inquiry may be it is not well to give it undue prominence, lest the *time* of the coming occupy us more than the *Person* who is coming, and prevent our united testimony to the fact that He is coming, and also to the character of the times in which we live. It is at least certain that all that which tells us the advent of the King of Israel draws near, tells us as plainly that the coming of the church's Head is as near, if not nearer.

Scripture teems with testimonies in history or prophecy: (1) to Israel's *past*, from Egypt to Babylon, and from that period to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans (see Lu. xxi.); (2) to Israel's *present* dispersion, degradation, misery and woe; and (3) to Israel's *future* restoration and subsequent glory. This we all recognise, and it is unnecessary to stop to prove it. Our object is rather to adduce those features in the present condition

of the Jews that indicate the nearness of the events which the Scripture unfolds as marking the great crisis of their history.

The history of the nation up to the nineteenth century has been with little exception one continuous record of shame, disgrace, slavery and tyranny. No nation has ever passed through such centuries of unmitigated misery. They have been taxed like beasts of burden, and hunted like wild beasts. Until lately a Turk, in pronouncing the word *Jew*, would say, "The Lord forgive me," as he would say when naming a *dog* or *swine* in speaking to a superior. No ignominy has been deemed too great to subject them to; no cruelty too severe to bring upon them. The blessed Lord foretold all this, and wept when His eyes of pity beheld the doomed city, and, looking through the centuries, He foresaw every detail of the sufferings of His people.

In tracing out what has taken place during this nineteenth century, and seeking to show the position of Israel as we draw near to the close of it, we will for greater clearness arrange our remarks under different heads. We shall thus demonstrate the fact that *God has already begun* those predicted dealings with them, which point to the nearness of the days of the Antichrist, and the consequent manifestation of the kingdom of the Son of Man.*

I. THEIR EMANCIPATION.

The civil emancipation of the Jews has been going on during the present century in a most remarkable manner. England took the lead in this movement when, in 1753, the Jews were temporarily enfranchised; and under the

* Most of the facts stated in the following pages are from *The Jews*, by Dr. S. H. Kellog: Nisbet & Co., London; a book that will well repay careful reading.

throes of the French Revolution one nation after another in Europe published edicts of toleration in their favour. At the very commencement of the revolution in France, on a petition from the Jews, they were admitted to all the rights of citizenship, and all distinctions of race were obliterated. So through every political shaking in Europe, as in that of 1848, the Jew has been the gainer. In all this we see pledges of the fulfilment of Jer. xxx. 8, "I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him."

II. THEIR POLITICAL INFLUENCE.

Immediately they were emancipated they began to rise in political importance. We find them as marshals under Napoleon, and ministers of state in almost every country of Europe. Their position is unique; they are strangers in every country, and yet are naturalized in all, and so are one of the wonders of the age. Thus are they being prepared by the hand of God for that position which they are yet to hold amongst the nations of the earth. All this is going on so quietly and naturally that cursory observers do not notice it. Thoughtful politicians, however, observe their growing importance, and dread it as foreboding no good to the nations in which they sojourn, for they form what is called an *imperium in imperio*, i.e., an empire within an empire, which is ever a source of danger. The nations of Europe are beginning to find them, what Zechariah predicts they will be, "a burdensome stone for all peoples," and they will yet prove the fulfilment of the words spoken of Jerusalem, "All that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the nations of the earth be gathered together against it." (Zech. xii. 3.) The position of the Jews amongst the

nations answers to the position of Moses in the house of Pharaoh. As he was being prepared to deliver Israel from Egypt, so are they being prepared to take the supremacy over those who unwittingly cherish them.

III. THEIR POWER OF ORGANISATION.

The subjection of the Jews to servitude has not, as is usual with enslaved nations, tended to amalgamation with their oppressors, but, against all probabilities, they have remained isolated amongst the nations of the earth. While thus separate from the Gentiles they are united together by bonds of sympathy, and are organising themselves to further their own national objects. Though the ultimate results of this are as yet hidden from ordinary observation they are clear to those who, under the light of prophecy, look forward to Israel's national restoration, when, the jealousies of the past being forgotten, and their nationality being cemented by suffering, they shall be blessed as one united people—"Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim." (Isa. xi. 13.)

In the vision of the dry bones, given to the prophet Ezekiel (ch. xxxvii.), this power of combination is very forcibly illustrated: "So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a voice, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone" (v. 7). Then follows a further development, for "the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above" (v. 8). Still the organization was lifeless, "there was no breath in them"; all were spiritually dead, and remained so until, as a further result of his prophesying, life entered into them. We thus have a picture of Israel's gradual gathering, and then of their ultimate regeneration and salvation. We seem already to have reached the first stage of this great

movement, and to see the bones coming together, and we may well expect that the second stage—"the sinews and the flesh" coming upon them—will soon follow, for God's work in these latter days is said to be a quick work, as well as a complete one. (Rom. ix. 28.)

During what men call "the dark ages," so slow was the fulfilment of divine purposes that what God calls one day has been to man as a thousand years; but, if it has been slow, it has not been the less sure and certain. Now, as the end draws near, we have the reverse of this, and a thousand years will be as one day, so rapidly do events follow one another. As an illustration of this we may note the fact that the *Universal Israelitish Alliance*, which was formed in 1860, has already spread over most of the countries of the world. This *Alliance* was occasioned by the need of help arising from the persecution of the Jews in Russia and elsewhere, and its object is the improvement of their condition intellectually and physically. Thus persecution and enfranchisement alike work out God's foreordained purpose, as Israel will see by-and-by, when Paul's doxology *in view of God's dealings with them* will become theirs also as the *fruit* of those dealings. (Rom. xi. 33-36.)

IV. THEIR ACCUMULATION OF WEALTH.

Poverty, as well as misery, was part of the predicted curse upon Israel: "He [the stranger] shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail." (Deut. xxviii. 44.) Thus it has usually been; but now all is changed, and of late years the Jews have amassed wealth to such a degree that in some states of Europe the property of the country is fast falling into their hands. They lend money on mortgages to their less thrifty neighbours, and then by foreclosing

them become possessors both of houses and lands. They are among the greatest bankers of the age, and are the creditors of all the states of Europe. It is said that between 1854 and 1864, that is in ten years, the great banking firm of the Rothschilds lent over £100,000,000 to the nations. But, convenient as it may be to the nations to borrow money, these debts to an alien people are a source of danger that has generally been little considered. Those who are brought into direct contact with this state of things, and contemplate what it really means, see troubles and perplexities in the immediate future that will have to be dealt with. The petition of the *anti-semitic* party in Germany specially alludes to this. They say, "The fruits of Christian labours are harvested by the Jews. Capital is concentrated in Jewish hands." Again, the *New York Tribune* quotes from a German paper the statement that "the rapid rise of the Jewish nation to leadership is the great problem of the future for East Germany." (Dr. Kellog, p. 160.) In this age of money worship they who possess wealth hold the strings of power. Dr. Kellog tells us that out of 640 bankers in Prussia, in 1871, all but 92 were Jews; and in Austria the bulk of the merchandise of the country is also in the hands of Jews.

All these things cause them to be both feared and hated, and will, probably, sooner or later lead to their expulsion. As we thus write, an agitation against rich Jews has begun in Paris. It may be that in this manner God will fulfil the word, "I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God." (Ezek. xx. 35, 36.) Toward this events are tending, hastened by circumstances on which

man looks with fear and trembling, while he is powerless to alter them. God rules, and all things subserve His purpose. This purpose He has unfolded to us, having given us His secret that we may be wise, and able to forecast results of which the worldly politician can make nothing, because He scorns God's prophetic Word, which is the only light that shines in the midst of the world's political darkness and perplexity.

V. THEIR INTELLECTUAL INFLUENCE.

The prominence of the Jews in the intellectual development of Europe is very remarkable. Their literary men abound, in proportion to the population, in most continental countries, so that Jewish influence in education and literature is increasing every year. Their students take the leading places in colleges and seminaries, and a large proportion of the writers for the press, and of the owners of the papers, are Jews. In consequence of this they are able to exercise an undue influence in the parliaments and legislatures of the countries in which they dwell, which is a growing cause of irritation to those who see them acting as citizens while they are foreigners at heart.

VI. THEIR LEADERSHIP AS SOCIALISTS.

One alarming feature, in connection with the influence just spoken of, is the fact that Jews are among the most prominent leaders of the anarchist, socialist and nihilist movements of the day, and that these movements are very much under their control. In 1863 a Jew founded the *German Working Man's Union*, in connection with which the Socialist party in Germany has made such rapid strides. They started upon the principle, first expressed by Spinoza, a Jew, more than two centuries ago, that "Capital is robbery." This may seem strange

after what has been said about their accumulation of wealth ; but it only illustrates the opposite tendencies of the human heart.

In this aspect of their prominence we may discern a preparation for the coming of the Antichrist, and, perhaps in different ways, he will be mainly helped on by the Jewish element amongst the nations of the earth. It is with the Jews that "the prince that shall come" (Dan. ix. 26)—the beast of Revelation—shall confirm a covenant for seven years (*v.* 27). Old Testament prophecies contain many statements that show the relation subsisting between the Antichrist and the Jewish people till he breaks the covenant, and seeks to destroy the people he has deceived.

VII. THEIR SCEPTICISM.

Not only in the socialistic and democratic tendencies around us are the Jews taking the lead ; but in the mighty current of rationalism, that is drawing so many into the infidel and semi-infidel opinions of the day, they are also in the van. They who, during their oppression, have been the upholders of monotheism, are now the abettors of that pantheism which sooner or later ends in atheism. It deserves notice that Spinoza, the Jew referred to above, sowed the seeds of those opinions which took root in Germany, and developed the scepticism of Strauss and his followers. Denying the inspiration of the Scriptures, they set aside all the fundamental doctrines taught in them, and this has led to that "down-grade" movement in the professing church which so characterizes our day. It is in western Europe chiefly that the Jews have adopted these infidel principles ; those of the east of Europe are, on the contrary, mostly upholders of their old Mosiac faith. Thus, while the seeds of a deep-seated

apostasy are developing in the west the Sadducean principles of an earlier day, the Pharisaic element is being developed in the east. In the midst of all this there is a small national movement on the part of some who would own Jesus as their true Messiah, without faith in Him as the Son of God. Out of this movement we may look for that faithful remnant of God's Israel so often spoken of in the Psalms and the Prophets. See Pss. xliv., lxxix.; Is. lix., lxiv.; Dan. xi. 32-35; xii. 1-3, 10-13.

VIII. THEIR HATRED OF CHRISTIANITY.

The acceptance of the Lord by so many of the poorer Jews, and their readiness to read the New Testament, are matters for thanksgiving to God; but we must not be deceived with the thought that there is any general softening of Jewish prejudice and intolerance. There is, on the contrary, among educated Jews a growing hatred of Christianity, and a definite aim at its destruction, especially on the part of those who have adopted sceptical views. They do not reject the Old Testament, but they eliminate the miraculous from it, as so-called Christian rationalists do from both the Old and the New Testaments. Their avowed object is to supplant Christianity by their rationalized Judaism, and to make that the religion of the nations of the earth. Their system is nothing less than an infidel pantheism, which, though not avowed atheism, is in fact nothing better. "Everywhere," says Dr. Kellog, quoting from a lecture given before the University of Berlin, "one thought rules the Jews—the thought that the Christian ideas shall at last be vanquished by the Jewish; and their common effort is directed to that end—to supplant Christianity in the collective life of nations" (*page 211*).

Those who are familiar with the many Scriptures

that refer to the Antichrist may readily see in all this an earnest of their fulfilment, and a preparation for the reception of the lawless one of 2 Thess. ii., the "man of sin"—"the son of perdition"—who will seat himself in the temple of God. It will be with the consent of those who are thus prepared that the Gentile beast and the Jewish false prophet shall occupy the city where Christ was crucified, and open their mouths "in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name [as revealed in Scripture] and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven." (Rev. xiii. 6.) These approximations call for our prayerful consideration, for they tell us how near we may be to the days there described, and that even now we may be in the very rapids that will end in the awful Niagara catastrophe of which the book of the Revelation gives the details.

IX. THEIR RESTORATION TO THEIR LAND.

A few years ago all but prophetic students laughed at the idea of the Jews ever returning to their own land; now it is the common talk of politicians in their anxiety to solve the Eastern Question, which is also more and more becoming the Jewish Question. The tendency of the day is towards the uniting of nationalities in their own land, and Jewish influence may greatly further a movement that would find expression in such words as "*Palestine for the Jews.*" Principles come into play and work silently, and then, without anything remarkable taking place, the results soon appear to be very great. Thus in the most natural and unobserved manner divine predictions are accomplished, and, before we are aware of it, the cloud, which was only as big as a man's hand, grows into a blackened heaven with its thunder and storm and tempest. Because of the naturalness with which

these preliminary events are wrought out men refuse to see the hand of God; but the wise will see and understand the actings of His providence, as we read, "None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." (Dan. xii. 10.)

The antagonism and jealousies that exist among the nations of Europe prevent any suggestion being made to transfer the Holy Land (for it is such still) to any Gentile power. God reserves it for "the holy people," who in due time must possess it. The record of the mighty overruling of the unseen God of Esther is being re-written, and yet man drifts on as ignorant and careless as if all things were matters of chance. The *Jewish Chronicle* says that the Jews are bent on going back to their land, and regard themselves as on the eve of another exodus. The lack of security for life and property at present prevent those who have anything to lose from settling in Palestine; but every year the misrule of the Turk is giving way before the nations whose mercantile interests are at stake. Turkey is powerless to prevent their onward course, and, as they hasten her on to her fall, they will remove another obstacle out of the way of Israel's return to their own land.

X. THEIR INCREASE IN NUMBERS.

One point more we would notice, and that is the rapid growth in numbers of the Jewish race. In the early part of the present century their number was estimated at from three to four millions; but it is now computed to be not less than twelve millions. Dr. Kellog tells us that the rate of births among them is reckoned to be almost as five to three of the surrounding Gentile nations. Then their longevity is also considerably greater, for, while not more than twelve per cent. of the Gentiles reach the age of

seventy as many as twenty per cent. of Jews reach that age. Thus God shows how soon His despised people Israel may assume a national importance that many little dream of.

CONCLUSION.

The facts thus briefly given all point to the one conclusion that the people that have been dormant for centuries, and have nationally lain in their graves, are being brought out of them. (Ezek. xxxvii. 12.) They form a new phenomenon in the world's history with which Gentile nations will soon have to deal in one way or another, and show that we are nearing the time with reference to which Isaiah speaks of the travailing earth bringing forth in one day, and a nation being born at once. (Is. lxvi. 8.) Surely Israel is a witness to-day that Jehovah is God. He will yet claim them as His people, and show that He is their King. When He again takes them in hand it will be first to punish them for their rebellious apostasy and hardness of heart by destroying the rebels from among them, and then to make the remnant a vessel of His own glory.

There are many other omens abroad, in the moral, social and political aspects of things around us, which, to the opened eye and quickened ear of the scribe "instructed unto the kingdom of heaven," unmistakably point to the nearness of the advent of Him who is the King of Israel and the Lord of the whole earth. The day is thus proved to be hastening fast when all God's promises to Israel will be realized. But, as we have said, if He is near as the King of Israel, how near must He be as the Bridegroom of His church! The proof given of this nearness by the present position of Israel seems overwhelming, and all these things that tell of "the day approaching" should lead to solemn exercise of soul among God's people that

they may be ready. If the thought expressed in the lines,

“ We can almost hear His footfall
On the threshold of the door,”

becomes more real, and our hearts are stirred to long for the coming of our Redeemer and Lord, this brief review of facts will not have been written in vain. H. G.

NOTES OF LEOMINSTER CONFERENCE,

OCTOBER 7TH TO 11TH, 1889—(*continued*).

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND LOVE.

Mr. H. DYER said : Love and righteousness are blessedly blended, and we may be called the children of righteousness, and the children of boundless love. In reckoning righteousness we must give Christ His due. God never forgets the balance of the sanctuary, and He would teach us to hold it and to weigh by it. Should He give sure measure for grace, and not for righteousness? He must measure faithfully and weigh faithfully. In Romans Paul speaks of “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” Why is there so little joy in the Holy Ghost? Because there is so little righteousness. That comes *first*, and then peace. Righteousness at the cross *saves* the sinner, and by the Spirit righteousness is *wrought in* the believer. God never yet pardoned a sin for which He did not receive infinite payment. Could you worship a God that had not a balance of righteousness? Could you draw nigh to Him as Father if you did not know the gush of infinite love? Therefore you worship Him for the pillars of His house, and you drink of the fountains that flow therefrom. In Rom. viii. we are told that “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, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Thus we learn that righteousness—divine righteousness—is wrought in the believer by the blessed Spirit, that the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in Him. This does not teach the believer Pharisaical righteousness that would lead him to approve himself; but divine righteousness for which he is indebted entirely to God. It is the embroidery work of the Spirit of God in the very soul, reminding us of the picture of the bride in Rev. xix. "arrayed in fine linen clean and bright"—not only *white*, but *bright*—"for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of saints."

Thursday evening:

CONFORMITY TO CHRIST.

MR. T. NEWBERRY gave an address on 2 Corinthians iii. verses 17 and 18: "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The Spirit is spoken of frequently in this chapter: God "hath made us able ministers of the new covenant; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life" (v. 6). Again, "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God" (v. 3). There is one aspect of the unity of the Godhead which I fear is but little apprehended. We are all familiar with the truth of the oneness between the Father and the Son, as expressed by the Lord in the declaration, "I and My Father are One" (John x. 30); but we are apt to forget that into this oneness the Holy Spirit enters.

The Father and the Son are One ; but the unity of the Godhead is by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost : and it is with reference to this that the Lord prays for His disciples, "that they all may be one ; as Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." (John xvii. 21.) Where the Lord is the Spirit is, and where the Spirit is the Lord is ; so Paul says, "Now if any man have not *the Spirit of Christ*, he is none of His ; and if *Christ* be in you, the body is dead because of sin ; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." (Rom. viii. 9, 10.) You cannot separate the Lord and the Spirit. If you are "strengthened with all might by His Spirit in the inner man," the result will be Christ dwelling in the heart by faith. (Eph. iii. 16, 17.)

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." The contrast is between the first covenant and the second. The first covenant was in the letter—killing and bringing into bondage—the ministry of death and condemnation. But we "have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear ; but we have received the Spirit of sonship, whereby we cry, Abba, Father," and we are loved with a love that casts out all servile fear. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" makes us free from all bondage.

We speak of liberty in our meetings ; liberty for what ? For God to manifest Himself through Christ Jesus by the Holy Ghost ; liberty for the Holy Ghost to act, and to conduct the whole proceedings of our meetings from beginning to end. There cannot be a more mischievous mistake than to suppose that this is licence for the flesh, freedom for each one to do as he likes, to speak and say just what he pleases.

The expression "*we all*" means all in whom the Spirit of God dwells ; all in whom Christ dwells by the Spirit ; all in whom God dwells.

“With open face” should be “with *unveiled face*.” There is a contrast between the veiling of Moses’ face, and the unveiled face wherewith we now behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord. In answer to the earnest prayer of Moses God put him into the cleft of the rock, and hid him with His hand while He passed by, and then removed His hand that he might see His back parts, the skirts of His robe. (Ex. xxxiii. 22, 23.) But *we* see with unveiled face. We do not see face to face as yet; we behold the glory now in a mirror; but in the coming day we shall see face to face.

This word mirror, which denotes the sacred Scriptures as a whole, always reminds me of the mirror of Archimedes, which was composed of various plates of polished metal. Each plate was concave in form, throwing a focus to one centre on which the sun shone, and all the plates together formed the one mirror. So we have many parts in the Bible; but the whole sixty-six parts combined, arranged, focussed to a centre, form the mirror of the Word, which throws its concentrated light on the Person of Christ. Thus we have God’s testimony, by the Holy Ghost, to Christ who is “the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person.” The sun shines, and the beams are reflected, and the object exhibited is the Person of Christ. Thus the Father is manifested in the Son, and the Son is revealed by the Spirit of God.

What was the effect upon Moses, when he looked even upon the fragmentary glory which was displayed to him in the Mount? Though he wist it not, “the skin of his face shone” so that the people “were afraid to come nigh him.” So while we gaze with unveiled face upon the mirror which reflects Christ there is a transforming power. We not only see a transfigured Christ; we ourselves are

transfigured—changed into the same image. If it be a concave mirror that you stand before, it will show its reflected light in your countenance, whether you know it or not. Thus it is with the mirror of the Word of God.

The skin of Moses' face shone; but the glory passed away, for it was only skin deep. But the glory of which we speak is the glory of internal conformity to Christ. The Spirit of God writes on the "fleshy tables of the heart," and "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts," through the mirror, that is the Word. It is a transformation in the spirit of our mind, a being renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created us.

This is not instantaneous photography, but a continuous process; for we are being "changed into the same image from glory to glory." When photographers first exercised their art you were obliged to sit still without moving for a painful length of time. The longer you sat, and the quieter you kept, the more perfect was the portrait. There is a lesson for us in this. The longer we gaze, the longer the light shines in, the quieter we sit in the process, the more truly the conformity grows. We become more Christ-like in heart, in spirit, in character and in conduct. It is not light from without reflected on the skin, as in the case of Moses; but that which is wrought in the heart, "by the Spirit of the Lord," shining out in the life and ways. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." When Gideon's pitchers were broken the light shone out, and so the more broken in spirit we are the clearer will the light shine forth.

All this is wrought by "the Spirit of the Lord." Do not separate the Spirit from the Person of Christ, or from

the Person of the Father. They are Three in One—a threefold cord not to be unstrung. They always act in harmony, and in perfect order. All revealing of Christ to us, and conforming of us to Christ are by the Holy Spirit.

The instantaneous change is in reserve, and it will take place at the coming of the Lord. “When He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” (1 John iii. 2.) “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye” (1 Cor. xv. 52), we shall be transformed permanently and for ever into the image of Him whom we shall see “face to face.” We shall be conformed to Him in “spirit and soul and body.” It will no longer be the treasure in earthen vessels. The earthen vessel will become heavenly—transparent like a gem, so that the glory may shine out, softened and beautiful. The Lord will conform us to Himself by the working of that mighty power whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself. (Phil. iii. 21.) It will be instantaneous, and then “from glory to glory.” For ever gazing, by the power of the Holy Ghost, on God manifest in Christ, we shall ever be growing in the knowledge of God, in love to God, in likeness to God and in ability to serve Him.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SECRET PRAYER.

Mr. J. N. MACRAE, who was about to sail for India, asked the fellowship of the Lord's people in prayer. He remarked that prayer is of more value than money, though sometimes money is more freely given than prayer. Above all things we should seek to cherish the habit of secret prayer. It is sometimes more easy to pray in the prayer-meeting than to pray in private; but if we only believe that God loves us, and that He delights to see us come to Him just as we are, we shall have a growing confidence and joy in secret prayer.

CONFIDENCE BEFORE GOD.

Mr. J. STANCOMB: There would be no stint in prayer if only we were apprehending and enjoying the Father's love, and drinking of the Spirit in which the Lord Jesus said, "Abba, Father." It is because we are sons that God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, and has given us liberty of access to Himself. It is our privilege as children to go in and out before the Father, and to have fellowship with Christ. To this end the Holy Ghost fulfils to us the promise of the Lord, "At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." (John xiv. 20.) This is the great revelation of the Holy Ghost in this dispensation, and it is by His ministry that it becomes a divine certainty to us.

In order to draw near to God we need a perfect conscience touching the question of sin; and this we have through the perfect sacrifice of Christ. We know that God has been glorified in the Person of the Lord Jesus, and that He is now seated at the right hand of God. God, as a Judge, has been propitiated, and can say of His people, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." God is the Holy One, in whose sight the heavens are not clean, and who chargeth His angels with folly (Job iv. 18; xv. 15), and that we may draw near with confidence we need a holiness that is commensurate with the holiness of God. This we have in our great High Priest, who, with "*Holiness to Jehovah*" on His brow, ever presents Himself in the presence of God for us. We dishonour our great High Priest and His perfect sacrifice if there be any hesitation in our hearts about drawing near to God. He bears us upon His shoulders and His heart—the place of strength, and the place of affection; and He bears the iniquity of our holy things. It is seeing this that encourages us to draw near.

In dwelling upon his high estate in Christ Paul was in an ecstasy, as he said, "If we be beside ourselves it is to God." And surely, if David danced before the shadow, we may well be in an ecstasy before the substance. Being taken out of the old creation and put into the new, in Christ Jesus, shall we not triumph in God's workmanship in that new creation? And as the Holy Ghost shows us that this is our true place shall not our hearts abound with thanksgiving? The question of sin is not raised, for having been dealt with by God as a Judge, and having been condemned in the cross of the Lord Jesus, it has no power to condemn us. It has power, indeed, to cast down our souls and to interrupt our communion, and therefore we cannot be too careful about our walk, or too diligent in the matter of judging sin in the presence of God; but to judge sin we must be in the light. May the Holy Ghost enable us so to discern the finished work of the Lord Jesus, and His appearing in the presence of God for us, that it shall be our delight to draw nigh to God and worship, even as it is our heavenly Father's delight to have us in His presence in the true holiest of all!

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE IN PRAYER.

Mr. H. DYER: In our reading of the gospels we have before us a praying Christ. How the consideration of His constancy in prayer makes us feel our poverty in prayer, and our want of power for continuous prayer to our God and Father! Oh, for the holy liberty of unhindered and unrestrained prayer! Let us gaze upon a praying Christ, and cherish the spirit that, instead of growing weary, gets warmer as it goes on, being helped by abounding grace. It is blessed to know that our God does not grow weary of us when we come to Him. We tell the unsaved to say, "Just as I am, O Lamb of

God, I come!" Let us as children of God say, "Just as I am, O Father, I come."

During our absence in the colonies kind ones wrote to us of the good things you were having in these British Isles, and we were told that at one of these conferences, when prayer was the subject, beloved Robert Chapman said that, in his estimate, the first and choicest answer to prayer was power to go on praying. It was he who also once said that he found more time to pray than to write letters. If we were all measured by that simple measure, how should we stand?

In the last verse of Psalm xxvii. we read, "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord." As we wait on Jehovah He strengthens the heart, and bestows power for further waiting, and thus the last word—"Wait on Jehovah"—becomes deeper and richer than the former part of the verse.

In Luke xxii. 41 we behold Christ praying. We have the record of prayer at His baptism, prayer at His transfiguration and prayer in the garden of Gethsemane. His word to His disciples was, "Pray that ye enter not into temptation." His own prayer only deepened as He advanced. "There appeared an angel unto Him from heaven, strengthening Him," and the result was further prayer—"being in an agony He prayed *more earnestly*." But when He rose up from prayer, and returned to His disciples, He did not find them praying, but sleeping for sorrow. It is the brightness of the glory shining in that sustains the soul in prayer. A cheap penny post, busy pen and ink, and the pressure of business life, all tend to shorten our time for closet prayer; and yet there never was a day when it was more needed.

One thing that charms me about the remnant of Israel,

who will have the spirit of grace and supplication poured upon them, is that they will break up even the communion of husband and wife for the sake of prayer: "the land shall mourn . . . all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart." (Zec. xii. 12-14.) Let us seek to know something more of this personal dealing with God, making prayer our constant habit. As we lay our heads upon our pillows let our last thoughts be of God, and, as we enter upon daily duties, may we all find more time for prayer than we have ever done! In view of the fact that "the end of all things is at hand," Peter says, "Be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer."

As we find the gospel rejected, and people preferring delusion, what can we do but betake ourselves to our knees? When, after the absence of a few years, our brother Macrae goes back to his work in India, and finds that the people have become harder, and that the work is harder, what will he do? He will give himself more to prayer. What did Elijah do when Israel had apostatized from Jehovah, and the abominations of the priests of Baal filled the land? He shut himself up with God and gave himself unto prayer. So may we, amid the growing need of these days, increasingly value that liberty for prayer which our God, in His grace, has given unto us.

Mr. W. H. BENNET said: As we have been listening to these weighty words on the subject of prayer, I have been forcibly reminded of a hymn by our esteemed brother Mr. Chapman. Nothing perhaps more influences our habit of thought than the hymns we frequently have before us. The tendency of the day is to turn to those of a lighter character; but it will be found very profitable, and very helpful to our communion with God, to

meditate upon such hymns as that which I am about to repeat.

- “ Oh ! how I love in solitude,
Great God, to speak with Thee ;
For Thou, whose grace my soul renewed,
A Father art to me.
- “ With Thee how sweet to be alone,
And in full tide of prayer,
Lord God of hosts, before Thy throne
To lay the bosom bare.
- “ From Thee no secret thoughts I hide,
No mysteries of my soul ;
To Thee, whose Son was crucified,
With joy I tell the whole.
- “ Thus surely Thy confiding child,
Thy close embrace obtains ;
And by Thy friendship is beguiled
Of all his griefs and pains.
- “ For freedom to rejoice and grieve,
Where none but God is by,
All other friends full oft I leave,
Though not without a sigh.
- “ But soon the Bridegroom shall appear,
Then shall each wedding guest
Unfold to his companions dear
All secrets of his breast.”

PRAYER is a haven to the shipwrecked man, an anchor to them that are sinking in the waves, a staff to the limbs that totter, a mine of jewels to the poor, a healer of diseases, and a guardian of health. O blessed prayer ! thou art the unwearied conqueror of human woes, the firm foundation of human happiness, the source of ever-enduring joy, the mother of philosophy. The man who can pray truly, though languishing in extremest indigence, is richer than all beside ; whilst the wretch who never bowed the knee, though proudly seated as monarch of all nations, is of all men the most destitute.—
Chrysostom.

HUMAN CONFEDERACY VERSUS DIVINE POWER.

CONFEDERACY is man's remedy for his weakness, and it is the snare into which Satan endeavours to draw the children of God when, through lack of spiritual power, they lose the sense of God's presence. The world's motto is "*Union is strength*," while faith ever lays hold of the fact that GOD is "*the Strength of Israel*." (1 Sa. xv. 29.) It is when God is with His people that one shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight (De. xxxii. 30), whereas when they turn from Him "one thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one." (Isa. xxx. 17.)

In the church's early days separation to God, and the holding of His truth in the power of the Holy Ghost, kept believers together in spite of persecutions without and discord within. But when the church, yielding to worldly influences, lost the conscious power and presence of God, it began to seek other bonds of union. It was this that led to the episcopal arrangements of the third century, which ended in the catholic claims and the papal assumptions and usurpations of Rome. The idea of apostolic succession is the essential element of episcopal systems, while in dissenting and presbyterian bodies, unions and associations of various kinds are the devices whereby each denomination seeks to maintain its prestige and power. Human organizations are resorted to because the cementing and protecting power of the presence of God is lacking, and human laws are then required which virtually set aside the authority of the Word of God.

These same great lessons run through Israel's history, and "they are written for our admonition, upon whom the

ends of the ages are come." (1 Cor. x. 11.) When God had lost His place in the confidence of Israel, they sought a king who should be a confederating centre, such as all the nations had. (1 Sa. viii. 5.) God had purposely withheld a king from Israel till He should give them one after His own heart; but Saul is a fitting type of the power of the flesh in the house of God. It begins working in very humble guise, just as at the beginning Saul was little in his own eyes; but as it gains a position tyranny follows, as God forewarned Israel (*vv.* 11-18). There is apparent success, for Israel seemed stronger than before; but it breaks down in the end, as Saul died leaving Israel where he found them—under the rule of the alien. That which made Saul so desirable in the estimation of Israel was the fact that "he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward"; and fleshly rule in the church of God has always sprung from pre-eminence in intellect, learning, wealth or natural power of some kind. Even well-instructed saints forget God's warning against glorying in wisdom, might and riches. (Jer. ix. 23.)

In the days of Ahaz, when Israel had become very low and weak through forgetfulness of the God of Abraham, they formed alliances and confederacies according to their own mind, and it was then that God sent the message to those in the nation who still owned Him: "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear [*i.e.*, the object of their fear], nor be in dread. Sanctify the Lord of Hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be (to you) for a sanctuary." (Isa. viii. 12-14.) As showing the exceeding importance of this in time of weakness, Isaiah says, "The Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people" (*v.* 11). Our

God would repeat these solemn words to us, and impress them in all their power on our souls, warning us against imitating what we see around us, or seeking to strengthen ourselves by sectarian unions, confederacies and associations, in forgetfulness of the blessed truth that Jehovah of Hosts is ever with those who are with Him.

To the hearing ear all is clear; but we are dull of hearing. Let us therefore look further at the history of Israel, and the development of the church of God, and see how both by example and precept God has warned us against this principle of human confederation, which is so natural when the omnipotence of God is not realized.

What strikes one in Israel's history is the fact that they had no central source of authority after God removed Moses and Joshua, who were types of the Lord Himself. Their only centre was the tabernacle with the ark of the covenant, which was to bind their national life into one. There was no head on earth, nor was there any organized association of rulers of tribes to form a centre of authority. God was their King, and was ready to be their defence against all their enemies. In all their difficulties, whether arising from within or without, they were to consult God at His tabernacle, by means of the high priest who wore the breastplate of judgment with its Urim and Thummim—the types to us of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. They were gathered around the one Name of Jehovah the God of Israel, and this made them God's house, in which at the first Moses was a servant. (Heb. iii. 5.)

So with the church of God. The apostles were appointed by the Lord Himself, and they laid the foundation on which the whole spiritual temple is reared by invisible growth, to be manifested in visible unity and harmony hereafter. Then will be the perfect fulfilment of our Lord's prayer in John xvii. At present it is a "spiritual

house" (1 Pet. ii. 5) and is not discerned by the natural eye; for spiritually we are quickened together with Christ, and raised up together and seated together in heavenly places. (Eph. ii. 5, 6.) It is to this heavenly building that the apostle points in Heb. xii. when he says, "Ye are come unto . . . the church of the firstborn ones written in heaven." It is of this that he speaks in Eph. ii. 20, 21—a building having its chief corner stone in heaven; and we see it in its glorious completeness in Rev. xxi. and xxii. The church as a complete whole is never spoken of as on earth, for as a whole it is essentially heavenly. If it be considered as a *building*, the chief corner-stone, which is the bond of the whole, is in heaven; and if it be regarded as a *body*, the Head is in heaven. We certainly cannot speak of the body as on earth when the Head is in heaven, or describe the building as on earth when the chief corner-stone is in heaven.

Immediately after his reference to the building in heaven in Eph. ii. the apostle turns to the local assembly in Ephesus, which had a visible existence and of which the heavenly was the model: "In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." Thus while the church as a whole will only be manifested in the future, the local assembly has its visible manifestation to the world now, and should truly represent that heavenly reality which faith alone can discern. This involves solemn responsibilities on the part of all in the assembly towards one another and also towards other assemblies. Should an assembly depart from fundamental truth and godliness, all inter-communion must cease; but in this each assembly can only act for itself before God. Yet, when such departure is clearly evidenced in the light of the truth of God, we may expect oneness of action in all assemblies, just as there is oneness of

mind in any case of individual discipline where the facts manifestly call for the carrying out of the plain Word of God. All this, however, is very different from a confederation that takes assemblies from the place of simple individual dependence upon the Lord, and forms a centre where high-handedness and dictatorial pride find scope.

The apostle, when dividing mankind into their integral parts, describes the human family under three heads—the Jews, the Gentiles and the church of God. (1 Cor. x. 32.) The latter embraces all who are members of the heavenly family, and who therefore have ceased to be either Jews or Gentiles. Local assemblies are spoken of as “the churches of God.” Such were spiritually united to one another by a common faith, each standing in the sevenfold unity of the Spirit described in Eph. iv. They were not organically united, but stood, like the seven candlesticks of Rev. i., ii., iii., each on its own basis, and each responsible alone for the condition in which it was found by Him who walked among them. If signs of inter-local responsibility were to be found anywhere, we might surely look for them in the epistles to the seven churches; but of such there is not a vestige. So too in the other epistles the churches are addressed as responsible to the Lord alone, and not to one another, except, of course, for any knowledge each church might have of the spiritual state of other churches, and for consequent thanksgiving or prayer.*

All through the Acts the same absence of dependence of churches one on another is manifest. The conference mentioned in Acts xv., which was oecumenical in its character, was so only because the apostles were still there. As they passed away, this outward bond ceased, and so when Paul was leaving the elders at Ephesus he com-

* A servant of the Lord seeking, in responsibility to Him and in brotherly love, to *help* in another church, is quite a different matter.

mended them to God and to the Word of His grace. In the same manner when Peter contemplated His death he did not point to successors, or to combinations of elders or overseers; but he left them all that God had given him to leave—his own epistles and the whole written Word of God. (2 Pet. i. 12-21; iii. 1, 15, 16.)

It may seem strange that the Lord left no delegated authority to any combination of elders or teachers; but it is a simple fact that He did not, and the reason is not far to seek. His object was to cast His people individually on Himself, and to cast each local assembly on Himself. All experience has shown that the assumption of delegated authority leads to pride and apostasy. It is as true in our assemblies as in our personal experience, that when we are weak then only are we strong.

Human combinations and rule accomplish much. God uses them as He used Saul; but for all that, He teaches His own lesson, which is that in choosing a Saul, or turning to human devices, we virtually reject Him. Though God in grace wrought for Israel through Saul, they had to learn on mount Gilboa that God was true. Their setting aside of God and His sole authority and power led, as it ever will, to such a defeat as showed that God is not mocked, and that therefore as we violate His principles we must suffer loss.

It is with profound sorrow that we see around us, amongst God's simple assemblies, tendencies to an outward organization that can only result in the formation of another sect, with its walls and its bolts and bars. Hitherto we have had our "unwalled villages" that have a claim on God to show Himself as a "wall of fire" round about us, if only we walk with Him. It is ever thought by man that it is better to have some human wall of defence. Thus all the sects of Christendom

stand, whether enslaved by State control, or under the thralldom of a Pope or other human authority. And now those who have come out of all sects and systems are in danger of returning by a back door to the very thing they have left. Sectarianism is one of the works of the flesh enumerated in Gal. v.—“strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, heresies” or parties (*margin, v. 20, R.V.*)—and when it finds a lodgment in our hearts, and is not expelled by the “love, joy, peace” of the Spirit, the sectarian *condition* of soul will sooner or later find a sectarian *position* for itself. It may take the high title of *separation from evil*, in forgetfulness of the fact that it is as great a sin to separate from good, as not to separate from evil, except under direct obedience to positive precept in the Word of God.

Let us ever remember that a wrong *condition*, which is inward, is ever more defiling to the soul and more injurious to spiritual life than a wrong *position*, which is outward. Thus, we praise God for the unsectarian condition of soul of so many who are still held in the bonds of a sectarian position, while we mourn over the sectarian condition of some who boast of an unsectarian position. We may learn from the Word of the Lord that the only way to secure an outward position is to maintain an inward condition: “Cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.” (Matt. xxiii. 26.) Everything that is contrary to this is, in the judgment of Him who tries the reins and the hearts, but hypocrisy. May our God save us from all sectarian combinations, and make us, as an unleavened lump, true to His truth. May we seek more than ever to give God His place, for only as we do so shall we truly maintain fellowship with all who are Christ’s, and carry out the whole Word of God.

H. G.

QUIETNESS AND CONFIDENCE.

PSALM iv.

THE fourth psalm probably has reference to the same circumstances that are referred to in the title of the third. It breathes the spirit of true confidence in God, and therefore of true quietness of heart. It was a psalm for the chief musician, who led the praises of Israel, and it was to be played upon *neginoth*, *i.e.*, *stringed instruments*. It sets forth Jehovah as the object of His people's trust and the source of their blessedness (*vv.* 6, 7), and therefore was to be accompanied with a joyous instrument. This may remind us of the joy with which we should appear before our God.

Jehovah's anointed one appeals to Him in his trouble: "*Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness.*" He elsewhere speaks of God as "the God of my mercy" (Ps. lix. 10), for the mercy he received and the righteousness in which he stood alike came from God. He gratefully acknowledges past help—"Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress"—and is thus encouraged still to plead, "*Be gracious unto me, and hear my prayer.*" If we receive favours from men we fear to go on asking for more, lest we weary those who bestow them. It is not so with God. The remembrance of deliverance and help received in the past only encourages the soul to wait upon Him with expectation as fresh necessities arise. He delights to give, and is glorified with that worship which is the fruit of deliverance. (Ps. l. 15, 23.)

In *v.* 2 David expostulates with those who were refusing to own the royal dignity which God had bestowed upon him, and were following the deceitful policy of

Absalom ; “ *O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? How long will ye love vanity, and seek after falsehood?* ” This is the way of men still. They set at nought the “glory” of God’s Anointed One, they love what is empty and transient, and their actions give expression to the disposition of their hearts. Those who have learnt in any measure to own the glory of Christ, and to set their “affection on things above” are debtors to God’s infinite grace.

“ *But know that,* ” whatever the opinions and practices of men may be, they cannot frustrate the counsel of “*the Lord,*” who “*hath set apart him that is godly for Himself.*” The word for *godly* denotes one who is an object of divine choice and favour. (Ps. lxxxvi. 2, *marg.*) The one whom the Lord in sovereign mercy has chosen He has set apart for Himself—for His own glory and praise, and nothing can prevent the carrying out of His purpose. As one has said, “Is David ‘set apart’ for the kingdom of Israel? Saul shall not be able to detain, nor Absalom to wrest it from him. Is Messiah ordained to be King of the Israel of God? Death and hell shall not prevent it. Are His disciples appointed to reign with Him? Infallibly they shall.” Such assurance, however, leads not to slothfulness, but to prayer, “*The Lord will hear when I call unto Him.*”

Some consider *v. 4* to be an exhortation to David’s followers not to give place to *unholy wrath* against the rebels. Others regard it as a continuation of the address to the latter, and render, “*Tremble and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.*” In the silence of the night reflect upon your course, and be still in self-condemnation before God. (Rom. iii. 19.) It is only when any of us are brought to this that we can “*offer the sacrifices of righteousness.*”

It is when the sons of Levi are purged and purified that they will offer "an offering in righteousness," and it is when the sinner's mouth is closed in self-judgment that God opens his lips to offer "the sacrifice of praise." (Mal. iii. 3; Ps. li. 15.) Those who are thus taught of God will not *trust* in their sacrifices, as the formalist does; but, while offering them with a contrite heart, will carry out the second part of the precept—"and put your trust in the Lord."

Still, as of old, "*there be many that say, Who will show us any good?*" But vain indeed is their question while they persist in turning their back upon the Fount of all good. The one who knows God to be such says, "*Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us.*" He longs for that blessing which the ministry of the great High Priest is designed to secure (Num. vi. 24-26), and seeks not the portion that men of the world seek. *They* are glad when there is an abundance of the good things of earth; but the child of God, while gratefully owning the kindness of God in bestowing the things of this life, possesses a gladness that is above them, and independent of them (Hab. iii. 17, 18): "*Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.*"

Joy in the Lord gives confidence, and therefore the psalmist concludes, "*I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.*" As one free from anxiety though beset by difficulties, in peace though surrounded by foes, he will lie down and sleep, confiding in Him from whom alone safety comes. "Except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps. cxxvii. 1); but when He guards His own no foe can injure them.

“WITHOUT THE CAMP.”

To apprehend the meaning of any particular expression in Scripture it is necessary to consider the context, and it is through inattention to this rule that erroneous or imperfect interpretations are often given. With a view therefore to a more perfect understanding of the exhortation to go forth unto Jesus outside the camp, let us seek prayerfully to ponder the weighty verses that come between the twofold mention of leaders or guides in Heb. xiii. 7, 17. These verses furnish us with several most important exhortations, based, as all exhortations are, upon great doctrinal statements.

The eighth verse should not be linked with the preceding verse as though it meant that Jesus Christ was “the end of their conversation.” It is an absolute assurance of the eternal *sameness* of our adorable Lord, though as such it is closely linked both with what precedes and what follows. In *v.* 7 the Hebrew believers are exhorted to *remember* their guides who had spoken to them the Word of God, and had been removed from them by death, while in *v.* 17 they are charged to *obey* those guides who were still with them, and, as true bishops, were watching for their souls.

Now in contrast with those who had thus been taken from them the writer assures them that there is One who can never be removed. Under-shepherds may be called away; but “the great Shepherd of the sheep” abides; human guides may reach the end of their divinely appointed time of service and enter into their rest; but “Jesus Christ is yesterday and to-day the same, and for ever.” Between yesterday and to-day night has inter-

vened, and night will come between to-day and to-morrow ; but our blessed Lord has no to-morrow. He had *one* night, but can never know a second. His *yesterday* had an end, but not a beginning ; it goes back into the depths of eternity, before any creature existed ; but it terminated at the cross. That was His *night*. Even in incarnation there was no break in the perfect fellowship of the Father and the Son. The Son took a new *position* ; but every step from Bethlehem to Calvary was taken, and every act of public service was rendered in the full joy of that Word, "He that sent Me is with Me." (John viii. 29.) At Calvary we have a break—not indeed the *cessation* of communion, for on the part of the Son there were perfect obedience and perfect trust, and on the part of the Father perfect delight in that obedience and confidence ; but the fellowship of *joy* gave place to the unparalleled sorrow which was the portion of Christ, when, as the Surety of His people, He received the stroke of inflexible justice for their deliverance. Then He had the sense of being *forsaken*. That was His night of darkness—a darkness relieved only by His assurance of what God was to Him, and by the prospect of the joy that was set before Him. Then in resurrection He entered upon His *eternal day* : "For Thou [O Jehovah !] hast made Him most blessed *for ever* : Thou hast made Him exceeding glad with Thy countenance." (Ps. xxi. 6.) We learn from the record of His life on earth what He was *yesterday*, and welcome to our hearts is the assurance that He is "the same" in this *to-day* of His ministry above for us—the same in His tenderness and watchfulness, in His love and faithfulness—yea, the same *for ever*.

Out of this precious statement of the unchangeableness of Christ springs the command, "*Be not carried away* [R.V.] with divers and strange doctrines." The

object of all divine teaching is to attract the heart to, and fix it upon, Christ; and everything that would come between the soul and Him is a "strange doctrine." The doctrine of which Christ is the centre is summed up in the word "*grace*"; while the alien doctrines of Judaism are comprehended in the term "*meats*." (Comp. chap. ix. 10.) The Mosaic dispensation was a dispensation of externals; external observances procured benefits and averted penalties; the present dispensation is, on the contrary, a dispensation of spiritual realities. Such a system of externals had its proper place till Christ came; but to attempt to revive the shadows, now that Christ who is the substance has come, is to put Him into the background. "We have an altar" of which those who cleave to that system have no right to eat. Christ Himself is both our altar and our sacrifice. To eat of the sacrifice is to partake of the altar (1 Cor. x. 18); and the only and all-sufficient food provided for us is the flesh and blood of Him who, as our great sin-offering, suffered outside the gate of the holy city.

That those who cleave to the Jewish ritual, which pointed forward to Christ and was fulfilled in Him, have no right to eat the heavenly food of the great sin-offering is proved by their own law: "for the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp." The law is stated in Lev. vi. 30; but the special reference here is to the sin-offering of the day of atonement, the blood of which was sprinkled in the holiest, while the victim was entirely consumed outside the camp. No one might partake of that *typical* sacrifice; and no one remaining under the law of Moses can partake of the *antitypical* sacrifice, of Whom the apostle says, "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with

His own blood, suffered without the gate." Our attention is fixed upon the *place* where the Lord suffered, showing that nothing is without its significance in connection with His death. He did not go to the temple and there, amid heavenly manifestations or imposing ceremonies that would have silenced all opposition and attracted universal attention, offer Himself to God. He suffered Himself to be taken as a malefactor, delivered to the Gentiles, cast out of the holy city, and executed as a criminal. He permitted men, in their enmity and wickedness, to carry out *their* will, that He, in infinite love to God His Father and to those whom the Father had given to Him, might accomplish *God's* will. That will was the sanctification of "*the people*." This grand title, which in the Old Testament belongs to Israel, is here given to all the redeemed, while the word "*sanctify*" comprehends the whole atoning and purifying work of the Lord Jesus. It expresses nothing less than the rescuing of "the people" from their *far off* condition, purging them from their *defilement* and setting them in the very glory of God's presence as priests who are *worthy* to worship there. To accomplish this He *suffered*—a word on which we should dwell with loving reverence—outside the gate. Then in resurrection He entered "with His own blood," that is, in all the enduring fragrance and fulness and sufficiency of His atoning death, into the true holiest—the heaven of heavens, and thus opened the way for us.

Only as we take into our very hearts the solemn truth that Jesus "*suffered* without the gate," and learn something of what He suffered, are we prepared to respond to the exhortation that springs out of that great fact, "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." The work accomplished by Him in that

outside place brings us inside the veil as *worshippers*; therefore we are called to go outside the camp as *pilgrims*, and nothing but our apprehension of our standing as worshippers will enable us to go forth unto Him as those who in heart and spirit are not of the world. There is here a very evident reference to that solemn time in the history of Israel when the camp had become defiled by idolatry and licentiousness. The people had virtually rejected God and His servant Moses, "and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt, saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us." (Acts vii. 39, 40.) They wanted what was *visible*, and could not by faith worship an unseen God and wait for an unseen mediator. Then it was that "Moses took the tabernacle [*i.e.*, the *tent*] and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the tent of the congregation. And it came to pass that every one who sought the Lord went out unto the tent of the congregation which was without the camp." (Ex. xxxiii. 7.)

Once again the leaders of the system of which Jerusalem had become the centre and the symbol, deliberately rejected God in the person of His "holy Servant Jesus," and therefore all who really sought the Lord were called to "go forth" from the earthly system and the "worldly sanctuary," owning Christ as the way—the only way—to the Father, and bearing the reproach of the rejected One. Jerusalem was Israel's centre, and, *as a nation*, their hopes never rose above it. Even those of the national Israel who formed part of the true Israel of God were never called into outward separation from the nation, however much in heart and spirit they found themselves in a truly separate place. But with the revelation of a heavenly calling comes, in greater distinctness, the revelation of a heavenly city—Jerusalem which is above; and

the one who is really at home in heaven is a stranger on earth, and thus a true follower "of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." (Heb. vi. 12.) Hence as a further encouragement to "go forth unto Him" the writer adds, "for here have we no continuing city, but we are seeking the one that is to come." We do not seek it as if there were any doubt about finding it; but with the assurance that it is our eternal *home*, and that all our treasures are there.

The application of all this to the present circumstances and condition of Christendom is not very difficult to those who see in any measure the heavenly calling of the church of God. What is popularly known as Christianity is really a compound of Christianity, Judaism and Paganism. Soon after the removal of the apostles and those who had been taught by them, men turned from the simplicity of Christ, and, in order to *dignify* the church and make it acceptable to the world, really *degraded* it into a semi-Jewish system, to which in time were added certain pagan rites, the result being the amalgamation of the church and the world, and the confusion we see around us. At different times and in varied measures some, who were exercised before God and studied His Word, endeavoured to get rid of what they deemed contrary to Scripture, and, enquiring for "the old paths" and "the good way," sought to walk therein, even though the many still said, "We will not walk therein." (Jer. vi. 16.) As those who thus sought to pursue a fresh path increased in numbers a name was given to them, which in course of time they *adopted*, and in this manner were formed most of the denominations of Christendom. Seldom has there been the giving up of *everything* that Scripture did not warrant, and, through the growth of what was allowed of traditional Christianity, history soon repeated itself.

At the present time instead of there being any repenting of the sins of former days, religious leaders, generally speaking, are only seeking to complete what their predecessors began in the downward course. Some are more than ever bent upon a fuller revival of Jewish and Pagan sacerdotalism, while others are *advancing*, as they say, in "free thought," that is, in infidelity. Great as is the antagonism between these two lines, they are both essentially of the world and not of God, and they are one in rejecting Christ as the only way to the Father, in denying the heavenly calling and hope of the church of God, and in appealing to sight instead of to faith. In all this we may readily discern "the camp" of which this chapter speaks. But Christ and His cross are outside this camp, and therefore to us the exhortation comes with much force, "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach."

Not a few have definitely endeavoured to obey this command, as their consciences bear witness, and they have not been without the "reproach" that must ever fall upon those who in allegiance to Christ turn from traditional teachings and established customs, and make it their aim to be well-pleasing unto Him. When such reproach is borne in the meekness of Him to Whom they have gone forth there is no cause for fear, but rather of joy, since blessing will surely follow. But in a different direction there are dangers, which may well cause serious alarm, lest they lead to a departing from the simplicity of Christ, and falling again into sectarianism, and thus becoming but another part of the great "camp."

There are two strong principles at work which, unless by God's grace they be checked, will surely hasten this sad result. One is the tendency to worldly ease and conformity, even whilst taking an outside position of

separation from the world ecclesiastically ; the other is the disposition to look upon ourselves as the *only* persons who are seeking to go forth unto Christ outside the camp ; and these two things very frequently go together.

Some speak as though gathering in a scriptural manner in our public meetings to the name of the Lord were the whole fulfilment of this exhortation in Heb. xiii. 13, thus limiting its application to the few hours of each week that we spend in meetings, and overlooking the fact that going forth unto Him is to characterize our whole course on earth. Now it is certain that if our gathering to the name of the Lord be a *reality*, and we have the remembrance of His death ever in our hearts, we shall be "outside the camp" always ; our houses will be to us but tents, and our whole life but a great opportunity for serving Christ and living to Him. But this is very different from luxury in household arrangements and family life, and the flowing on with the world in many other respects, accompanied perhaps by rigid separation from many of the Lord's people. If we pursue the course of this world in business, in the ordinary walks of life, and in the family circle, we may meet as we will, but it is vain to talk of being with the crucified Christ "*outside the camp.*"

The question has been asked, Does this scripture show that all Christians who do not gather only to the name of the Lord Jesus are *inside* "the camp" ? If "the camp" points to worldly Christianity—*i.e.*, to any system of worship in which people can get on very well without spiritual life—then those who are in such systems of Christianity are of necessity inside the camp. But it behoves us to be very careful how *we* pronounce sentence upon God's own children. Just as with a *form* of what is simple in worship we may be most truly *inside* the camp in heart and spirit, so it is possible that the Searcher of

hearts may see many in reality *outside* the camp who do not take the stand we do. Association with evil in religious systems may vary much in degree. In limited spheres some may think they are not identified with the evils which they deplore in their denominations, and God alone can rightly judge as to the measure of their responsibility. There are also many who truly desire to go forth unto Christ, but who shrink from separating from believers with whom they have long been associated, from the fear of causing divisions. Moreover they cannot stand alone, and if they look at those who, as they fully acknowledge, take a more simple place, the first thing that meets their eye is their divided condition, and they naturally say, How are we to decide which is right? The failure of those who have sought the way of truth cannot justify others in remaining where Christ and His truth are set aside; but it is not for us to say *that only those who assemble after a certain pattern are in heart true to Christ*. This at least is certain, that instead of priding ourselves upon any position we occupy and condemning others, it becomes us to humble ourselves that the state of many assemblies of God's children tends to keep other Christians inside “the camp” rather than to draw them out of it. Yet let us not think or speak as though it did not matter how we assemble; let us seek rather to be with Christ outside the camp in *every* sense, and let us be assured that in so far as we do go forth *unto* HIM He will both acknowledge and approve our fidelity.

The next two verses, which are too full for a closing paragraph, must form the subject of another paper, if the Lord will.*

W. H. B.

* It may be well to remark that this paper and that on *Human Confederacy* were written quite independently.

“THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM.”

THIS expression is first used in Matt. iv. 23. It occurs again in ix. 35 and in xxiv. 14. It is also found in Mark i. 14; Luke iv. 43 (Greek), and perhaps elsewhere. What does the term mean? Simply this, that the king was come to claim royal rights and to give royal blessing. The rights were acknowledged by every one who owned Him as the Son of David; the blessings (*i.e.*, *temporal* blessings) were received by all whom He healed of their diseases, or fed by His bounteous hand.

When the Jews' rejection of Jesus was evident (Matt. xii. 23, 24) He began to teach in parables; and, in explaining some of them to His disciples, He spoke of the *mysteries* of the kingdom. He thus intimated that from that time the kingdom of God would be taken from Israel (Matt. xxi. 43), and would be given to those only who would bring forth its fruits.

In the coming age of millennial glory this kingdom will be manifest. Christ will openly reign on earth, will receive universal homage as sovereign Lord, and will be the Author of earthly blessings such as are sung of in Psalm lxxii. But, though the kingdom is not now manifest, it nevertheless exists. Though not seen by the men of this generation (Luke xvii. 20) it is yet among them (21, *margin*), and is a reality confessed and enjoyed by believers. The apostles preached it to those whom they were seeking to convert to God (Acts xvii. 7; xx. 25; xxviii. 31); and taught to the brethren its present power and blessing. (Rom. xiv. 17; Col. i. 13.)

The expressions “the kingdom of heaven,” the kingdom of Christ (Rev. xi. 15), “the kingdom of God,” and

“the kingdom of His dear Son” (Col. i. 14), do not denote different kingdoms, but one. These terms present the one kingdom from different points of view.

Some explanation may be added as to Matt. xxiv. 14, “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.” In this instance “then” means *at that time*. The Lord is answering the question put to Him by the disciples in *v. 3*. It appears, therefore, that while the gospel has been preached with more or less diligence for nearly nineteen centuries, a time is coming when there will be, much more than at present, a very definite and wide-spread preaching of the gospel of the *kingdom*. Alas! few servants of God now preach or teach *the kingdom*. Hence the general self-will and laxity of Christians, and the feebleness of their hope. Important as it is to preach grace, grace is but one aspect of the gospel; the kingdom is another, and is of equal importance. So thought Paul, as we see from the record of his preaching in the Acts, and of his teaching in his Epistles. The book of the Revelation contains many allusions to the King. While His praise is, during the time of the Antichrist, being sung in heaven (ix. 15; xv. 3), may we not suppose that those who witness for Him on earth, exposed as they are to the most terrible persecutions, will give emphatic prominence in their preaching to the kingship of Christ? Is not this, too, included in the testimony of the angel who, flying in mid-heaven, preaches to all on the earth the everlasting gospel? (Chap. xiv. 6, 7.)

It may be further remarked that in the passage above referred to (Matt. xxiv. 14) the expressions “all the world” and “all nations” do not mean that every single nation must have the witness of the gospel given to it. The word “all” is characteristic. The allusion is by way

of contrast to the hitherto restrictive aspect of the message. When our Lord was on earth He said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Chap. xv. 24); and, on His sending forth the twelve, His command was, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles." After the resurrection this restriction was removed, and the word was, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations." (xxviii. 19.) How Peter and Paul understood this we see from their recorded preaching in the Acts of the Apostles. All through that book this universality of the message of salvation is recognized, though it is more especially so from chap. x. to chap. xxviii.

J. C.

A QUIET MIND.

THE following verses were written by the late JOHN PLUNKETT, of Lisburn, Ireland, who since the 1st of January, 1890, has been "absent from the body and at home with the Lord." His age was 83.

I have a treasure which I prize ;
 Its like I cannot find ;
 There's nothing like it on the earth ;
 'Tis this—A QUIET MIND.

But 'tis not that I'm stupefied,
 Or, senseless, dull, or blind ;
 'Tis God's own peace within my heart,
 Which forms my QUIET MIND.

I found this treasure at the Cross ;
 And there to every kind
 Of weary heavy-laden souls,
 Christ gives a QUIET MIND.

My Saviour's death and risen life,
 To give it were designed ;
 And that's the root and that's the branch
 Of this my QUIET MIND.

The love of God within my breast,
 My heart to Him doth bind ;
 This is the peace of heaven on earth—
 This is my QUIET MIND.

I've many a cross to take up now,
 And many left behind ;
 But present troubles move me not,
 Nor shake my QUIET MIND.

And what may be to-morrow's cross,
 I never seek to find ;
 My Saviour says, " Leave that to Me,"
 And keep a QUIET MIND.

And well I know the Lord hath said,
 To make my heart resign'd,
 That mercy still shall follow those
 Who have this QUIET MIND.

I meet with pride of wit and wealth,
 And scorn, and looks unkind ;
 It matters not—I envy none,
 While I've a QUIET MIND.

I'm waiting now to see my Lord,
 Who's been to me so kind ;
 I want to thank Him face to face,
 For this my QUIET MIND.

REVISED VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.*

XXIV.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS (*continued*).

LXXXV. 4—" Turn to us " M. v. 6—" not quicken." v. 11—" Truth springeth . . . r. hath looked," the latter precedes the former. v. 13—" shall make his footsteps a way (to walk in)".

LXXXVI. 2—" I am godly." v. 7—" cry . . . all the day long."

LXXXVII. 4—" this one was born," so v. 6. v. 5—" This one and that one," *i.e.*, many men were born there, but God only reckons (v. 6) that *this one was born there, i.e.*, Christ. v. 7—" They that sing as well as they that dance (shall say), All my fountains are in thee."

* All quotations from R.V. without comment are regarded as improvements. R.M. means *Revised margin*; A.M., *Authorized margin*; a denotes the first part of a verse; b, the second.

LXXXVIII. 5a—"Cast off," or cast adrift. v. 9—"Mine eye wasteth away." v. 10, 12—"wonder" is sing. not pl., pointing to God's great wonder, *resurrection*; it is the same in 89. 5, which gives the answer to the questions here.

LXXXIX. 1—Ren. "the *lovingkindnesses*," and cf. 88, 11. v. 5b—"the *assembly of the holy ones*." v. 7—"A God very terrible in the council of the *holy ones*, and to be feared above all." v. 8—"who is a *mighty one*, like unto thee, O JAH? and thy f. is round." v. 9—"pride of the sea." v. 14—"Righteousness and j. are the *foundations*." v. 18—"For our *shield* belongeth unto the Lord; even to the Holy One of Israel our King," M. v. 19—"holy one" should be *godly one*," as De. 33. 8 (see note), it is different from the word in v. 18, which is always used of God. In the pl. it is well ren. *saints*; but here the R. V. adopts the pl. without sufficient warrant. v. 33—Ren. as A. M., "I will not make void from him"; the word *utterly* impairs the sense. v. 37b—"and as the f. w. in the sky," i. e. the rainbow. v. 38—"and rejected." 47b—"for what vanity hast thou created all the children of men!" v. 48b—"That shall deliver." v. 49b—"in thy faithfulness."

BOOK IV.

XC. 1.—The word for *Lord* here and v. 17 is *Adonai*, not *Jehovah*, as the capitals of the A. V. would imply. The word for "dwelling-place" is nearly identical with that ren. "refuge" in Deut. 33. 27. It also occ. Ps. 91. 9, and thus connects these psalms with Moses. vv. 5-9—We would ren. all these verbs by the past tense; Moses is looking back on the wilderness journey. v. 9b—"we bring [or brought] our years to an end, as." v. 10—"their *pride*," i. e., when at its zenith, "soon gone." v. 11—"thy fear" means the fear due to Thee, as R. V. v. 14—"satisfy us in the morning," cf. 30. 5; 46. 5, M; 92. 2. v. 16—"glory upon." v. 17—"Beauty" is the same word as in Zec. 11. 7, 10 and Ps. 27. 4; it occ. besides only in Prov. and is ren. "pleasant" three times.

XCI. The Rabbins regarded this psalm as the language of Moses, and so probably we should look upon Ps. 92. v. 1b—Ren. "shall lodge at night," see A. M. and cf. Ex. 12. 22. The shadow speaks of God's hospitality, as the secret place does of His protection; cf. 25. 13, M. v. 4—"with His *pinions*." "shalt thou take refuge." v. 9—"For thou, O LORD, art my refuge! thou hast made the Most High thy habitation," or better *dwelling-place*, as Ps. 90. 1. v. 12—The Heb. for "set his love upon" is rare, and expresses ardent affection; it occ. of God in De. 7. 7; 10. 15; of man Gen. 34. 8; De. 21. 11.

XCII. 7—Ren. "When the wicked flourish (*it is*) as the grass," marking the contrast with v. 12. v. 13—Ren. "shall be made to flourish." v. 14—"and green," as A. M.

MINISTRY GODWARD AND MANWARD,

AS EMBRACED IN THE SACRIFICES OF HEB. XIII. 15, 16.

FROM verses 10 to 14 of this chapter we are taught that God's people are, by the blood of Christ, brought inside the veil as worshippers and outside the camp as strangers, and now these verses bring before us the twofold ministry of those who are thus both God's priests and God's pilgrims. They already have access in spirit to the heavenly sanctuary, and have a definite ministry *Godward*; but as yet their feet are treading the wilderness pathway that leads to the city of habitation, and they have a ministry to *fellow-pilgrims* and to *all* around them.

I. MINISTRY GODWARD.

In chap. x. we learn that, as one great result of the perfect work of Christ, believers have "boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus"; and they are exhorted to make full use of that blessed liberty of access. This privilege is again set before us in the words, "*By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.*" The word "therefore" shows the link with what precedes. Because Christ "suffered without the gate" the exhortation is, "let us *therefore* go forth unto Him" (v. 13); He has likewise sanctified us "with His own blood," let us *therefore* enter the sanctuary with our sacrifices (v. 15). When Aaron and his sons were consecrated as priests to God, their hands were filled with an offering to present to Him (Lev. viii. 27); and believers, as God's consecrated priests, have a great sacrifice to offer, even "the sacrifice of praise," which is

further described as "the fruit of our lips." In a coming day, Israel will learn to say, "Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips." (Hos. xiv. 2.) But while God's chosen nation still withholds from Him the glory due to His name, those whom He has called out, both from Israel and the Gentiles, are taught to "glorify God for His mercy." We are often reminded that for anything to be worthy of God's acceptance it must be "*of Him*," and so with reference to this sacrifice we read, "*I create the fruit of the lips.*" He does this by speaking peace to the heart, and healing all diseases of the soul—"Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him." (Isa. lvii. 19.)

How high and holy is the business of worship! It is indeed a heavenly occupation, and it will ever be carried on with joy by all God's "heavenly" people (1 Cor. xv. 48); but it begins upon earth. At best we form a very feeble conception of what worship is to God; but the higher our estimate of it becomes, the greater will be our diligence to cherish the spirit of praise, and to shun everything that would hinder it. God delights in the worship of "ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands" (Rev. v. 11) of "elect angels" that "do His commandments," and He will ever delight in it; but for the highest worship He looks not to them. By a single act of almighty power He could surround Himself with innumerable hosts of those glorious beings whose joy it is to adore and serve Him; but the richest worship of heaven costs more than an act of omnipotence. The songs of holy angels glorify Him; but their songs lack that choicest fragrance which is His supreme delight.

If we would form some estimate of the worth of our worship, let us consider the fact that were it not for the

atonement death of the Son of God, no breath of praise could ever have risen from the heart of any child of Adam; therefore every breath of true worship is fragrant with the precious sacrifice of Calvary. This is not all. But for the renewing grace of the Spirit of God not one of us would ever bow in His presence with a contrite heart, and therefore all worship is the fruit of the Spirit. We should also observe that angels worship simply as creatures, though they are very high and very glorious. God's redeemed people do not worship simply as creatures, but *as children*. It is the peculiar privilege of those who are rescued from their lost estate, and brought nigh to God by precious blood, to address Him by that sacred title which no creature *as such* could ever utter. The Son of God alone had the right to call God *Father*; but this right and ability He bestows upon all who receive Him. (John i. 12.) So really are they one with Himself, that before He left the world He could say, "I ascend unto *My* Father, and *your* Father; and to *My* God and *your* God": and now from the heaven of heavens His word of grace to us is, "O magnify Jehovah *with Me*, and let *us* exalt His name *together*." (John xx. 17; Ps. xxxiv. 3.) Faith hears His voice, and the lowly heart responds with the "sacrifice of praise."

This was the worship that the Father *sought* (John iv. 23) through the mighty work of Christ. It was to surround Himself with a blessed family of children who, being one with His beloved Son, should address Him as *Father*; and a holy company of priests who should worship *with* as well as *by* the great High Priest, that He yielded up His Son to the death of the cross, and called Him from the grave to a priesthood that abides for ever. One great aim of the Spirit of God throughout Scripture is to lead us to worship, and to guard us from what would

hinder true worship; and the call to worship in chap. xiii. is the most natural conclusion of this great Epistle. God redeemed Israel, and instructed them, that they might worship Him (Ex. iii. 12); and now God has redeemed and instructed us as His children, that we may worship. He is pleased to tell us that "whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me"; and as we do so we prove the truth of the word, "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O most High!"

Is it then any wonder that Satan should use all his subtlety and power to hinder or corrupt that worship? How soon Israel "forsook God" (De. xxxii. 15), and brought upon themselves the charge, "Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them"! (Acts vii. 43.) And, while the charge may truly be brought against Christendom at large that they have made their own objects of worship, it is still more sad to have to own that the worship of those really born of God has been much corrupted and hindered through the perversion of His truth. The first utterance of the Spirit in the church at Pentecost was an outflow of worship (Acts ii. 4); and those who received Christ through the testimony of Peter and his companions joined them in "praising God" (v. 47). When the Spirit "fell on" the Gentiles "which heard the word," those who accompanied Peter were astonished because "they heard them speak with tongues and *magnify God*." (Acts x. 44-46.) Worship was the natural response of hearts that had found all they needed in Christ, and were happy in God. To the question, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" the soul can only reply, "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." (Ps. cxvi. 12, 13.) The call of distress (v. 4) being

answered, there is the call to praise, as *v.* 17 says, "I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord."

As soon as saints were "corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ," and the "guides" of the flock became *priests* in a Jewish or heathen sense, the common priesthood of believers was forgotten; they were kept at a distance from God, and worship of necessity withered and died in all who allowed the pretensions of a self-constituted priesthood. Then, the ministry of the Spirit in the church being hindered, *priests* required formal *liturgies*, and, the distinction between the church and the world being ignored, an effort was made to frame these liturgies for *general* use, and thus the distinction became obliterated. This is the principle still acted upon where liturgies are in use. The consequence is that those who are not born of God are treated as worshippers, and those whom God has made His children are kept in the place of distance, while their worship is hindered by the formalities which surround them.

Where liturgies have been discarded, worship is too often given quite a secondary place, the prominent part of the service being the sermon, to which the hymns or prayers are regarded simply as preliminary. A well-known and true servant of God in defending this says, "Let us remember that true spiritual preaching is also praising God, and declaring His name." That all preaching should be in the spirit of worship there can be no question, and all true preaching leads to worship; but this is very different from saying that it *is* worship. In worship we speak to *God*; in preaching we speak to *men*.

Most readers of these pages are accustomed to meetings that are definitely stated to be for *worship and the breaking of bread*; but many of such are doubtless conscious

that it is often found difficult to make the high and holy business of worship the first and chief part of a meeting. It seems easier to speak to one another than to God ; to *talk of* worship than *to worship*. There can be no doubt that the very effort to worship God in simplicity causes those who make it to be special objects of the great enemy's assaults, and they have therefore great need of watchfulness and prayer in this particular matter. Is not lack of power in public worship an evidence of the lack of the spirit of worship in private ? We are surrounded with everything that is calculated to hinder that spirit. The terrible pressure of business life, the style of family life, and the lack of quiet for meditation and prayer, all tend to this. We cannot *get up* real worship ; the mere exercise of the mind may enable anyone to speak ; but in order to worship the heart must be quiet before God and happy in God. The heart must be full before it can *overflow*, and worship is the overflow of a heart that is full.

It is only by the Spirit of God that we can worship. That Spirit when ungrieved is ever revealing Christ to the heart, and all that is thus learnt of Christ is turned into worship, according to the word here, "giving thanks [or *confessing*] to His name." As we bow before God we *confess* the worth and fulness and preciousness of the name of Jesus ; we own that name as our only hope, the very stay of our souls, and as ointment poured forth to our broken spirits. The *name* of Jesus is expressive of what He is, and just as in former days the offering upon God's altar which was typical of Christ was a sweet savour to God, so the telling out before God of the perfections of Christ and His finished sacrifice ever brings sweet fragrance into His presence. It is "*by Him*" that we offer our praise as well as *for Him*, and seeing that He is *ever* before God for us as the new and living way and the

great High Priest, we are called to worship "*continually*." We are always to be in the spirit of worship here, and soon we shall enter upon the worship of the eternal day. Thus we learn out now the blessedness which then we shall fully prove—"Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be still praising Thee." W. H. B.

SIN AND REPENTANCE.

NOTHING but a true conception of the deep ruin sin has caused will lead to that deep repentance which the Holy Ghost seeks to work in the soul. But amongst the sorrowful features of the present day few are more marked than the feeble apprehension of what sin is, and, as a consequence, repentance is very shallow. The remedy for this is surely a deeper knowledge of what the cross of Christ means, and of what it was to Him when He "bare our sins in His own body on the tree." This will lead to growing hatred of sin and burning love to Him who put it away, and as we ponder His Gethsemane experiences, and the agonies of Calvary which our salvation cost, our souls will be drawn to our Lord in closer bonds of fellowship. We shall learn something of watching with Him in looking back upon what He passed through, even as He watches with us in the present time of our trial and temptation, in which Satan sifts, while *He* takes care that not one grain of wheat shall fall to the ground.

The one who has most truly measured his indebtedness to God will love Him most, and be most lowly; hence the apostle Paul, toward the end of his course, spoke of himself as "*less than the least of all saints*," and still later on, with deeper self-abasement, wrote the words, "*sinners, of whom I am chief*." (Eph. iii. 8; 1 Tim. i. 15.)

As the awful shadows of the cross grew deeper and darker in his estimation, through increased acquaintance with Christ, he measured his sinfulness by that cross, and the Holy Ghost taught him what sin was, and what, as a sinner, he deserved. It is in this same spirit that one beloved amongst us writes—

“ In His spotless soul’s distress
I perceive my guiltiness ;
Oh ! how vile my low estate
Since my ransom was so great ! ”

If we thus measure the weight of our sinfulness the result will be a firmer grasp of our Redeemer, a truer love to Him and a deeper reality in our repentance. Repentance is not amendment of life, though amendment of life necessarily follows it. True repentance is described by Paul in 2 Cor. vii. as embracing far more than is usually considered. In that chapter he speaks of repentance as springing from a “sorrow according to God,” and possessing the following characteristics : 1. “*Carefulness*,” which is just the opposite of that carelessness and laxity which led to the perpetration of sin, or the condoning of it. 2. “*Clearing of yourselves*,” *i.e.*, putting away the accursed leaven. 3. “*Indignation*” with themselves for what had been done and allowed. 4. “*Fear*” of God’s holy displeasure. 5. “*Vehement desire*” [or *longing*, R.V.] for a higher and holier future. 6. “*Zeal*” or *jealousy*, *i.e.*, jealousy or watchfulness over the heart and its tendencies. 7. “*Revenge*,” or, better, “*avenging*” of the wrong done to God and to the holy name of Christ. This indeed is repentance according to God. It looks at sin with reference to God as David did, who in his agony said, “Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight.” (Ps. li. 4.) This is the sure sign of godly sorrow and repentance

wrought by the Spirit of God, and it is the opposite of that sorrow of the world that looks at self only, and the results to self, and sorrows with a sorrow that "worketh death."

It is to be feared that the shallow gospel too often preached makes far more of the result of sin in the weal or woe of the creature, than of sin itself in relation to God, as against His name, His honour and His love. It is the sense of the vileness, the filthiness and the ingratitude exhibited in sin that gives such tenderness and pathos to the experience of so many who have but feebly realized the salvation of Christ in its freeness and its fulness. The experience of such is often found to be far deeper than that of those who are brought up in the full light of the gospel. It ought not to be so; but alas! it is so too often. Evidences of such experience may be found in the records of many of those godly souls who were groping out of Romish darkness before the Reformation, and in many who have been brought up in similar circumstances since then. Many of Hart's hymns might well be pondered with heart-searching as an antidote to many of our more recent hymns in which "the hole of the pit" (Isa. li. 1) seems little thought of, and the depth and horror of "the miry clay" and the "pit of noise" (Ps. xl. 2) are little considered. The following hymn, which is taken from a Roman Catholic book, and is headed "*A Good Confession*," is calculated to stir our hearts to their depths in these days of gospel light, when the horror of the darkness and the awfulness of the ruin out of which God's salvation lifts us ought to be better known:—

"The chains that have bound me are flung to the wind,
By the mercy of God the poor slave is set free;
And the strong grace of heaven breathes fresh o'er the mind,
Like the bright winds of summer that gladden the sea.

- “ There was naught in God’s world half so dark or so vile
 As the sin and the bondage that fettered my soul ;
 There was naught half so base as the malice and guile
 Of my own sordid passions, or Satan’s control.
- “ For years I have borne about hell in my breast,
 When I thought of my God it was nothing but gloom ;
 Day brought me no pleasure, night gave me no rest,
 There was still the grim shadow of horrible doom.
- “ It seemed as if nothing less likely could be,
 Than that light should break in on a dungeon so deep ;
 To create a new world was less hard than to free
 The slave from his bondage, the soul from its sleep.
- “ But the word had gone forth and said, ‘ Let there be light,’
 And it flashed through my soul like a sharp passing smart ;
 One look to my Saviour, and all the dark night,
 Like a dream scarce remembered, was gone from my heart.
- “ I cried out for mercy, and fell on my knees,
 And confessed, while my heart with keen sorrow was wrung ;
 ’Twas the labour of minutes ; and years of disease
 Fell as fast from my soul as the words from my tongue.
- “ And now—blest be God and the sweet Lord who died—
 No deer on the mountain, no bird in the sky,
 No bright wave that leaps on the dark bounding tide,
 Is a creature so free or so happy as I.
- “ All hail, then, all hail, to the dear ‘ precious blood,’
 That hath worked these sweet wonders of mercy in me ;
 May each day countless numbers throng down to its flood,
 And God have His glory, and sinners go free ! ”

The first four verses of the above show a sense of sin as slavery, bondage, vileness, baseness and hell that reminds us of the anguish and agony expressed in some of the penitential psalms ; and then the last four verses suddenly come forth into the full glory of that creative word, “ *Let there be light.* ” Touching indeed is the evidence of that ecstasy of joy in the soul, as the result of the in-shining of God, found in the expressions “ the sweet Lord who died ” and “ the dear precious blood ” !

The word "Let there be light" recalls an incident that occurred in India many years ago. That earnest and faithful servant of God, Mr. Hebich, who ever had a word in season to win a soul, went one morning to a young officer in one of the Madras regiments. After a salutation he said, "Bring your Bible," and then asked him to read from Gen. i. When he had read the first two verses he said, "Read them again." He did so, and though he was evidently becoming annoyed, Mr. H. said solemnly, "Read them again." This he did as if he felt them, and said, "Oh! that is just as I am, void and dark." "Yes," said the soul-winner, "I know it; now read on," and he read, "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." The light shined into the young officer's soul, and he became one of the "countless numbers" that "throng down to its flood," where God gets "His glory, and sinners go free."

May that side of truth which gives God His glory be better understood, and then there will of necessity be a more profound apprehension of our position as sinners before God, and the joy of forgiveness will be hallowed with a deeper sense of our obligations to the compassion of our God, and to the grace that has made the guilty blameless and the defiled whiter than snow. God made much of sin in the cross of His Son; may we make much of it in our repentings, and know more of what confession of sin really is!

H. G.

"The *strength* of love is shown in *great* things, but the *tenderness* of love in *little* things; thus Christ showed the *strength* of His love in bearing the curse on the cross, but the *tenderness* of His love when He said, 'Behold thy mother'; 'Woman, why weepest thou?' 'Children, have ye any meat?'"

SOME OF SATAN'S DEVICES.

THERE is great subtlety in the question raised by Judas when Mary "anointed the feet of Jesus" with her "ointment of spikenard": "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" (John xii. 5.) He durst not say anything that was disrespectful of the Lord; that would have been too gross, and would have been resented at once by the other disciples. - But the apparent philanthropy of the suggestion carried them, at least some of them, away (Matt. xxvi. 8; Mark xiv. 4), and in their indignation at the thought of the poor being robbed they asked, "Why was this waste of the ointment made?"

How easily Satan could picture to their minds the many poor this sum of nine pounds, seven shillings and sixpence would have fed! And how readily they forgot that the Lord had fed thousands of the poor by His own bountiful hand, leaving sufficient fragments to last themselves for days, and had, moreover, repeatedly spoken of the death He was about to die, by which blessing to the poor of all tribes and nations would be secured for eternity. Thus Satan got an advantage through their shortsighted charity; and, while Mary, in faith and love, was anointing that precious body for its burial, they, in their unbelief, were ingloriously murmuring over what they called "this waste."

Why did not Peter, who was ready to say to the Lord, "I will lay down my life for Thy sake," now rise up and speak on behalf of His worthy handmaid, in opposition to the Satanic suggestion of Judas? He might well have pointed out that by speaking of it as "*waste*" he was

both reproaching her and dishonouring the Lord, whom they all delighted to honour.

And why did not John, whose place was on the Saviour's bosom, repel such an insinuation, and put the blessed Lord in His own place of dignity? He might have said, "Is it too great an honour for the Lord to receive the homage of one to whom He has shown such mercy, who, in sitting at His feet and hearing His word, has received such blessing that she feels, as we all do, that she cannot repay Him? In the low place she has taken does she not show that she has surpassed us all in her knowledge, her faith and her affection? And when we remember the deep sympathy that filled the Lord's own bosom when He met her at the grave of her brother, and how the tears streamed from His precious eyes, I cannot but think that the suggestion just made is an evidence that Satan is in the midst of us. I feel ashamed that it should have been made, and especially by one of ourselves, who should each have striven to be the first to do Him honour. We have confessed by the lips of Peter that we believe and are sure that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and we have seen Him feed the poor, heal the sick, the lame, the deaf, the blind, and even raise the dead. Has He not also taught us that He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him, and confirmed the great truth that they who honour God shall be honoured by Him, while they who despise Him shall be lightly esteemed? (John v. 23; 1 Sa. ii. 30.)

"I feel," he might have added, "that a great insult has been offered to the Lord by this remark—an insult to His *wisdom*, as if He did not know what it was fit and proper for His handmaid to do; and an insult to His *grace*, as if He did not care for the poor, but would absorb for Himself

what should be given to them. I see indignation (Matt. xiv. 4) sitting on the brow of some of you; I hope it is indignation that such a question should have been raised. Is not He on whom this has been bestowed entitled to the sincere love of our hearts, and the possession of all our substance? Should we not by loving any creature—even a father or a mother—more than Him prove that we were unworthy of Him? And have we not often seen those who were most eager that others should help the poor most niggardly with their own money, and most covetous for themselves?”

Let us consider who it was that made this suggestion. It was Judas—a man of whom we have not a word recorded that he ever spoke till this foul question came from his lips. His recorded *utterances* are the following:—1. The one under consideration. 2. “What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you?” 3. “Master, is it I?” 4. “Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He: hold Him fast.” 5. “Hail, Master!” 6. “I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.” His recorded *acts* are:—1. He “had the bag, and bare what was put therein.” 2. He bargained “with the chief priests and captains for the betrayal of the Lord,” and then “sought opportunity to betray Him unto them in the absence of the multitude.” 3. He “received the sop” from the hand of the Lord and “went immediately out.” 4. He acted as “guide to them that took Jesus”—he “went before them, and drew near unto Jesus” and “kissed Him.” 5. He returned the money, casting down “the pieces of silver in the temple.” 6. He “went and hanged himself.” 7. He went to “his own place.” This is the man who set generosity to the poor against a special token of regard for the Lord.

But who actuated Judas, and inspired such a suggestion?

Satan. Now we have the secret of the whole matter. The devil would set up his philanthropy against what he would represent as the selfishness of the Lord Jesus. He would put the creature before the Creator, and thus set himself up for worship instead of God. He who deprived Job of his property and his family in one day, and then covered him with a sore disease "from the sole of his foot unto his crown," now talks about giving to the poor, and at the same time offers an insult to the Lord. He lowers the Lord's dignity in the presence of His friends. Let us beware of Satan's philanthropy, and Satan's help in God's work. This help he will readily give when the children of God turn to amusements, bazaars, concerts, penny-readings, and yield to the world for the sake of its patronage, under the plea that it is to obtain money for a good object.

We do well to ponder the meek reply of the Lord Jesus: "Let her alone; why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work on Me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but Me ye have not always." He will encourage faith while He will not lessen charity. Mark the high-toned principle in this reply. It enunciates the principle that there are occasions when our highest duty is to do certain things to certain persons, to the setting aside of other claims that at other times are binding upon us, and that will come in properly in their turn. "Honour to whom honour" is due is a divine principle. "Honour thy father and thy mother"; "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head"; "Honour the king." Some are to be honoured for their office, some for relationship, and some for the circumstances in which they are placed. If a parent were leaving home, or had just arrived after a long absence, and children were coming forward with their parting or

welcoming gifts, how strange and unbecoming it would be to tell the children at such a time to bestow their gifts upon the poor rather than *waste* them upon father or mother!

Now there are many things that combine to make the Son of God the proper Object of universal honour. His eternal glory before the world was; His high offices as Saviour, Redeemer, Prophet, Priest and King; His service, which was of such infinite value, and His giving Himself a ransom for us; His near and dear relationship to us as Head and Bridegroom, and "First-born among many brethren"—all combine to entitle Him to the highest honour we can render unto Him. He was just on the point of leaving His disciples, and could anything be accounted waste that was laid out upon Him? Is not the thought revolting to every Christian heart? As well might we object to the spices of Nicodemus and the women, or even Joseph's grave.

" Were the whole realm of nature mine
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my heart, my life, my *all!*"

There is no question that this principle may be greatly misapplied, for what good thing has God ever introduced which Satan has not led man to abuse? If you quote Scripture he can do the same, as we see in the narrative of the Lord's temptation. (Matt. iv. 6.) So it has been in this matter. Failing in the effort to keep men from seeking to honour Christ, he has led them to all kinds of extravagances under the false plea of doing Him honour. What are all gorgeous cathedrals, ornate chapels and costly ritual but abuses of this principle? In the past dispensation, when a worldly sanctuary, a visible altar and animal sacrifices, with a sinful and dying priesthood,

were appointed as figures of the good things to come, that which was beautiful and imposing had its place. But Christians have a heavenly sanctuary, and an eternal Priest who ministers in the heavens on the ground of His finished sacrifice, and are called, as themselves being God's priests, to offer up spiritual sacrifices through the ministry of the Spirit of God. Not only therefore have they *no need* of the outlay of money on things which simply please the eye and tastes of carnal men; but when they do spend wealth upon such things, instead of using it in feeding the hungry and carrying the gospel to those who are in darkness, they dishonour Christ, and do not glorify Him. To build a room of suitable dimensions, strength and convenience, in a proper place, and to keep it clean and comfortable for worship and the ministry of the Word, is becoming to those who assemble in the name of the Lord; but they need nothing more than this.

In the Lord's commendation of Mary we see how He recognises the greatness of a lowly act, and how everything may be great when the mind is actuated by a great principle: "She hath wrought a good work on Me"; "she hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint My body to the burying"; this shall "be told for a memorial of her." Little did the humble actor in this "good work" think that her last loving act of service to her blessed Lord, before His death, would receive such notice, or produce for her such fame—a fame even beyond that of some of the apostles. Satan himself is the means of adding to her honour, for perhaps less notice would have been taken of the act, if the objection had not been raised. Some one has said, "Virtue would lose half her honours if slander and evil report did not come to her praise."

Having said "The poor always ye have with you," the

Lord adds, "But Me ye have not always." It was the very uniqueness of the occasion that gave the act its special value and significance. It was the only occasion of the kind that ever did occur, or ever could occur, and yet on such an occasion Satan would deprive Him of the homage rendered to Him. But we are not "ignorant of his devices." His object ever is to trample under foot the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame; and the man who would be his instrument in thus seeking to dishonour the Lord was prepared to do anything at his bidding. That man's conscience was gone, all respect for the Saviour of mankind had vanished, and there was nothing left to hinder Satan from filling his heart and leading him to betray his Master. Step by step the devil leads him on till "it had been good for that man if he had not been born." What an end was his! Just as the swine, when the demons took possession of them, drowned themselves, so Judas went and hanged himself. He runs fast whom the devil drives. As "the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him" (1 Sa. xvi. 14), so, in the case of Judas, it only required the restraining power of the presence of Jesus to be withdrawn, and the full power of Satan drove him to despair and self-destruction. He had done the enemy's work, and he received his wages.

Amongst the many lessons this narrative is calculated to teach we may note the following:—

1.—Let us learn to be on our guard against side issues. It is one of Satan's devices to turn the minds of God's people aside to some trivial matter, and so frustrate what should be their main object. The disciples were invited by those whose aim it was to do honour to the Lord; but by the devil's cunning the feast might have ended in great disgrace had not Jesus Himself pleaded the cause of His

handmaid. When we assemble at the Lord's-table are not our minds often turned aside from the great matter before us to some bye-question? Thus other matters take the place of the Lord Himself, who alone should occupy our thoughts. What an advantage Satan often gets over us in this way!

2.—Let us remember that just as Satan aroused the spirit of "*indignation*" against Mary's lowly service on this occasion, so shortly after, at the supper of which the Lord said, "With desire I have desired to eat this pass-over with you before I suffer," we have further evidence of his presence, for "there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest." Now "where envying and strife are, there are confusion and every evil work," for these things come of a wisdom that is "earthly, sensual, *devilish*." (Jas. iii. 15, 16.) When a Diotrefes becomes pre-eminent, unwary souls are drawn away and join in over-riding their brethren and casting them out of the church. How the devil must have gloried over this strife amongst the friends of Jesus, almost at the foot of the cross, and how he triumphs over the same thing now in connection with the Lord's-table. The whole law is comprehended in the one word *love*.

3.—How encouraging is the word, "She hath done what she could"! An angel can do no more. While the disciples are pitying the poor to the dishonour of their Master, and yet are seeking the highest places for themselves, she is meekly and unostentatiously pouring the wealth of her perfume on the only One worthy of her love, and filling the house with the odour of the ointment. May it not be so to-day? Some one, little known, hid away in some back corner, behind others—perhaps even cast out of fellowship—may be doing Him more honour than many who are more prominent. Oh,

for that meek and lowly mind that can sit at His feet and hear His Word, and then, in resurrection power and with a contrite heart, render Him such service as He can appreciate and find joy in!

P. G. A.

THE HEAVENLY.*

Do we not get up to our fullest height in our conceptions of Christ when we contemplate Him as intrinsically and eternally *heavenly*? What beauty of essence! What beauty of character! No angel could depict Him. We read that Christ and His members are "all of one"—of one sort. Sweetly the blue (the heavenly, the holy, the gracious) mingles itself in all that He is in Himself towards us, and in all that we are as one with Him. Our heavenliness dates (if date it ever had) in the mind of God ever since God was God, from all Eternity. "Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world," we are blessed, in the divine purpose, "with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus." And "as we have borne the image of the earthy"—poor, sinful, sorrowful dying ones—"we shall bear the image of the heavenly"—the holy, glorious and majestic One. When God acts upon us here it is from heaven. "Except a man be born again [or *from above*] he cannot see the kingdom of God." It is in heaven now we have our citizenship; it is its politics, and not those of earth, that regulate our actions and our life. We take our cue from heaven and not from the government or rulers of earth, as to what shall be or shall not be in this world. John the apostle tells us that as He is, so are we.

And here I should like to draw out a little that word in

From *Christ Unveiled, or Thoughts on the Tabernacle*, by the late J. Denham Smith: Hawkins.

I Corinthians i. 9. As we look up into heaven at the High Priest it is sweet to think of it—"God is faithful, by whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." It is God who hath called us. He was the beginning of the old creation. He created all things by the word of His power. And He is the beginning of the new creation; that, however, which is first recorded in the Word is modern compared with His purpose concerning us. That to which we are called is participation with Christ, or, as here said, "*the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ.*" Fellowship, communion and participation are interchangeable words, showing the same thing. How wonderful! called to a participation of all that Christ is and has, or that could be communicated. What creature in his own standing as such could sit upon the throne with Christ, or be joint-heir with Him of His eternal possessions? It goes beyond all thought of man or angel.

Communion means share and share alike—participation, the same. But of what? We read in Titus i. of "eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began"—that is, before creation had a beginning; promised, not to us, not having then existence, but to Christ; promised on the ground that Christ would do God's will in dying, so saving man, and doing justice to God's law and character in saving him. Hence the certainty of eternal life. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand." We read too of Christ's image: we are to participate in His form, His likeness, "predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son"; and in His heavenly endowments, for because we are sons God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son, "whereby we cry, Abba, Father." And also in His possessions we participate. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand,"

so that all things are His; and now He says, "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them." All things, all worlds, angels, dominions, principalities and powers are ours; we possess them with Christ; all this is truly heavenly.

But it was here on earth the foundation for all was laid in death, a death accepted by God, who raised Christ from the dead. We have died in His death, and are alive in His life, and are now in the same hope of glory and destined to the same home. All this tells of the character of our calling—it is heavenly—and of the timeless, ineffable share assigned to us by God in the future course of Him who is Head of the Church, which is His body, being of His flesh and of His bones. The certainty of it is that God is faithful by whom we are thus called. Could we be more associated with the Son of God, or with heaven? Could our hope be greater?

REVISED VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.*

XXV.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS (*continued*).

XCIII. 4—"Above the voices of many waters, the mighty breakers of the sea, the LORD on high is mighty."

XCIV. 1—Ren. "God of *revenges*," as A.M. Vengeance or revenge denotes the execution of a judgment previously pronounced and contains nothing vindictive in it. "*shine forth*," as A.M. So De. 32. 2; Ps. 80. 1. v. 7.—"God . . . *consider*." v. 8—"Consider, ye brutish." The repetition marks an antithesis. v. 10b—"(*even*) he . . . knowledge?" om. "*shall not he know*." v. 17—"soul had *soon*." v. 20—"by *statute*," i.e. an unalterable principle of action. v. 22a—"my *high-tower*."

* All quotations from R.V. without comment are regarded as improvements. R.M. means *Revised margin*; A.M., *Authorized margin*; a denotes the first part of a verse; b, the second.

XCV. 7—"To-day, *Oh that ye would hear.*" v. 8—"as at *Meribah*, as in the day of *Massah.*"

XCVI.—For the first use of this psalm see 1 Ch. 16. v. 3b—"his marvellous works." vv. 11, 12—Ren. verbs as future, "The heavens *shall be glad,*" &c.

XCVII. 2—"foundation of his throne"; *bas's* seems better, cf. 89. 14. v. 7—"Ashamed be."

XCVIII. 1—"arm, hath wrought salvation for him." v. 3—"and his faithfulness." vv. 4-6—"Make a joyful voice" scarcely conveys the force of this word. It is the shout of victory, and occ. Jos. 6; 1 Sa. 10. 24, and freq. Here, and in other places, it is a shout to God as the victorious One. Cf. Ps. 47. 1; 66. 1; 81. 1; 100. 1. vv. 7, 8—Ren. verbs as future.

XCIX. 3—"holy is *he*," cf. vv. 5, 9. v. 7—"and the *statute.*" v. 8—"their *doings.*"

C. 1—"all *the earth*," M., so A.M. v. 3—"and *we are his*," as A.M. So the *Keri* reads; but some accept the A.V., which follows the *Ketib*.

CI. 1b—"sing praises." v. 3—"no *thing of Belial*," A.M. is best, see on De. 13. 13. v. 4—"an *evil thing* (or person)." v. 6b—"minister unto me"; the word points to an honourable ministry. v. 8—"morning by morning" for "early."

CII. 2a—"day of my distress." v. 3b—"as a *firebrand*," but "*fuel*" is better. v. 6b—"the *waste places*" or ruins. v. 8b—"me do curse [or swear] by me," i.e. use me as an oath, as one having a fixed destiny of woe. v. 10b—"hast taken me up, and cast me away." v. 12—"sittest (as king) for ever," M. v. 13—"have *compassion.*" v. 16, 17—"For the Lord hath built," and ren. by past tense through these verses. This psalm is divided into three parts, vv. 1-12; 13-24a; 24b-28. The latter verses give God's reply to Christ's prayer in vv. 23, 24.

CIII. 8—"The Lord is full of *compassion* and" (cf. 102. 13), so v. 13 has the same word for *pitietih* twice. v. 16—"wind" is the same word as Spirit, cf. Is. 40. 6-8. v. 19—"hath established."

CIV. 4—"Who maketh *winds his messengers.*" This may be appropriate to the character of the psalm, and allowable as a translation; but when the Spirit quotes the LXX ren. as A.V. in Heb. 1. 7 we should surely retain it. v. 5—"not be *moved.*" v. 16—"are *satisfied.*" v. 30—"of the *ground.*" v. 35—It is better to ren. by fut. tense, as a prediction. "*Hallelujah*," M., so 105. 45; 106. 48.

CV. 2—"talk," i.e. to one's self or meditate, M. v. 6—"chosen *ones.*" v. 15—"anointed *ones.*" v. 19—"came to *pass.*" In the latter clause the word ren. "*word*" is different, and refers to God's appointments in the pit and the dungeon. v. 25—The word ren. "*to deal*

subtilly" is the same as "*conspired*" in Gen. 37. 18, and is very rare; we may note the divine retribution. v. 30—"their land *swarmed with.*" v. 37—"his tribes."

CVI. 5—Ren. "chosen ones." v. 32—"of *Meribah.*" v. 35—"But mingled *themselves with the nations.*" v. 37—"unto *demons*"; this word occ. only De. 32. 17. v. 39b—"whoring in *their doings.*" vv. 47, 48 close Dav. d's song in 1 Chr. xvi. and thus connect this fourth book of psalms with the triumphs of his reign.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

What was the purpose of the soldiers in giving the Lord "vinegar to drink mingled with gall"? Matt. xxvii. 34.

This is usually taken as a fulfilment of Ps. lxxix. 21; but seeing that it is not spoken of thus in the New Testament it may be questioned whether the interpretation is correct. There is scarcely evidence of that spirit in the soldiers which is so clearly expressed in the psalm, "They gave Me also gall for my meat; and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink." That which in the Gospels is called "gall" signifies *wormwood*, which is very intoxicating. It was often given to those who were being crucified, to mitigate their sufferings, and it was probably given to the Lord simply as a matter of custom. He tasted it as if He regarded the kind intention, and would not appear to treat it lightly; but He refused to drink it, for He could accept nothing that would stupefy or deaden the senses, and so prevent His full endurance of all that was necessary for the great work of atonement.

We read a second time of the soldiers offering Him vinegar in response to the cry, "I thirst." From the words of John, "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished," we may gather that this was not absolutely refused. The vinegar was the weak sour wine commonly drunk by the people, and the object in giving it to the Lord was to prolong life and see whether Elias would come, the cry "Eli, Eli," being mistaken as a call to Elijah. In the Gospel of John, however, a deep meaning underlies the simplest words, and the expression "I thirst" contains a depth which not only the bystanders at the cross were utterly ignorant of, but which we ourselves can little fathom.

MINISTRY GODWARD AND MANWARD,

AS EMBRACED IN THE SACRIFICES OF HEB. XIII. 15, 16.

II. MINISTRY MANWARD.

In addition to our precious ministry Godward, there is a ministry to those around which, as children of God, we are called to cultivate. The faith of God's elect is a "faith which *worketh by love.*" In writing to the Hebrews the apostle commends the evidences of their love, but implies that it was not so manifest as it had been (chap. vi. 10; x. 32-36), and he again seeks to stir them to diligence in this respect. It is during our pilgrimage that we have special opportunities for the exercise of this love, which are not always fully valued. "*To do good . . . forget not,*" for Christ "went about doing good," thus "leaving us an example that ye should follow His steps."

When people become anxious about salvation they are tempted to set about doing good that they may fit themselves to come to God; but when they have learnt that "not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to His mercy He saved us," they are as strongly tempted to *forget* to do good. Satan would persuade the unsaved sinner that he can do good works, and would make the saved one careless and indolent. But just as clearly as Scripture testifies that salvation is by grace, through faith, "not of works, lest any one should boast," so clearly and decidedly does it call upon those who *are* saved to "be careful to maintain good works." There are innumerable ways of doing good, and love is very inventive. When the love of Christ constrains the heart, the eye will readily discern ways of showing sympathy and kindness to fellow-saints, and of helping

and cheering one another onward in our heavenly journey. And towards those who are outside the holy tie of Christian brotherhood—because they have not received Him who alone gives any one power to become a child of God—there will also be the exercise of the grace of Christ. It will be esteemed a privilege to render them what help we may be able in things of this life, and at all times to seek, by kind and godly and courteous ways, to commend to them that gospel of which they discern not the beauty and prove not the power.

If the first word—“*to do good*”—is general, the second—“*to communicate*”—is very definite. The word here used is one of wide significance. It expresses (1) our partnership, in a high and holy sense, with the Son of God (1 Cor. i. 9) in His present rejection and His eternal glory; (2) as the ground of this, our participation of His body and blood, shadowed forth in the partaking of the bread and wine at the Lord's table. It is also used of our causing others to partake with us of what God gives us of the things of this life. Thus Paul uses the same word in his commendation of saints at Corinth for their “*liberal communication*” (2 Cor. ix. 13), and when he calls upon Timothy to charge those who are rich in this world, that “*they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate.*” So here the word means to impart of one's substance in ministering to others.

The opportunities for the exercise of this grace by the people of God are abundant, and we may note the following.

1. *Care for the poor.* God cares for the poor, and a special blessing is pronounced upon His people who do the same: “*Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.*” (Ps. xli. 1.) Under the law God was pleased to give His people Israel

special instructions about this matter. After the command concerning the firstfruits that were to be offered to Him, we read, "And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor and the stranger: I am Jehovah your God." (Lev. xxiii. 22.) If any one forgot a sheaf he was not to return to fetch it, but was to leave it "for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow"; and if any Israelite was poor those who had sufficient were to help him, and were to do so cheerfully, "Thou shalt surely give him, and *thine heart shall not be grieved* when thou givest unto him." (De. xv. 10; xxiv. 19-22.)

In the New Testament the exhortations to remember and care for the poor are numerous. As God said to Israel, "The poor shall never cease out of the land," so the word of the Lord Jesus is, "The poor always ye have with you." To be "distributing to the necessities of saints" is one of those commands which a due sense of "the mercies of God" (Rom. xii. 1, 13) will constrain us to seek to carry out, and in so doing we shall be especially following the example of the Lord and His beloved apostle Paul. This devoted servant of Christ could say, "I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts xx. 35.)

It is as true of this as it is of all God's commands, that obedience will have its reward; but we may with profit note the contrast between the promises of former days and those of the present time. The word to Israel was quite in keeping with a state of things in which abundance of earthly store was the reward of obedience:

“For this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.” (De. xv. 10.) But the higher promise of the Lord Jesus is equally characteristic of the present time: “When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for *thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*” (Luke xiv. 13, 14.)

2. *Fellowship with those who are called to special service in the church and in the gospel.* It is both the privilege and responsibility of the Lord's people to minister in temporal things to those who minister to them in spiritual things, and none can be in a healthy state of soul who do not recognise this, however small the opportunity they may have of carrying it out. It is a distinct appointment of the Lord that “they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel,” and the command is clear, “Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.” (1 Cor. ix. 14; Gal. vi. 6.) In days like the present, when by so many the things of God are turned into merchandise, it is no doubt good if servants of Christ are able to say, as Paul said, “I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things that it should be so done unto me.” Such have an advantage which God may enable them to use for His glory; though nothing of this kind affects the responsibility of saints or prevents those from being losers who neglect this opportunity of fellowship, and of laying up fruit that would abound to their account. (Phil. iv. 17.)

It may be well also to add that it should not be hastily assumed that, because one who seeks to give himself specially to the service of Christ may, through the providence of God, have some means of living, there is no room for the fulfilment of the scripture just quoted. Mistakes may

easily be made about this. It is a simple fact that some have at times known a good deal of pressure, not because those to whom they ministered were unable to express fellowship with them in temporal things; but purely because they *thought* there was no need. Nor is it always remembered that while present facilities for travelling enable servants of Christ to respond to many calls, yet they cannot travel without expense. But to make too much of the question of *need* here would be a sad mistake. The true servants of Christ are not objects of compassion, to be fed because they are hungry, or to be cared for because they are in want. *They* are responsible to go forward in dependence upon Him whose servants they are, and those amongst whom they labour are called to esteem them in love for their work's sake. If they lack what the true fellowship of saints would supply they can bear their deficiency to the glory of their Lord, and earn the lessons He teaches them by such discipline, while those who might supply the lack and do not will suffer loss. If on the other hand they receive offerings from the Lord's people which they do not need for themselves they will simply delight to use them for the Lord, and those who have ministered to them will have their reward.

3. *Fellowship with the spread of the gospel in other lands.* There is another responsibility resting upon the children of God, and a very solemn one too, even that of sending the gospel to those who have never yet heard it. Though all are not called to *go forth* in this service personally, all are called to express their fellowship with those who do go. There are two means of doing this—prayers and gifts, and it is not easy to see how they can be separated, unless the gifts are very formal things. For those who have abundance it is of course easy to *give* without the heart being much exercised in prayer; but it

is scarcely possible for any truly to pray about such work without the question arising, What can be done to help forward the work and those who are labouring in it?

It has been good to see of late years a stirring of heart with reference to this great matter; but there is still much room for effort. Is there any little assembly that says, We are too poor to "communicate," or to have fellowship, in this service of sending the gospel to those who are sitting in darkness? Let such ponder the question, Where should we have been if the gospel had never been brought to Britain? It is not easy, perhaps, to consider this question; but we know that the gospel was brought here, and we are reaping the fruit of it. Then may we not say that in proportion to our appreciation of the salvation which that gospel has brought, and of the grace of God which sent it, will be our desire to do something towards sending it to others?

But in whatever way the Lord's people may be led to "communicate," the great thing is not to "forget" to do it somehow, and ever to remember that, in the highest sense, the Lord Jesus sits "over against the treasury" and forms His own estimate of the gifts of His people. He knows well when they offer that which costs them something, and does not forget it. He marks any little self-denial for the sake of ability to impart to others; and He is able to compare what is spent upon *Him* and His service with what is spent upon self in various ways, and, as has often been said, He estimates what is *given* by what is *left*. Those who are rich may still find room for some self-denial, and may make their offerings of special value by the prayers that accompany them, and those whose means are very limited may well be encouraged by remembering that, however small their gifts may seem to themselves, they are great in the Lord's estimation according to their cost

to the giver, and the faith and love in which they are given.

How precious is the assurance that "with *such sacrifices* God is well pleased"! The same word is used for these offerings that is used for the offering of worship. So Paul speaks of "the things" which were sent by the Philippians as an "odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God." God will not be worshipped with men's hands as though He *needed anything*; but when we can say, "Of Thine own have we given Thee," and the hands present that which is the expression of the heart's gratitude, He takes delight in it.

W. H. B.

PRAYER AND EXPECTATION.

PSALM V.

THERE is great beauty in the simplicity with which David speaks to God. He never forgets the greatness and majesty of Him whom he addresses, and yet he speaks with the utmost freedom. With the deep sense of being in the presence of the Most High he entreats His attention: "*Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation.*" It is good when our *meditation*—the quiet communing of our hearts—goes with the words we utter, for it is possible to address words to God when our hearts are wandering. This word "conveys the idea of still, sweet, earnest, thoughtful speaking, being derived from that which signifies soft murmuring sounds like those of the harp, or of a dove, and also deep thinking and consideration."* The rendering *my dove-like mournings* may remind us of the "intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered," which the Holy Spirit—the heavenly

* Several writers are quoted in this little paper, though names are not given.

Dove—makes for us. Such *mournings* are always heard and attended to in heaven, “for He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” (Rom. viii. 26, 27.)

“*Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King and my God, for unto Thee do I pray.*” The *cry* denotes the loud cry for help from one in distress, while the great secret of confidence is found in the words “*my King and my God.*” The speaker is a true child of Abraham, who has embraced in his heart the promise made by God “to the father of all them that believe,” that He would be a God to him and to his seed after him. (Gen. xvii. 7.) He also takes the place that becomes a subject of God’s true spiritual kingdom, even that of submission and dependence.

In v. 3 we have a beautiful expression of the diligence of faith: “*My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee and will look up.*” There is no time like the morning for prayer, and if it be neglected in the morning it is very possible to go through the day without finding opportunity for it. It is, of course, easy to have our times for prayer without having the heart really drawn out to God, yet on the other hand the *habit* of prayer strengthens the desire for intercourse with Him. “Rare prayer is cold prayer. In His presence, and under His sunshine, our cold, hard hearts gradually warm, soften and expand. He who prays rarely will ever be at a loss for subjects of prayer.” What an example of this diligence we have in the Lord Jesus, when we read that, after a day of great toil, and with another before Him, “rising up a great while before day, He went out into a solitary place and there prayed.” (Mark i. 35.)

The word for *direct* is a sanctuary word, being used for

arranging the wood upon the altar, and setting in order the shewbread on the table; and *look up*, from the same root as *Mizpeh* or watch tower, signifies looking out for the answer. "It seems as if mind and heart, with Martha-like diligence and Mary-like spirit, 'prepared' the wood, and the sacrifice, and the candlestick, and the shewbread, and then intently looked up for the fire to descend, and the shechinah to rest upon it all."

The psalmist finds a ground of confidence in the holiness of God (*vv.* 5-7). Satan is both a *liar* and a *murderer*, and those who correspond with him in character must share his doom, being abhorred of the Lord. God has no pleasure in wickedness, and even of himself the psalmist said elsewhere, "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." (Ps. lxxvi. 18.) On the other hand David could say, "I know also, my God, that Thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness." (1 Ch. xxix. 17.) When therefore we read these solemn words, "*For Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with Thee,*" they may remind us that He has pleasure in those who by His grace walk in "paths of righteousness," and "follow after holiness." They shall *stand in His sight* as distinguished men stand before kings, and shall *dwell with Him* in close and eternal friendship.

So he proceeds: "*But as for me I will come into Thy house in the multitude of Thy mercy: and in Thy fear will I worship toward Thy holy temple.*" In God's mercy or lovingkindness we find the source of all our hope, and it will ever be the theme of our song, while the sense of it excludes all reliance on any fancied strength or goodness of our own. And the more deeply we realize the fact that our access to God is the fruit of His mercy or grace alone, the truer will be the spirit of reverence in which we draw

near to Him—“*in Thy fear will I prostrate myself toward Thy holy temple.*” If this was the reverence of one to whom “the way into the holiest of all was not made manifest,” what should be the reverence of those who are called to enter through a rent veil into the very sanctuary of the Holy One? *Doctrines* of grace in the *head* may make men careless; the *knowledge* of grace in the *heart* can never do so. “Grace is a doctrine to be learned on my knees, to be understood on my knees, and to be applied on my knees.”

But we have to tread the daily paths of life as well as the courts of our God, and truly suitable is the prayer, “*Lead me, O Lord, in Thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make Thy way straight before my face.*” It is indeed needful for us to have *God’s* way made plain for us, and also to be led therein, for if we were left to ourselves we should very soon take *our own* way to our sorrow. To the heart that feels this the promise is precious, “He that hath mercy on them shall lead them.” (Is. xlix. 10.) *Many* of God’s people have had enemies of flesh and blood, and *all* are surrounded by spiritual foes, who ever watch for the opportunity of turning them aside from the heavenly pathway, or obstructing their progress in it. But “a man’s enemies, while they oblige him to pray more fervently, and to watch more narrowly over his conduct, oftentimes become his best friends.”

Verses 9 and 10 give a solemn description of the character of these enemies of God and His people, and of their doom. Without entering into the subject of these prayers for judgment on the rebellious, or dwelling on the fact that they will be found especially adapted to the condition of the elect remnant of Israel before their final deliverance, we may note that they arise not from personal vindictiveness; but from true fellowship with God in the cause of

righteousness, as is clearly seen from the words "*for they have rebelled against Thee.*" Even at the present time, while those who are led by the Spirit of God will pray for their enemies [if they have enemies of "flesh and blood"], and will cherish the spirit of forgiveness towards them, they will also without hesitation pray "*Thy kingdom come,*" though they know that the setting up of that kingdom means the subduing of all who do not submit themselves to God. But Horne and others have remarked that such expressions should very generally be rendered by the *future* tense, and then it would be apparent that they are for the most part *predictions* of the righteous retribution that must fall upon those who persist in rebellion against God.

They must perish; but the righteous shall have cause for everlasting joy (vv. 11, 12). God's people "*trust*" in Him and "*love His Name*"; they delight to trace out that revelation of Himself which His *Name* expresses, and He looks upon them as "*the righteous*"—those whom He has made righteous, and thus worthy of His blessing. In the day of battle He *defends* or *covers* them, so that the enemy hurts them not, and with His *favour* He *compasses* them "*as with a large shield.*" They, on their part, "*rejoice*" and "*shout for joy*"; yea they are *joyful in Him* whatever their circumstances may be. When Luther was asked where he would find shelter if his patron should desert him, he replied, "*Under the shield of heaven.*"

One has written: "This is a psalm which Messiah could use most fully; none could ever use it so fully as He. Every word of it becomes doubly emphatic in His lips, down to the last verse, where we see Him, as '*the Righteous One,*' encompassed with the Father's love and well-pleasèdness."

BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

IN THEIR CHURCH ASPECTS.

WHEN we consider the pre-eminently *spiritual* character of the present dispensation, it may appear strange that the Lord should have appointed as its ordinances baptism by water, and the partaking of bread and wine. We must, however, remember that we have bodies as well as spirits, and that in divine wisdom we are called to give outward expression to that which is realized inwardly and spiritually. The outward is really a test of the inward, and often brings to the exercised heart a conviction of the vain show in which we walk, for by our actions we may deny the principles of truth which we profess to hold. The two ordinances given by the Lord to His church are symbols of what He designed her to be in the presence of an unbelieving world, but Satan has ever sought to undermine their meaning, and thereby to frustrate the purpose of Christ; and how far he has apparently succeeded in Christendom we too well know.

I. BAPTISM.

Though there are other precious truths connected with baptism its main teaching is *separation*. As Israel were fully separated from Egypt when they were "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor. x. 2), so baptism is the expression of our separation from the world unto Christ — of our being taken out of our old Adam-standing and united to the second Man, the Lord from heaven. We are placed on heavenly ground, because we are united to the Lord in resurrection, and

therefore He can say of all who are His, "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world." As by the Flood the judgment of God separated Noah and those who were with him in the ark from the old world that perished, and brought them into a new world, so baptism in figure separates us from the old creation, and brings us into a sphere where all is new. (Comp. 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21 with 2 Pet. iii. 5, 6.) It is really by the death and resurrection of Christ that this separation is effected, and it is by the baptism of the Spirit that the believer participates in that death and resurrection; but this is expressed in baptism by water, for "so many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death." (Rom. vi. 3.) The result is *union*, "for in one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." (1 Cor. xii. 13.)

Baptism is therefore God's separating grave out of which we come up severed from that state in which we were, and brought into the one body of which Christ is the Head, and into the heavenly family of our God and Father. Our life has then to be practically not of the world, according to the command, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.) Thus baptismal truth is, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" with whom there can be no "fellowship," no "communion," no "concord," no "part," no "agreement" (*vs.* 14-16). These many expressions are used to show the absoluteness of the separation required between the believer and the unbeliever, between the saved and the lost. On the carrying out of this depends the measure of the soul's realization of God as *Father*, for "if any man love the world, the love of the

Father is not in him." (1 John ii. 15.) This is true *absolutely* of those who are "of the world," and even of those who are "not of the world" it is true that in the measure in which they love it they have not the love of the Father.

We are baptized into the triune "name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. xxviii. 19), and are brought into the sevenfold unity of Ephesians iv., in which the one baptism is connected with the "one body," the "one Spirit," the "one hope," the "one Lord," the "one faith," and the "one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all." This "unity of the Spirit" is not one of attainment as that of *v.* 13 is; but a unity that exists because God has made it, however feebly we may grasp it. And we have to keep it with all diligence against all assaults of Satan whether from within or without.

This sevenfold unity corresponds with the threefold divine name into which we are baptized. We are baptized into nothing less than the body of Christ, the church of the firstborn ones written in heaven—not into a church, or local assembly, nor into a denomination, for that would be destructive of the fundamental truth contained in the ordinance. Baptism is the exclusive right of those who are in Christ, and it is the right of *all* who are in Christ; God has made no difference in this between one and another, for all are His, and all are baptized into Christ.

II. THE LORD'S SUPPER.

As baptism "in the cloud and in the sea" brought Israel into the place where they received the manna and the water—symbols of "spiritual meat" and "spiritual drink"—so those who are separated from the world and baptized into Christ have the true spiritual food, even the

body and blood of Christ (John vi. 53-58), which are symbolized in the bread and wine of the Lord's supper. As *separation* is the great principle taught in baptism, so the leading principle involved in this great feast of the whole church under the new covenant is *communion* with the Father and the Son, and with one another in the Holy Ghost. Having referred to the history of Israel in I Cor. x., the apostle follows up this reference with the exhortation, "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry." That is, Idolatry is of the world, therefore leave it behind you. He then adds, "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which *we* bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which *we* break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For *we* the many are one bread, and one body: for *we* are all partakers of that one bread."

He does not say, "*ye* bless" and "*ye* break," as if referring to the local assembly in Corinth, as he does in chap. xi., where he is correcting local failures, but "*we*," because he regards the supper as *one* wherever partaken of, and looks at all saints as united at one common table with its one loaf and one cup. It is not the communion of any particular assembly, but of the whole church, and it is imperative that we hold firmly this fundamental principle of the Lord's supper, or else we drift into a sectarian table with sectarian bread and wine of our own. That each local assembly has solemn responsibilities with reference to the Lord's table, as it has in the matter of baptism, it is of the deepest moment to remember; but we cannot, by local usages and ways, violate the fundamental rules of these ordinances as given to the whole church, without being guilty of denying the Lordship of Christ. He is *Lord* at the table at which we are *guests*, and if we violate the great principle of His ordinance,

either by laxity or bigotry, we set aside His authority and become lords over God's heritage, instead of being disciples at the feet of our one Master.

Who are the "*we all*" of v. 17? Surely those described in chap. i. 2, as "them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus; called to be saints, *with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord*, both theirs and ours." This precious description is very comprehensive; it embraces the whole of the heavenly family. They are "in Christ Jesus," they are "saints," and they "call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." There are the "*we*" and the "*all*" who in chap. x. are said to be "partakers of that one bread." None are excluded except those who are described in such scriptures as chap. v. and 2 John, and we may not exclude any except under the authority of the Head of the church. "The *many* are *one* bread, and *one* body," and the table is for *all*, as the ordinance of baptism is for *all* who believe in the name of the Lord Jesus. We may neither go beyond this *all*, nor fall short of it. Religious bigotry refuses to embrace the "*all*," and religious worldliness and looseness go beyond the "*all*." It therefore behoves the *porters* of the Lord's house (Mark xiii. 34) to watch that His will in this matter may be wisely carried out in this evil and difficult day.

In 1 Cor. x. "the Lord's table" is put in contrast with "the table of devils," as in Prov. ix. wisdom's feast is put in contrast with the harlot's feast. They both have their guests; but let us guard against a slanderous use of the term "table of devils," in applying it to that which, though connected with much that is unscriptural, gives to the heart of many a true worshipper a hallowed remembrance of Christ. What would not be *to us* the Lord's table may be so to others, with less knowledge of the Word of God. The Lord judges according to His

perfect knowledge of the attitude of each heart towards Himself, and we have to take care not to usurp His place in judgment of others. The broken spirit of a child of God, even amid wrong surroundings, is more acceptable to God than a proud self-righteous spirit at the most scripturally appointed table. The expression "table of devils" or demons is used of that which was definitely set up for the worship of idols and of that alone.

III. SELF-JUDGMENT THE GREAT REQUISITE.

In I Cor. xi. the apostle corrects certain abuses of the Lord's supper *in the local assembly*. Their coming to it had been "not for the better, but for the worse," and they had really treated *His* table as *their* table. But though they had thus profaned it the Lord did not disown it. He held it to be His table still, and judged them for their desecration of it, for some had died and others were under judicial sickness. God holds men responsible for the profession they make and the names they take and give, and judges accordingly. He thus regards what professes to be the Lord's table in Christendom, and judges now and will judge hereafter for all the dishonour done to the name of the Lord by the abuses man has brought upon it.

The local assembly is here called "the assembly of God," and the apostle gives to those who composed it the instructions concerning the Lord's supper which he had received from the Lord Himself for the whole church. The Lord's table has not to be restricted by the assembly at Corinth with any local limitations, nor fenced with any other authority than that which the Word of God supplies for the common feast of the saints. It is the anti-typical passover of the Israel of God, wherein Christ is presented as sacrificed for us, and to which all are

welcomed who by faith feed on Him. On the significance of the feast we do not write now, but would simply remark that deeper and fuller acquaintance with the cross of Christ would deepen our personal fellowship with Him, and would lead to more searching and humbling of ourselves and to richer worship at His table.

One thing, however, to which we would specially call attention is the solemn obligation of *self-judgment* laid upon all who have a place at the table. The one who does not judge himself profanes the table *to himself*, though not to others. Misconception prevails on this point, and saints imagine that if someone is at the table, of whose evil conduct they have a suspicion, but no proof, *they* are defiled thereby. Still more frequently is this the case when someone is present whose conscience allows him to do as to the Lord what the consciences of others would not permit them to do. Their consciences are not defiled by his presence, but their love should seek a fitting opportunity to impart to him any truer knowledge of the Lord's mind that they possess. Owing to this misconception the Lord's table is looked upon as a place where those assembled are to judge others, while the humbling, godly process of self-judgment is neglected. Thus the holy supper, instituted by the Lord just before the sorrows of Gethsemane and Calvary, is turned into an occasion of discord and confusion, instead of the means of fellowship with Him in those sorrows.

In the sanctuary the table was on the *north* side, and this is always expressive of judgment. It was on the north side of the altar that the sacrifices were slain, and the very fact of our being at the Lord's table should direct our hearts and thoughts to the sorrows and sufferings of the cross. Such a contemplation of His sacrifice, when seated at the King's table, would produce

its blessed results on our spirits and tempers, and would lead us to watch against all filthiness of the flesh in its grosser forms, and also of the spirit in its inward and subtler forms of pride and worldliness. It is this that defiles the "pure table" to ourselves, and calls down on us the Lord's judgment.

The Lord will vindicate the right of His table as He did at Corinth, not simply because an outwardly unclean person had sat at it, but because of the temper and manner which the company as a whole were manifesting. How often He has to do this we should better understand if only we walked more in the light of communion with Him. In chap. xi. we do not read of *our* putting away from the table; but we read of God's solemn putting away. There is in our church ways too much fleshly activity, and too little quiet waiting upon God that we may discern His will and set things in order by that Word which He has given for our guidance and direction.

It is as true of the Lord's supper as of baptism, that it is not specially connected with any local assembly, but with the *whole* body of Christ, and can only be rightly observed by any assembly on the ground common to all saints. Any one, therefore, having a place at it anywhere has a place everywhere. Any local assembly, be it of but two or three, truly gathered to the name of Christ, has the mighty promise, "There am I," and all that is done in the name of the Lord, that is, in true obedience to His Word, possesses universal authority over all who discern His name and authority in what is done; but only in that measure is there responsibility for obedience. To *enforce* the action of one assembly upon another no authority is given; but the action of any assembly ought surely not to be questioned without very good reason, for, like that

of Israel in Deut. xiii. 14. it ought, after diligent, patient and full investigation, to be so clearly in accordance with truth that it should commend itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

IV. THE PENTECOSTAL PATTERN.

At Pentecost all were together, and the reality of their oneness was such that there was no "mine" and "thine," but they had all things common. So will it be again when we are together as one in the presence of the Lamb. This beautiful pattern is given us not to enforce as a *law*, but to imitate, and as it is imitated by us individually there will be the outward manifestation of it. Then we read, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship; in the breaking of bread and in prayers." The doctrine and the fellowship are linked together, as are the breaking of bread and the prayers.* The "apostles' doctrine" or teaching was the foundation passover truth of the death and resurrection of Christ, as we see in the early chapters of the Acts, and "the fellowship" was that which resulted from fellowship with the Father as the Head of the family, and with the Son as the Head of the body. Then "the breaking of bread," *i.e.*, the Lord's supper, as a church ordinance, and "the prayers," are spoken of as observed by all who were in that fellowship. Of fellowship *at* the table Scripture never speaks; but the communion of the table belongs to all who have communion by faith in the body and blood of Christ. United hearts gave united assemblies. The root of all sectarianism is that alienation of hearts which can no longer forbear one another in love; while all union

* The word "prayers" following the "breaking of bread" clearly shows that the latter was not a social feast but a religious one. The "and" after "fellowship" should be omitted as in R.V.

that is the result of pressure from without is but as a whited sepulchre that covers corruption.

When the thing symbolized is found we cannot deny the symbol, as Peter said when his brethren contended with him, "What was I, that I could withstand God?" God gave evidence that they were baptized by the Spirit, and for Peter to have refused baptism by water would have been to withstand God. We should be doing the same if we were to refuse the symbols of the bread and wine to any who have communion by faith in the body and blood of Christ, having received life in Him. We have to be on our guard lest we be found "fighting against God," as we most assuredly shall be if we deny the symbols and shadow to those who have the reality and substance.

A vague phraseology often needs to be sifted. We often hear of people being "in fellowship," when what is meant by the expression is that such an one is regarded as belonging to a certain meeting. In Scripture the expression means something very different, for it denotes being in fellowship with the Father and the Son—the centre and fountain of life—and in fellowship with all saints. It might be well if the expression were restored to its grand and lofty use according to Scripture, and then the lower local use of the word, which has a painful and sectarian ring about it, would become unnecessary. Let us be very careful lest scriptural expressions be made to cover unscriptural thoughts and opinions, and we thereby deceive ourselves, to God's dishonour and our own injury.

V. THE ABUSE OF THESE ORDINANCES.

As was remarked in commencing, it has ever been the aim of Satan to frustrate the purpose and design of God, and he has specially sought to do this in the matter of baptism and the Lord's supper. Baptism, as

we have seen, was designed to be a *separating* ordinance, marking off the children of God from the world. Satan has turned it into the means of *uniting* in one mass clean and unclean alike, and giving to nations as such the profession of Christianity. By the introduction of infant baptism, and by the administration of the ordinance in a manner which man deems to be more convenient than that set forth in Scripture, the very design of Christ has been utterly perverted, and the result is a christened *world*.

So has it been with the Lord's supper—that ordinance which was designed to be the great symbol of the *unity* of all Christians. Instead of being this it has been made the especial occasion and instrument of *division*, and what should have been the one table of the church of God has been replaced by numerous human tables which are out of keeping with the one loaf and the one cup which are placed upon them, for they fail to own the one Lord and Christ—the one Head of the one church. That which should have been an expression of communion has thus become the symbol of disunion and discord.

In both ordinances Satan has contravened God's purpose, and made them the very opposite of what He intended them to be. Yet in spite of all this unutterable confusion, and even by means of it, God is teaching lessons of grace and truth, of separation from the world, and of the communion of saints, which in their depth would never have been known but for Satan's devices. Satan is used of God to sift out the chaff from the wheat, while God takes care of the wheat, whether in the church collectively or in us individually. There is a needs-be for the things which sift, though woe to him through whom they arise, whether Satan or man. We shall soon learn what God's discipline has effected even by means of our sin and

discord, and how God has thereby been teaching His people and preparing them for the blessed, united harmony of heaven. Meanwhile may it be our object to frustrate Satan's devices, and to give both these precious ordinances their due place according to the Lord's gracious design, and then we shall in quiet confidence, amidst all the confusion, anticipate the time when it shall be said, "True and righteous are Thy judgments"; "Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

REVISED VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.*

XXVI.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS (*continued*).

CVII. 1—For "mercy" here and for "goodness" in *vv.* 8, 15, 21, 31 ren. "*lovingkindness*" as in *v.* 43. This is the key-word of the psalm. *v.* 2—"adversary" for "enemy," so 108. 13; 112. 8; 119. 139, 157; 136. 24. *v.* 4—"a desert way," "city of habitation" as *vv.* 7, 36. *v.* 7—"a straight way," *i.e.* an even way, same word *Ezra* 8. 21; *Jer.* 31. 9. *v.* 37b—"and get them fruits." *v.* 40—"in the waste" *i.e.* a void, empty place, word for "void" *Gen.* 1. 2. *v.* 42—"The upright."

CVIII. With *vv.* 1-5 cf. 57. 7-11, and with *vv.* 6-13 cf. 60. 5-15. *v.* 4b—"The skies" as 57. 11. *v.* 12—"help against the adversary."

CIX. 21—Ren. "*But thou art Jehovah Adonai* [*i.e.* my sovereign Lord], *deal thou with me* for thy name's sake." For the rare combination of these two divine titles cf. 68. 20; 140. 7; 141. 8; *Hab.* 3. 19.

CX. 3—"people offer themselves willingly," or M. "*are freewill offerings.*" For "in the beauties of holiness" M. has "*in holy attire.*" The **LXX.** has "in the splendours of thy saints," the word for *splendours* being the same that is ren. "*bright*" in *Rev.* 19. 8. The expression "(as) from the womb of the morning" points to resurrection, cf. *Is.* 26. 19, and note "the dew." "*Thy youth are to thee (as) the dew*" M. *v.* 6—"he shall strike through [cf. *v.* 5.] the head." The sing. *Rosh* (*head*) is the word ren. "chief" in *Eze.* 38. 2, where we would ren. "The prince of Gog, head of Meshech and Tubal." "over a wide land" M., rather "earth."

* All quotations from R.V. without comment are regarded as improvements. R.M. means *Revised margin*; A.M., *Authorised margin*; a d. notes the first part of a verse; b, the second.

CXI. 1—"in the council." v. 7—"hands are truth."

CXII. 5b—"he shall maintain his cause in judgment."

CXIII. This psalm to 118. formed the *Hallel*, or song of praise, sung by the Jews at the passover; cf. Matt. 26. 30.

CXIV. 1—"went forth." v. 2—"Judah became." v. 8b—"a pool of water."

CXVI. 3—"cords of death" "and the restraints"; this word occ. 118. 5; Lam. 1. 3 "straits." v. 8—"feet from being thrust aside," cf. 118. 13. v. 11—For "haste" ren. "flight," or "hasted away"; lxx. has "amazement," cf. Mk. 14. 33.

CXVII. 2—"loving-kindness" is better, and so in 118 for "mercy."

CXVIII. 5—For "Lord" read "JAH" twice, and also in vv. 14, 17, 18, 19. This name of God occ. first, Ex. 15. 2, and after Ex. 17. 16; Is. 12. 2; 26. 4; 38. 11 (*twice*); and 43 times in Psalms. v. 7—"The Lord is on my side." v. 20—"This is the gate." "into it." v. 25a—Heb. *Hosannah*, as in Matt. 21. 9. v. 27—"The Lord [*i.e.* Jehovah] is God," cf. 1 Ki. 18. 39. v. 28a—"I will give thanks unto thee."

NOTES AND REPLIES.

What are we to understand by "these least commandments" in Matt. v. 19.

The Lord had just spoken of the obligation to obey in all matters, and declared that one "jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." It is to the jots and tittles that He refers in the expression "these least commandments." We have a parallel in Matt. xxiii. 23. In condemning the hypocrisy of the Pharisees the Lord says, "Ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith." *Judgment* implies correct personal estimate of right and wrong; *mercy* has regard to our dealings with our fellow-men, as God had mercy on us; and *faith* denotes faithfulness to God and His commandments. While the hypocrite seeks to condone great wrongs by little virtues that cost nothing, the heir of the kingdom must be careful not only of the great matters of the law written on the heart, but of those lesser ones also—the jots and tittles—lest he be least in the kingdom. Even those who fear God are in danger of becoming careless in small matters, and we may ponder our Lord's question, "What is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or suffer loss?" (Lu. ix. 25.) "*Suffer loss*" is better here than "be cast away." What is *profit* in this world compared with *loss* in the next?

FELLOWSHIP.

WE are very prone to use words with which we are familiar without considering their force and meaning. In doing this we are always losers; and if, through lack of care, we go further, and get into a habit of *mis*-using words, we may go astray ourselves and lead others with us.

One of the words frequently on our lips is *fellowship*; and it would be well to see whether we give it the meaning that Scripture warrants. Indeed in the inspired writings it is not always used quite in the same sense, though its varied uses are so closely linked together that they may be said to grow out of its first and highest significance.

The Greek word is sometimes rendered *fellowship*, sometimes *communion*, and occasionally by other words, and it is only by considering the various passages in which it occurs that we get a full view of what is expressed by it. One has said "it is almost always used of fellowship with *persons*, or with things personified," and another remarks that "it generally denotes the fellowship of persons with persons in one and the same object," an object in which all are truly interested.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SON.

The earliest New Testament scripture in which the word is found is 1 Cor. i. 9, where it expresses the high calling of believers: "God is faithful, by Whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." That this declares nothing less than the high calling of *all* who are Christ's is very clear. For while the

Epistle is written specially to saints at Corinth, it is addressed to them "with all that in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 2). And it is evident that this statement is not made concerning those at Corinth because they were walking according to their high calling, for they were in a divided condition, there were contentions among them, they were gathering around party leaders, and were allowing an evil that even Gentile idolaters would not have permitted. (1 Cor. i. 11, 12; iv. 6; v. 1.) For these things Paul has to reprove them, but before he speaks to them of their *unfaithfulness* he tells them of God's *faithfulness*; and before he attempts to deal with any evil he declares that calling which is the fruit of God's infinite grace, that he may use it as a lever to lift them up in their thoughts, desires and conduct.

God has called us "unto the fellowship of His Son." John speaks of fellowship *with* the Father and *with* the Son; but here it is "the fellowship *of* His Son." Those who "are sanctified in Christ Jesus" (v. 1) are called into *partnership*, or to *partake in common*, with the blessed Son of God in all that is His. They are called into association with Him *now* in His rejection, and then *for ever* in His glory. They are embraced with the very same love that from eternity rested upon Him (John xvii. 23); it is their privilege to speak to God as their Father with the very same liberty with which He addressed Him (John xvi. 26, 27); they "are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Eph. v. 30); and, as over-comers, they shall "walk *with Him* in white," shall bear *His* "new name," yea, shall sit *with Him* on His throne, and be able to join in that holy song of praise which He in the midst of His risen church will sing. (Rev. iii. 4, 12, 21; Heb. ii. 12.) It is of those whom the Father has

given to Him *without distinction*, even all who believe on Him through the word of His apostles, that He says, "The glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given them." (John xvii. 9, 20, 22.)

Lest any should think that the word *called* does not mean that they were actually brought into this fellowship, it may be well to observe that throughout the Epistles the word "called" always expresses an effectual act of God. Thus in the Epistle to the Romans we read, "Whom He did predestinate, them He also *called*"; the "vessels of mercy" are those "whom He hath *called*"; and all saints at Rome are described as "the *called* of Jesus Christ." (Rom. viii. 30; ix. 23, 24; x. 6.) Under law blessing was the reward of obedience; under grace obedience is the result of blessing. "God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus"; "I therefore . . . beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." (Eph. i. 3; iv. 1.) Only when walking in obedience can a believer enjoy the blessings he has in Christ; but *they are his*, not as the fruit of his obedience, but as the free gift of God.

The great truth needed to meet the low and divided state of believers at Corinth, and needed in these Corinthian days is thus announced, "Ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son." Then follow solemn words to show Corinthian saints that they were not proving the reality of this calling, and walking in a manner worthy of it. The calling involves participation in the present rejection of the Lord by the world, and therefore those who know its reality take their place with Him in separation from the world; but Paul has to say to the Corinthians, "Already are ye filled, already ye are become rich, ye have reigned without us: yea and I would that ye did reign, that we also might reign with you" (1 Cor.

iv. 8, R.V.); that is, I wish the reigning day had really come, for then we should all reign.

FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER AND WITH THE SON.

In turning to the first Epistle of John we find the word "*fellowship*" several times in chap. i. The apostle presents Christ to those whom he addresses—Christ as the One who was from the beginning, as the *Eternal Life* manifested unto us (*vv.* 1, 2). He then unfolds his object in this: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (*v.* 3). We have here a double statement: "Our fellowship is with the Father"; it is also "with His Son." To have fellowship with the Father is to enter into His thoughts about, and estimate of, His beloved Son, His gift to us. We are called to learn out the fulness of Christ; to trace out the perfections of His life below as Emmanuel; to grow in acquaintance with the preciousness of His sacrifice, and the efficacy of His present ministry above; and to look forward to His eternal glory as the Head of the new creation of God. As we do this we find delight in Him who is, and ever must be, the supreme object of God's delight. Thus we glorify Him whom God delights to honour; we adore Him whom God accounts to be worthy of all praise.

But it is equally true that "our fellowship is . . . with His Son Jesus Christ." The Son has revealed the Father to us; He has declared the Father's name. (John i. 18; xvii. 6, 26.) "No one knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him"; but "we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true." (Matt. xi. 27; 1 John v. 20.) It is as those who are one

with Christ that we utter that holy name which He alone had a right to use, when we call God our Father. We are called to share His enjoyment of the Father's love and faithfulness: we can look forward with Him to the coming day when God will put all things beneath His feet, and He shall be satisfied with the harvest of His sowing in tears; and as we contemplate God's dealings with Him we can respond to His own word to us, "O magnify Jehovah *with Me*, and let *us* exalt His name *together*."

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE HOLY GHOST.

Then may we not say that "fellowship *with* the Father, and *with* His Son Jesus Christ," is really "the fellowship [communion] *of* the Holy Ghost"? (2 Cor. xiii. 14.) Does not the Holy Spirit lead the believer into that fellowship which is peculiarly *His own*? The promise of the Lord Jesus was, "He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you"; and then, that no one might think the words "*of Mine*" in any wise limited His gracious ministry, He adds, "All things that the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall shew it unto you." (John xvi. 14, 15.) So we read concerning "the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him," "God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the *deep things* of God." (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.) If in fellowship with Christ "we cry Abba, Father," it is "the Spirit of His Son" who begets that cry within us (Gal. iv. 6); and if in fellowship with the Father we grow in our estimate of the preciousness of God's *Elect* in whom His soul *delighteth* (Isa. xlii. 1), it is through the leading and teaching of that same Spirit.

We may see from all this how absolutely this high fellowship with God is the fruit of the grace that has

shown itself in redemption, and in the union of Christ and the redeemed. It is something which Adam in innocence could not have known. It could never have entered the heart of man to conceive, nor can it be confined by any human limitations, for it is from heaven and divine. Fellowship with the Father and the Son is the outcome of *sonship*, and can only be brought about by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit.

THE EXPRESSION OF FELLOWSHIP.

Let us now turn to some scriptures that speak of the outflow of this fellowship, and the first of these is naturally Acts ii. 42. The first effect of the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost was an outburst of *worship*. Those who were filled with the Spirit spake of "the wonderful works of God," not so much in addressing the people as in praise to God. The next thing was a testimony concerning Christ to the people, three thousand of whom accepted it at once. They too received the gift of the Holy Ghost (v. 28), and, by His leading, they gave constant attention to the apostles' teaching, continued in hearty and holy fellowship, observed the breaking of bread, and gave themselves to prayer. Some lay great stress upon the article in one of these clauses, and read "*the fellowship*"; but if we read it thus it of course means "*the fellowship*" which was characteristic of the church of God as a whole. This fellowship found a double expression; first in "praising God" (v. 47) together, in united thanksgiving and adoration, and then in loving ministry to one another's necessities. And so largely did their love show itself in this manner that the very word *fellowship* came to be used to describe this particular expression of divine affection. Thus in 2 Cor. viii. 4 Paul speaks of the churches of Macedonia "beseeching us with much entreaty in regard

of this grace and *the fellowship* in the ministering to the saints" (R.V.). In chap. ix. 13 the word is rendered "*distribution*" in A.V. and "contribution" in R.V. It is literally "they glorify God . . . for the liberality of *the fellowship* unto them and unto all." With reference to the same subject we read in Rom. xv. 26 (R.V.), "For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution [*fellowship*] for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem."

When Paul speaks of James, Cephas and John giving to him and Barnabas "the right hands of fellowship," the meaning is clear enough that they welcomed them in their service, and when in addressing saints at Philippi he expresses his thanks to God for their "fellowship in the gospel," we have only to read chap. iv. 15, 16 to see in what a very practical way they showed it. In the short epistle to Philemon Paul uses the striking expression "the *fellowship* of thy faith." Acknowledging his love and faith "toward the Lord Jesus and toward all saints," he prays "that the fellowship of thy faith may become effectual in the knowledge of every good thing which is in you [or us] unto Christ" (v. 6 R.V.). There are two things that always go together—faith in the Lord Jesus, and love toward all saints, and the latter increases or decreases in proportion to the former. There can be little question how Paul desired the fellowship of Philemon's faith to become effectual. Equally clear is it that when he exhorted Hebrew believers not to forget "to communicate," (*i.e. have fellowship*,) he pointed to the same kind of fellowship that Gentile believers had so largely shown with them.

The consideration of all these scriptures surely makes it evident that the word *fellowship* everywhere carries in it the thought of *participation*, or having anything in

common. We have fellowship with the Father, for He has by His Spirit made the object of *His* heart the object of *our* hearts, and we have fellowship with the Son, for by the same Spirit "we cry Abba, Father," and share with Him present reproach and future glory. "We have fellowship one with another," because this "fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" is the common portion of all believers, and because as the "fellowship of the Spirit" is wrought within us it finds expression in deeds of loving sympathy towards those who are children of the same heavenly family, and fellow-members of the same body—the one body of which Christ is the Head. And while seeking to cherish this holy fellowship amid much that would disturb it, we look forward to the time when, without any hindrance, we shall prove the full joy of that to which God, in His rich grace, has called us, even the "fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

MISUSE OF THE WORD FELLOWSHIP.

Here we would gladly conclude, but for the fact that *warning* as well as *teaching* is so often called for, and at the present time it seems necessary to say that the word "*fellowship*" is never used in Scripture in the sense in which it is sometimes used by men. One of its meanings in common use is that of a *society* or *community*, with a defined membership, and there seems a tendency to give it somewhat of this meaning in connection with the fellowship of children of God. Such expressions as "*in the fellowship*," or "*in our fellowship*," or "*children of God outside the fellowship*," all point in the direction of the formation of a *fellowship* short of the divine fellowship to which God has called us. The use of a scriptural word in an unscriptural sense is always calculated to mislead,

and certainly the use of the word fellowship in this sense is decidedly unscriptural. Scripture knows of but *one* fellowship, which is variously expressed as "fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ"; "the fellowship of His Son"; and "the fellowship of the Holy Ghost." To this fellowship *all* who are born of God are called, and it is their proper portion. The measure in which it may be *known* and *enjoyed* and *carried out* is another thing; but while we should ever seek to make experience correspond with calling, we should not confound calling and experience.

Of course men as men have a right to form a society, and call it a fellowship, and receive and reject whom they please, and carefully draw the line between those who are inside and those who are outside that fellowship; but Christians who would be subject to Christ as Lord can never do this. They can only recognise the fellowship God has formed, and seek so to know its reality that there may be both the enjoyment and the manifestation of it, but by the power of the indwelling Spirit alone can this be done. The more anyone really knows of the "fellowship of the Spirit" the more ready will he be to discern the same fellowship in another, and to rejoice in it, even though it may be linked with much that is calculated rather to hinder than promote its growth.

There is a fellowship against which we are solemnly warned. In 2 Cor. vi. the question is asked "What *fellowship* hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what *communion* hath light with darkness?" The second word is the general one for *fellowship*, the former being another with a similar meaning. The apostle John warns against any fellowship with one who brings not the "doctrine of Christ," and says "he that giveth him greeting partaketh in [*i.e. has fellowship with*]

his evil works." (2 John 9, R.V.) In writing to Timothy Paul exhorts him, "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of [*i.e. have fellowship with*] other men's sins: keep thyself pure."

Thus we have on the one hand to be exceedingly careful that we do not show any fellowship with what is contrary to God, and on the other hand, to be equally careful to cherish the mind of Christ towards those whom God has called into the one blessed fellowship, even though as to knowledge they may have less light on some matters than we believe God has given to us, and for the use of which we are responsible to Him. W. H. B.

"THE LAW OF THE SIN-OFFERING."

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS ON LEV. VI. 24-30.

OUR hearts must be drawn unto the Lord Himself if we are to worship Him, and in His Word we find that which does draw the heart to Him. "I determined," said the apostle Paul, "not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified," for all things that would be a cause of healing—all things that the soul really needs—are found centred in Christ, and Christ crucified. In the passage before us there is provision for the need of our souls, and the drawing out of our hearts to the Lord.

You will notice the two sin-offerings here spoken of—the one whereof the priests might eat, and the other whereof no one was to eat; the one was to be partly eaten, the other was to be wholly burned. Now in the Old Testament we have foreshadowings both of Christ and of His people; the High Priest was a type of the Lord Jesus Himself, while the priests generally were typical of the new order of priests addressed in 1 Pet. ii. 9, "Ye are a

chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation." It is well to distinguish between that which is directly and solely typical of the Lord Jesus Himself and His ministry, and that which sets forth the worship and service of God, which His people of the present day enter into and properly apply themselves to. Let us remember that all God's people form His priesthood, and that the priesthood of the present time is not dependent upon earthly appointments, but is chosen by God Himself, and constituted a royal and heavenly priesthood to offer up sacrifices acceptable to Him. Then we may see what the priests of old occupied themselves with, and what we, the true priests, should be occupied with. There are, indeed, various gradations of grace and various gifts in the church, but all members of that church form God's holy priesthood. The hearts of all true priests enter, though not equally, yet similarly, into the things of God, and the response of the heart of the true priesthood, which finds expression in worship, is pleasant to the heart of God.

There is before us then in these two aspects of the sin-offering a lesson which we may well value. Let us deal with the latter first. In verse 30 we read, "And no sin-offering, whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile withal in the holy place, shall be eaten; it shall be burnt in the fire." As some may not have noticed the distinction between the two sin-offerings, we may remark, without dwelling too much on details, that we find the latter specially set forth in Lev. xvi. The blood of the great sin-offering of the year, offered up on the tenth day of the seventh month, was brought in and sprinkled on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat, and the benefit of that offering came to the people, not from their partaking of it by means of their priesthood, but simply through the

acceptance of it by God. That this was so we find in Heb. xiii. The apostle there refers to what the Hebrews well knew, saying, "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." And then the reason is adduced, "For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp." Thus he explains to them: you know the meaning of a certain sacrifice you have, the benefit of which comes to you not through your eating of it, or through your priesthood eating of it, but purely through God's accepting it. The worshipper is absolved from sin, and sent away with a glad heart because of the sense of sins forgiven.

This great sacrifice is a foreshadowing of the greater sacrifice, even the Lord Jesus Himself. No sacrifice whereof the blood was brought into the holiest was ever to be eaten; it was the type solely of the Lord Jesus Christ, the one perfect sacrifice and offering unto God. Nobody could take part in it, and nobody by aught he did added to its merits. How precious this is when we think for a moment of what the Lord Jesus did when He suffered outside the camp! It is to this offering that reference is made in the words, "For if the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" And the entrance of the high priest with the blood is also referred to in the statement, "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." Christ, the Lamb slain, has entered God's presence, the acceptable offering,

the great sin-offering, that beareth away the sin of the world ; His blood is brought into the very holiest, and the benefit of His sacrifice comes to us, not through our individual eating, not through anything that might be added, but solely through the grace of God. It is through His perfect offering, that God sendeth forth the message of grace, that “ Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” Of *that* offering none could partake, it was a foreshadowing of Christ alone.

But of the other offering some one *was* to partake. Of the ordinary sin-offering brought when the offerer was conscious of actual sin committed, we are here told that the priests were to eat in a holy place. In Leviticus x. we get the account of the failure of Nadab and Abihu, and, after they were smitten, we are told that because of his affliction Aaron could not eat the sin-offering. Thus we see that it was the ordinance of God for the priests that offered the ordinary sin-offering to partake thereof. Aaron, Eleazar and Ithamar could not on that day, the day of affliction, eat thereof, their hearts were too heavy. They could not enter into the real spiritual sympathy needful to partake of the offering, and when Moses heard the plea, he accepted it as sufficient to debar them from carrying out the ordinance instituted, for even God’s laws are at times set aside by His own wisdom and at His own appointment. Thus David when eating the shew-bread was a nominal but not a spiritual breaker of the law. So Aaron and Eleazar were nominal breakers of the law, but what was the cause of their being accepted in this apparent breach ? It lies in this. The ordinance was that the true priesthood should partake of a portion of the sin-offering as entering into that which brought the offerer there. It was to be eaten in a holy place as a holy thing, for it was most holy. When the offerer brought an

offering for sin unto the priest, he virtually said to him, "You, O priest, are to enter into that which brings me here, into that which absolves me." They were not to stand above the offerer and say, "We are a holy priesthood; *you* bring the offering for sin, and *we* as holy priests will absolve you." There was no such thought in the Mosaic ritual. God would have His priests know that they must enter into the sin of His people, and His wise ordinances express the grace which was continually shown forth in the appointments of the tabernacle and the temple. If then this be so, and if Aaron, Eleazar and Ithamar, through Nadab and Abihu's failure, could not take such a place, but put in the plea, "We could not eat of the sin-offering, our hearts were so heavy," is there not for us a lesson of life-long, lasting importance, as to our condition, and our ability to enter as true priests of God into the necessities and difficulties of others? Just for a moment dwell on the thought of personal sorrow, and consider how impossible it is in the day of personal sorrow, especially when affliction comes from the hand of God, to be occupied with the failures and sorrows of others; they seem at a distance, for the heart is not in a condition to enter into them. Does God accept this? Yes, for while God takes pleasure in all service rendered in fellowship with Himself, He would not have that which is forced, and for which the heart is not prepared.

But putting aside the thought of personal sorrow and affliction, let us take up the New Testament meaning of this as expressed in Gal. vi., "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Here is the explanation of how true priests should behave, of how the priesthood of God should partake of the sin-offering, of how believers in the

present day should enter into the failure of others, and also enter into that which gives absolution from such failure. My friends, we know that sins and failures are of constant occurrence in the church of God. What is our spirit, our demeanour, our attitude toward those who are overtaken in faults? Is it the exaltation of ourselves saying, "Thank God, I have never done this thing"? I appeal to your hearts. When you hear of failure and backsliding, does not your heart groan out before God, saying, "That is just what I am; if God did not hold me up, I should likewise slip, for my heart is equally faulty and liable so to act"? The priests of God then, who are able to offer up their spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable to God, are not to exalt themselves above any failing brethren, and say, "We are better than you"; but rather as priests to carry out the teaching of John xiii., and to be washing the feet of any that may be defiled. This they can do by bringing the Word of God to bear upon the sin, entering into the matter with heart and soul, and so humbling themselves with their erring brethren, that they may share afresh the sweetness of the way of God's forgiveness.

You cannot have touch with sin, frailty, and failure on the part of your fellow-believers, without being intensely humbled before God yourself, because of the consciousness of your own liability to sin, but for the upholding grace of God. The heavenly priesthood stands below, instead of above, stoops down, instead of lifting itself up, in order to restore the fallen. Mark the word, "*in the spirit of meekness.*" Those who would restore others must be in a spiritual condition, having the mind of God, the mind of Christ. And we find great benefit in thus humbling our souls on account of the sins of our fellows. Would it be right for us to give the cold shoulder to one that had

erred, to gather up our garments as we pass by; and say, "Come not nigh, you have sinned" ? Far away be such unholy, ungodly thoughts; our part as priests is to bring to such an one the precious word of truth, and show the connection of the sin with that which takes it away, for the heart that values the restoration of others is the heart that values forgiveness most itself.

Now this leads up to the question—How are we as God's people acting one toward another? How are we bearing one another's burdens, and so fulfilling the law of Christ? The Church of Christ will always be a poor weak thing, full of imperfection, failing and faultiness, and if we expect perfection while here we shall be disappointed. God leaves His people here in order by grace to show the value of grace; He leaves them in weakness that they may know the value of strength; He leaves them still liable to temptation that they may know more fully the meaning of the grace bestowed. Ah! my friends, we must ever be greatly exercised about that which is lacking, about the faulty and erring; but the way to meet failure and bear with it is unfolded to us in the Word of God. We shall not meet it by standing above the failing one, but by stooping down and saying, "This is what you and I are liable to, but let us both turn to Him, confess all to Him, and know that in grace God forgives and perfectly cleanses us through the sacrifice of Christ." And they who taste of grace long to taste it more, and those who thus feed upon grace will be themselves true examples of grace—true priests that carry out the will of God on earth. May this tender spirit be engendered and fostered within us daily, and may we ever be drawing near unto Him who is the great sin-offering, whose blood is brought in before God on our account, and who ever liveth to make intercession for us!

A. O. M.

“A GOOD MAN.”

OF the man who is thus described by the Spirit of God the notices are brief, but very suggestive and instructive. His original name was *Joseph* (Acts iv. 36, R.V.); but the apostles gave him a name which signifies “*son of consolation*” or “*exhortation*,” the kindred verb being used of his exhorting the disciples in Acts xi. 23. He was a *prophet* in the early church, and fully answered to the inspired description of such, speaking “unto men to *edification*, and *exhortation* and *comfort*.” (1 Cor. xiv. 3.)

“To do and teach” is the divine order, and the first mention of Barnabas presents him to us as one who gave *comfort* to the church by his *deeds*, selling his land, and placing the proceeds at the disposal of the apostles. Owning Jesus as the Christ of God and the Hope of Israel he entered, as no Levite could under the law, into the truth of the word “the Lord is his inheritance,” and also his own high calling “to stand before the Lord and to minister unto Him.” (Deut. x. 8, 9.) Finding thus his portion in the Lord, and receiving the pledge of an incorruptible inheritance, the gratitude of his heart found expression in ministering of his substance to the saints.

A few years later, when Saul, who had left Jerusalem a persecutor, returned as a disciple of the Lord Jesus, Barnabas seems to have been the first to recognise the grace of God in him. The disciples “were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.” It is quite possible that “Saul of Tarsus” may have had some former knowledge of Joseph of Cyprus, and so the more readily have gained access to him; but certainly this “son of consolation” became such to the man who found himself

cut off from former friends, and suspected by those with whom he was truly one. "Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles," and told of the Lord's dealings with him. Thus was Saul received with confidence, and a special link was formed between these two servants of Christ that was yet to be very fruitful. (Acts ix. 26-28.)

The "great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem" led to the scattering of the disciples, who in consequence "went everywhere preaching the Word." As a rule they limited their speaking to "Jews only"; but certain "men of Cyprus and Cyrene," obeying their Christian instincts, and entering more fully into the spirit of the gospel, "when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the *Greeks* [*i.e.* Gentiles] also, preaching the Lord Jesus." (Acts xi. 20, R.V.) "The *hand* of the Lord was with" those who so entered into sympathy with the *heart* of the Lord, "and a great number believed, and turned to the Lord." Tidings of this reached "the ears of the church which was at Jerusalem," and they deemed the matter to be of such importance as to send one of their leaders to enquire into it. Barnabas was chosen as one who combined respect for what was dear to Jews with special power of discernment (Acts ix. 27), and a largeness of heart that could enter into this extension of the work of God, if such it proved to be.

When he reached Antioch, "and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they should cleave unto the Lord." It is in connection with this that it is said, "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." It is evident from Rom. v. 7, that the word "good" is more comprehensive than "righteous." No one can be "*good*" without being "*righteous*"; but a man may be very *righteous* and yet not have much of what one expresses

as "the more winning and persuasive form of holiness, as contrasted with the severer form of simple justice." True "goodness" is linked with "gentleness" (Gal. v. 22), and is the fruit of a large experience and high estimate of God's grace. It is he who is in this sense "a good man" that will discern the working of God's grace where others may not, and will have true fellowship with God in *all* the gracious work He is pleased to perform. The secret of this was that he was "full of the Holy Ghost and of faith," while the precious result is set forth in the statement that "much people was added to the Lord." The power to appreciate what God had wrought gave him a sympathy with these new-born souls that made his words of exhortation acceptable and fruitful. We may also be reminded of the proverb "The sweetness of the lips increaseth learning" (Prov. xvi. 21), for, as the dove is the chosen emblem of the Spirit of God, so the more truly a man is filled with the Spirit the more gentle and gracious will he be. Let us remember that true gentleness is no more evidence of readiness to compromise truth, than hardness of spirit and harshness of speech are signs of faithfulness.

Barnabas soon perceived that here was a sphere for the ministry of Saul, and with the true nobility of one who sought not his own praise but the glory of Christ, he found him and "brought him unto Antioch." Had there been any spirit of self-sufficiency or love of pre-eminence, instead of doing this he would just have maintained his own place; but, having at heart the true profit of the disciples, he became the instrument of introducing Saul to his own peculiar sphere of service as "the apostle of the Gentiles." Then, as true fellow-labourers, for "a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people." This service was only interrupted by their being chosen as bearers of some of the fruit of it

to Jerusalem. For it was in loving recognition of the *oneness* of God's church in Christ, which was a leading theme of Paul's ministry, that "Christians" at Antioch determined to send a gift "as a ministration unto the brethren which dwelt in Judæa." We are thus reminded that the *earliest* expression of the unity of the body of Christ was the outflow of love to all who owned His holy name in reality and truth.

Having fulfilled this service they returned to Antioch, and in answer to the united prayer of the prophets and teachers these two were marked out by the Holy Ghost as His messengers to carry the gospel to others. The record of their service and endurance in this mission is given in Acts xiii. and xiv., and having accomplished it they again returned to those who had commended them to God's grace ere they set out, and "abode long time with the disciples." When certain men from Judæa endeavoured to force circumcision on the Gentiles as a condition of salvation, Barnabas and Paul withstood them, and they were chosen with others to go to Jerusalem about the question. There they declared what things "God had wrought among the Gentiles by them"; their special mission to the Gentiles was fully recognised; and they were honoured as men that had "hazarded their lives for the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Gal. ii. 9; Acts xv. 26.) It is perfectly natural that in the epistle from Jerusalem the name of Barnabas stands *first*, even though it is clear that in their service Paul had already taken the lead. It is a special mark of the grace of Barnabas that he was quite ready to be the *companion* of the Lord's "*chosen vessel*" whom he had been the means of introducing to his field of labour.

But frailty ever attaches to the most eminent servants of God in their present state, and Paul and Barnabas soon

had to prove the truth of what they had said at Lystra—that they were men subject to like infirmities with others. (Acts xiv. 15.) It would seem to be after their return from Jerusalem, and while they “continued in Antioch,” that the painful matter related in Gal. ii. occurred, when Peter and others, in deference to some who came from Jerusalem, withdrew from the Gentiles, with whom they had had free intercourse. In relating this Paul says, “even Barnabas was carried away.” The expression “*even* Barnabas” while it shows the far-reaching effect of a bad example, shows also Paul’s high esteem of his companion.

Barnabas must have felt that the reproof addressed to Peter equally applied to him, and he may not have fully recovered from the effect of it when Paul suggested their making another visit to the brethren in the cities where they had preached the Word. Barnabas was minded to take with him his nephew Mark; but, as he had failed them on a former occasion, Paul “thought not good” to do this, and “the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other.” This sad record shows how even “good” men fail when, through hastiness of spirit or impatience, they in any measure leave the Lord out of a matter, instead of humbly seeking His guidance when a difficulty arises. The fact is recorded for our admonition, and may well lead the most devoted and united fellow-labourers to watch and pray lest they enter into that temptation which ever besets even true servants of God. “Only by pride cometh contention” (Prov. xiii. 10), and therefore the great thing is to seek the lowliness of mind that will make us more ready to pray over differences of judgment that may arise, than to contend for what we may consider to be right.

If it was a question of Jewish prejudice that led Mark to “turn away” from Paul and Barnabas at Pamphylia,

and not go "with them to the work," we can readily see that the sympathies of believers at Antioch would be with Paul rather than with Barnabas. We need not suppose that Barnabas justified Mark; and the fact that he was at Antioch again may have given him confidence and hope concerning his nephew. On the other hand, Paul's sense of the value of true Christian liberty may have caused him to fear the repetition of a shrinking back on the part of Mark.

It has been said that "Barnabas is not again mentioned in Scripture"; but we may feel thankful that this is not accurate, for the one reference to him that we have shows that there was no permanent break between these two servants of Christ. In writing to saints at Corinth a few years later Paul again speaks of Barnabas as a fellow-labourer. In referring to other apostles who were ministered to by the saints, he says, "Or I only and *Barnabas*, have not *we* power to forbear working?" (1 Cor. ix. 6.) Lest any one should think this was simply retrospective, it may be suggested that there would be little force in Paul's naming to those at Corinth one who had never been with him since he went there. The fact that Mark also had regained his former place in the apostle's esteem points to the same conclusion that fellowship had been fully restored.

In these days when Christian men can talk so lightly of *division*, and seem to make so little effort to overcome the difficulties that lead to it, it is well to lay to heart the fact that the differences we read of between these early servants of the Lord were fully overcome by that grace and wisdom which still abound for the lowly. (Prov. iii. 24; xi. 2.) Compare also 2 Pet. iii. 15, for evidence that Paul's faithful and "open rebuke" (Prov. xxvii. 5) of Peter did not lead to alienation of heart.

"HE EVER LIVETH."

Jesus my Redeemer lives,
 Christ my trust can die no more ;
 In the strength this knowledge gives,
 Shall not all my fears be o'er ;
 Calm, though death's long night be fraught
 Still with many an anxious thought ?

Jesus my Redeemer lives,
 And His life I too shall see :
 Bright the hope this promise gives,
 Where He is I there shall be.
 Shall I fear, then ? Can the Head
 Rise and leave the members dead ?

I shall see Him with these eyes,
 Him whom I so truly know ;
 Surely I myself shall rise,
 With His love my heart shall glow :
 Only then shall disappear
 Weakness which besets me here.

LOUISA OF BRANDENBURGH.

REVISED VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.*

XXVII.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS (*continued*).

CXIX. "*Blessed*" is the same word as "*happy*." "*they that are perfect in the way.*" v. 2—There are two Heb. words for *keep* ; one sig. to *keep by defending*, and the other to *keep by watching*. The latter is ren. *observe* in R.V. and occ. vv. 5, 8, 17, 44, 55, 57, 60, 63, 67, 88, 101, 106, 134, 158. v. 5—"ways were *established*." v. 19—"a *sojourner*," i.e. one away from home. v. 27—"shall I *meditate*," Heb. implies speaking to one's self. v. 29—"way of *falsehood*," cf. v. 30. v. 31—"I *cleave*." v. 53—"Hot *indignation* hath." v. 61—"The *cords* . . . have *wrapped me round*." v. 79b—"And they shall *know*." v. 80—"heart be *perfect*." v. 91—"they *abide*" as v. 90. v. 98—"Thy *commandments make me*." v. 113—"I hate *them that are of a*

* All quotations from R.V. without comment are regarded as improvements. R.M. means *Revised margin* ; A.M., *Authorized margin* ; a denotes the first part of a verse ; b, the second

double mind." The word with a slightly different pointing is in I Ki. 18. 21 ren. "opinions." It seems to point to the changeableness of man's opinions. We would ren. "I hate *speculations.*" What a word for these days! v. 158—"the *treacherous dealers.*" v. 160—"The *sum of thy word is truth*" [or "the beginning," cf. A.M.]. The foll. is lit. "and to eternity is each of thy righteous judgments." v. 168—"abhor *falsehood.*" v. 165—"and they have none occasion of stumbling." v. 176—Ren. "I have *wandered about* like a lost sheep," i.e. ready to perish, as De. 26. 5, where the word ren. *lost* occ. ; it does not necessarily denote *moral* wandering.

CXX. The title of this and the foll. 14 is ren. "A Song of *Ascents.*" They were the pilgrim songs, sung by those who went up to Jerusalem at the great festivals, see 122. 1-4. v. 4—Ren. "the mighty *One,*" cf. 45. 3 5.

CXXI. 1—A.M. is best. vv. 7, 8—"shall *keep,*" i.e. by *watching* ; see on 119. 2 ; it occ. six times in this psalm.

CXXII. 8, 9—Ren. "For the sake of" in each verse.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

Can worship in any way be called service ?

Speaking generally we should say that *worship* is the outflow of the heart in praise and prayer *towards* God, and *service* is what we do *for* God ; but we cannot draw the distinction too sharply, for the Lord used the two words in His reply to Satan, "It is written, thou shalt *worship* the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou *serve.*" (Matt. iv. 10.) When Paul said Timothy "*hath served* with me in the gospel," he used the word that among men denoted *bond-service* ; but when of the same service he said, "God is my witness, whom I *serve* in the gospel of His son" (Rom. i. 9), he used the same word that is rendered *serve* in Matt. iv. 10—a word that denoted *priestly service* ; for he was fully conscious that, however men might treat the message he delivered, he so set forth Christ that his preaching was a sweet savour to God. (2 Cor. ii. 15.) It was in the spirit of *worship* that he preached the gospel, as all will do who have in their souls the enjoyment of what they preach. The same word for *serve* is used of the *worship* of the redeemed in heaven in Rev. vii. 15 ; xxii. 4 ; and in the following and other passages it is evidently used of *ministry* Godward : Luke ii. 37 ; Acts vii. 7 ; Heb. xii. 28. While therefore we do well to draw a distinction between *worship* and *service*, and especially to cultivate the spirit of *worship* when showing forth the Lord's death, we should seek to render all *service* in the same spirit.

THE SONGS OF SCRIPTURE.

ALL the Songs of Scripture bear witness to God's mighty love. Christ is the centre of every song; and it is this that makes them so rich in comfort to us. The wilderness is by divine appointment the place in which we learn our songs, and they cannot be learned anywhere else.

In every one of these divinely taught songs the singer lays hold on God, and altogether rises above circumstances. It was so in the song of "Moses and the children of Israel" (Ex. xv.), their great theme being, "The LORD hath triumphed gloriously." This was truly the song of the nation in the day of its deliverance from the power of Pharaoh; but it is also the song of the lonely heart.

It was thus that Hannah sang her song (1 Sa. ii.), the key-note of which is the same as that of Ex. xv. Our smallest circumstances are not small in the sight of God. Faith brings things great and little alike to Him, and He who manifested Himself to the joy of Israel, also manifested Himself to the joy of Hannah's heart.

We can truly thank God for the tears, the sorrows and the disappointments which bring us a like joy; and it is well for us when we can pour out our sorrows to God, as Hannah spread out her grief at His mercy-seat. (1 Sa. ii. 15.) Being enabled thus to roll her burden upon God "her countenance was no more sad" (*v.* 18), for the sunshine of His presence rested upon her.

Every sorrow of the present will have its song in the future; every tear its praise; and every grief its hallelujah. What poor singers we are! Our lips can use joyful words; but our sorrowing hearts are slow to sing.

In Hannah's song Jehovah was all in all, and in her beautiful history we see how much she got out of her family troubles. How fruitful in blessing would all the sorrows of the household of faith be, if sorrowing ones got out of their griefs what she got! Her song was not learned from a book; but from the deep experience of her own soul, in her fellowship with God and her trust in His Word.

By faith we learn to sing of the night as we do of the day: of the dark as of the light. These varied experiences of life only lead to different notes in our songs, and the songs that are drawn out of them look beyond the immediate present into the eternal future. Songs *begin* in the wilderness, but they are always *continued* in glory. "The spirit of faith" will enable us, in our darkest hour, to say "The Lord reigneth" *now*, and "The Lord shall reign *for ever and ever.*" When Israel left the Red Sea they came to Marah, and there, in their distress, their faith gave way to unbelief; they forgot how the Lord had wrought for them; they failed to realize that He was still with them; and instead of singing they murmured.

We have to say with the psalmist, "I will sing of mercy and judgment," for every song has the two sides of mercy and judgment to it. The Egyptians dead on the sea shore, and the Israelites alive at the edge of the wilderness, spoke of grace and righteousness, of mercy and vengeance. Our hearts can so little sing of judgment because we are by nature so blind to the heinousness of sin; but we should never forget that He who spared not His spotless Son, when He stood in the sinner's place, will not spare the sinner who sets aside the sacrifice of Christ.

How wonderful it is that the sufferings of Christ set forth in Isaiah liii. should lead us into the triumph of Isaiah liv., which begins with "Sing"! The cross always leads to the song; and every song has eternity stamped

upon it, because it has the stamp of the cross of Christ. All the bricks of Babylon have the cypher of Nebuchadnezzar upon them, and every heavenly song bears the stamp of the cross of our Lord Jesus.

There is a beautiful similarity between the song of Hannah in 1 Sa. ii., and that of Mary in Luke i. They are both universal songs—songs that every child of God may take up. Are we needy, suffering, tried, in doubt, in perplexity? The same song of God's fulness is given to us. We read, "He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden," and we can say, "I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me." (Luke i. 48; Ps. xl. 17.) There is often more kindness in thinking upon a person, than even in giving. The Lord Jesus said, "Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God" (Luke vi. 20); yet now we see the heirs of the kingdom walking as beggars on the ground, and the devil's princes riding upon horses by their side. But this is the time of the devil's reign; the time of the reign of heaven is to come.

The blessed Paul and Silas were thrust by the jailor into the inner prison, and their feet were made fast in the stocks; but their tongues could not be tied. They sang, they praised (Acts xvi. 25), thus carrying out the exhortation Paul gave to others, "In everything give thanks." (1 Thess. v. 18.) What a testimony their song in the jail was to the reality of a present Christ!

Every song is an earnest of the new song that shall soon be sung before the throne. We may sing it but feebly now, for the present is often more real to us than the future; but when, like Moses, we by faith behold "the things which are not seen" we can say, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (2 Cor. iv. 17, 28.)

In Eph. iv. 1 Paul calls himself the Lord's prisoner, and he felt the dignity of his position. Dear child of God, are you the Lord's prisoner? His bereaved one? His sick one? His sorrowing one? Our very prison should bear witness to our songs of triumph; for our prison doors cannot remain closed one moment beyond the will of Him who loves us.

May our hearts be so drinking in the love of God that songs of praise may well out of them! He loves us, and we are precious to Him. "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song into my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." (Ps. xl. 2, 3.) May it be with us now as it will be with the faithful remnant of Israel amidst earth's desolations: "They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea." (Isa. xxiv. 14; comp. *v.* 15 with John xvii. 4.) H. G.

THE LORD JESUS AS THE SHEPHERD.

"ALL things were created by Him and for Him." The sparkling brook bursting from the mountain side speaks of Him as the water of life to thirsty souls; the ripening grain, bending with its full ears, and richly repaying those who have watched and waited since the time of sowing, assures our hearts of a coming day of resurrection; and the picture of simple obedient sheep, cared for by the tender loving shepherd, leads us to think of Him in all His loving care as the Shepherd of His flock. These and many other things all speak of Him to the opened ear, and are calculated to nourish faith in Him and to strengthen

fellowship with Him. But it is especially on the gracious work of the Lord as the *Shepherd* that the following brief remarks are made.

1. *Preparation.* A leader must not only know the necessities and capacities of those he has to guide; but he must himself have passed through their trials. He must also have come out of those trials victorious, for if he had failed himself he could not be the leader of others. Moses in Midian learnt the lesson of dependence upon God, and thus became fitted to lead Israel in the wilderness where God was their only resource for everything. David, while keeping the sheep and protecting them, gained fitness for other service. He learnt the secret of victory, even the use of the means nearest at hand, with faith in God to give efficacy to those means. He thus overcame the lion and the bear that attacked his flock, and then Goliath, the great enemy of Israel, and in due time became a true shepherd of the people whose battle he had fought. These were but types, and their conflicts but typical, of the Lord Jesus and the great conflicts through which He passed. In the wilderness He met the great enemy of souls and obtained the victory. He who was the Shepherd of the sheep took and kept the sheep's place of true dependence upon the unseen One. He remained in the place of unquestioning obedience—not only obedience to a written law; but obedience to the will of God, known to Him, about the particular circumstances in which He was placed. And in a still more awful conflict He fully overcame the great enemy of the sheep, at the same time laying down His own life to rescue them from their righteous doom.

2. *Qualification.* The Lord Jesus has the *heart* of a shepherd. When He saw the multitude scattered abroad as sheep without a shepherd He was moved with com-

passion on them. (Matt. ix. 36.) Were these the good? No: they were the lost. The shepherd-work commences with seeking those who as yet are lost. (Matt. x. 6.) It is needful to have our attention called to this. While shepherd-care is necessarily over those who are manifested as Christ's sheep, others there are, not known to *us*, who must needs be searched out. For doubtless He still has many who, as yet, "are not of this fold"—His elect. This thought should indeed stir our hearts to earnestness in the great work of the gospel. In John iv. we have an example of the tender love that shows itself in zealously seeking the lost. Having *love* to the sheep He seeks them without stopping to enquire how they came to wander; and when He finds them there are no reproaches. He Himself sustains the rescued one, and His soul is fed, for He has joy in rescuing it. (John iv. 32; Luke xv. 5.) Thus the great qualification for shepherd-work is love to the sheep and compassion over them in their wanderings.

3. *The work.* This begins with seeking the sheep when that sheep has no trace of the divine character, and when there is no appearance of readiness to respond to the call of grace. Who but *He* would have seen amongst the heretical Samaritans fields white unto harvest? Should the sheep wander, this seeking is renewed, nor is there any limit to the manifestation of His tenderness and grace.

We often see amongst men a remarkable expression of zeal in the pursuit of an object, and when the object is attained the zeal suddenly droops and all interest in it seems to languish. It is not so with the great Shepherd. The seeking is but the preliminary step to a work of love, which is deliberately taken up with the fixed purpose, as well as the power, to continue it till all the sheep are safely housed in glory. He bears them, and also bears their burdens, day by day. (Ps. lxxviii. 19. R.V.) He is ever

near to strengthen the weak and to bind up the wounds of the afflicted.

As the Shepherd He goes before the sheep. He leads them out of all *folds*—outside all those planned affairs of men, in which *restriction*, not attraction, is the binding power. He leads them to where alone there is true worship. (John ix. 38.) We meet Him in solitude at first; but solitude soon gives way to fellowship as we are led into that path where the rays of His love radiate from Himself to *all* the flock. Much more might be said of the precious work of the great Shepherd; but we will only dwell a little on that welcome which awaits each sheep as the Shepherd who, unseen, has cared for it so long in the wilderness, receives it to its blessed rest in His bosom.

4. *The welcome home.* With what a joyful welcome does the Shepherd receive those who, as witnesses of His grace and truth, have laid down their lives for Him! Many of these were not particularly prominent as servants, or intelligent as saints; but they lost their lives because they had received the gospel. How tenderly does He embrace them! And what joy it will be to Him to honour them as His witnesses before all the glorious assembly of heaven!

As the worn-out servant, who has toiled and borne faithful witness through many scenes of trial, yields up his spirit into those gentle hands, how sweet, how soothing, how reviving, will be that kiss of welcome that shall banish the furrows of years, and crown all the loving-kindness before received!

To the saint whose day is fulfilled and who falls asleep in those arms, having borne fruit in the sphere in which he was placed, what a joy it will be to look upon the face of Him in whom he has believed, and to know that he will enjoy Him without a cloud throughout eternity! Each

will know that he is loved as all others are loved, while he receives the reward of his own special service.

But beyond the joy which the Shepherd has in receiving one by one His martyrs, His saints and His servants, will be the joy of that *great day* when He will indeed gather together into one the scattered flock, and, in the fullest sense, will be acknowledged by all as its true Centre, Leader and Head. What a joy it will be to Him, and what a joy to His people, who have misunderstood others or have been misunderstood by them, to see all differences obliterated by the light of His presence! How sorrow for our unfaithfulness will be soothed and banished by the bright shining and the wonderful manifestation of His love! And in the case of any of us who think we have been faithful, how *our* faithfulness will fade into insignificance in our estimation in the light of the faithfulness in which He has fulfilled every promise, and gone far beyond what any promise could convey to our minds!

The thought of the joy of the chief Shepherd in that day of the final gathering of His flock should both encourage and stimulate to diligence all shepherds who under Him are called to feed and watch over any part of that flock in this time of its being scattered abroad. (1 Thess. ii. 19.)

C. H. B.

Mexico.

SONS AND CHILDREN.

GAL. IV. 1-7; ROM. VIII. 14-17.

THE careful consideration of distinctions which God has made is for our profit; but the endeavour to put in contrast things that are essentially one can only hinder our growth in the knowledge of the truth. In Gal. iv. we have a clear distinction between *children* and *sons*; in Rom. viii. we have no contrast, but rather the fulness of

the truth set forth by the use of the two words. But it is necessary to note that in Gal. iv. the apostle does not use the general word for *child*, which usually expresses relationship to a parent, apart from any question of age. The word he there employs is one which describes a state of *infancy*, as distinguished from that of full age. The ordinary word for *child* is never set in contrast with the word for *son*, though, whether we discern them or not, we may be sure there are reasons why the people of God are sometimes spoken of as children and sometimes as sons.

In Gal. iv. an ordinary fact of common life is taken as an illustration of a great spiritual truth: "Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child [*i.e. an infant* in a legal sense], differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed by the father." The apostle then tells us that this position of the child or *minor* is a picture of the condition of the people of God before Christ came: "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world." We must not think that because he says "*we*" he is speaking simply of his own state, and the state of those around him before they knew Christ. He is speaking of saints of previous centuries, as in Rom. iii. 25, and his use of the word "*we*" when speaking of those who had gone before, as well as when thinking of those who would follow (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52; 1 Thess. iv. 17), is very instructive. It shows what a grasp he had of the great truth of the oneness of all the redeemed in Christ as the last Adam—a oneness which rises above all distinctions, and which we must apprehend before we are in a position to consider the distinctions which God, in His sovereignty, has been pleased to make and to reveal.

Now in contrast with those who, with all their know-

ledge of God and faith in Him, were but *minors*, we have reached the position of full age. This is not a question of individual experience, but of the great advance that has been made by the manifestation of the Son of God, and the mighty work He has wrought. That which to saints of former days was a matter of hope is to us an accomplished reality. Even prophets enquired and searched diligently into those things which are plainly set forth to us; they desired to see them, and yet they saw them not. (1 Pet. i. 10-12; Matt. xiii. 17.) "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons," or "*the sonship*." This sonship is the present portion of *all* believers, "for ye are all sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus." (Gal. iii. 26.) This blessed relationship to God, and state of freedom, into which we are brought through the revelation of Christ to our hearts by the Holy Spirit, God is pleased to acknowledge by the gift of that Spirit to dwell in us as "the Spirit of His Son"; for "because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant [*i.e. bonds slave, nor yet a minor in such a position*], but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Thus the blessed position of believers as "sons of God" is set forth by way of contrast; but it is in contrast with the *position of minors or infants* in a legal sense, and not with the *relationship of children*.

Now when we turn to Rom. viii. we have no mention of *infants*; but the two titles of *sons* and *children* are used as both belonging to the same persons. There is indeed a great contrast drawn; but it is between those in whom "the Spirit of God" dwells and those who have

not "the Spirit of Christ." After setting forth the difference between these two classes, Paul writes, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, *they* are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear: but ye have received the Spirit of sonship, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (v. 14, 15). The mention of "the spirit of bondage," which even saints had under the law, and "the Spirit of sonship," which is now given, certainly reminds us of Gal. iv., but any thought of contrast between sons and children *here* would only mar the beauty of this passage. And the very thing is stated in Galatians of *sons* that is stated here of *children*. There we read, "If a *son* then an heir of God," and here, "If *children* then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ."

It is contended by some that the statement of v. 14 forbids our saying that all who are born of God are *sons* of God, though they are *children* of God, for it is maintained that where the Spirit of God leads He guides "into all the truth" (John xvi. 13); that children of God who are under the influence of traditional teaching are not led by the Spirit of God, and therefore are not in the sense of this verse "sons of God."

This mode of dealing with Scripture is a very dangerous one. To get at the true meaning of any scripture we must consider its connection with what precedes and follows. In v. 14 the pronoun is very emphatic, and the statement can mean nothing less than that they who are led by the Spirit of God and *they alone* are sons of God. But to see what this leading is we must look at the previous verses: "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace.

. . . But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. But if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Thus the contrast is clearly and solemnly drawn between those who are *in the flesh*, and those who are *in the Spirit*, and the statement is absolute that *the one who has not the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him*, and therefore, of course, is not a child of God. It is in contrast with *such* that those who are "sons of God" are said to be "led by the Spirit of God," and the special leading that is here in view is, on the one hand, the drawing out of the heart and the affections to God Himself with the cry of "Abba, Father," and, on the other hand, that gracious operation of the Spirit as the One through whom we "mortify the deeds of the body" (v. 13).

It is impossible to make too much of the leading of the Spirit promised in John xvi. 13; but it must be correctly interpreted. First of all the promise was given, and was fulfilled, to those who were to be the authoritative guides and teachers of others. The Spirit did guide them into *all* the truth, and enable them to write that truth for the church of God throughout the whole of its earthly course, so that it is now through the written Word alone that we can be led into the truth. It is indeed only by the teaching of the Holy Spirit that we can learn that truth, and it is a joy to know that all who humbly seek His teaching, with readiness to carry out what they learn, will have the truth unfolded to them. But neither here nor anywhere else is there the slightest intimation that only those who are led "into *all* the truth" are "sons of God." This would make sonship dependent upon intelligence, and would nullify the statement, "Ye are all sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus." It is through the operation of the Spirit that we are born again, and thus made both

children and sons of God; but it is because we "*are* sons" that God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts "crying, Abba, Father," and not till then can we be truly "led by the Spirit."

That there is a real distinction between the two words "children" and "sons" is not questioned. The former, which is always used by the apostle John (John i. 12; 1 John iii. 1, 2, 10; v. 2 see R.V.), expresses our *birth relationship* to God as our Father, while the latter sets forth our *glorious position* in fellowship with Him who is in the highest sense "the Son of God." It is not without meaning that in Rom. viii., having stated that God's people are *sons*, the apostle adds, "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are *children* of God: and if *children* then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ," for heirship is the natural result of a birth relationship. In Gal. iv. the great point before the mind is the position of *freedom*, now occupied by the heir, and therefore the word *son* is emphasized. But the pathway to that kingdom of which we are heirs is one of suffering with Christ, and therefore in Rom. viii. it is added, "If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."

These great truths have been much obscured by the false teachings of men, and, as a consequence, many of God's dear children, instead of walking at liberty, and proving the joy of their relationship to God, are really walking in bondage, to their own loss and the dishonour of Him who has made them His. It therefore behoves those who have learnt, in any little measure, the holy freedom and joy of sonship, to pray much for fellow-believers who are fettered by the chains of tradition, and to seek so to live that they may be helpers of others as God may give opportunity.

W. H. B.

“BE NOT DISMAYED.”

“Yet have I left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.” (1 Kings xix. 18.)

“WHEREFORE shrink, and say, ‘Tis vain ;
In their hour hell-powers must reign ;
Vainly, vainly would we force
Fatal error’s torrent course ;
Earth is mighty, we are frail,
Faith is gone, and Hope must fail.’

“ Yet along the church’s sky
Stars are scattered, pure and high ;
Yet her wasted gardens bear
Autumn violets, sweet and rare—
Relics of a spring-time clear,
Earnests of a bright new year.

“ Israel yet hath thousands sealed,
Who to Baal never kneeled ;
Seize the banner, spread its fold !
Seize it with no faltering hold !
Spread its foldings high and fair,
Let all see the Cross is there !

“ What, if to the trumpet’s sound,
Voices few come answering round ?
Scarce a votary swells the burst,
When the anthem peals at first ?
God hath sown, and He will reap ;
Growth is slow when roots are deep.

“ He will aid the work begun,
For the love of His dear Son ;
He will breathe in their true breath,
Who, serene in prayer and faith,
Would our dying embers fan
Bright as when their glow began.”

CHRIST ESTABLISHED ON HIS THRONE.

PSALM II.

THAT this psalm was written by David is clear from Acts iv., where according to the old MSS., a quotation is prefaced by the striking words: "O Lord . . . who by the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of our father David Thy servant, didst say." (R.V. *vv.* 24, 25.) On the psalm as a whole it has been remarked, "The view taken of Messiah by the world and by Jehovah is the theme; our eye is fixed on the purpose of Jehovah, triumphantly accomplished in Messiah's glory, in spite of all opposition."*

The One who is rejected by men is owned by Jehovah as His Son, and receives the whole earth and its nations as His rightful inheritance. That there was a fulfilment of the opening verses in the gathering together of "Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel" against the Lord, and that Jehovah brought to nought their designs by raising Him from the dead, is placed beyond question (Acts iv. 27); but "it may be said to have an ever repeated fulfilment in the history of God's kingdom upon earth, which has in all ages the powers of the world against it, and in all ages the same disastrous result to those who have risen against the Lord, and against His Anointed." The psalm is divided into four parts, each containing three verses.

I. PLOTS AGAINST JEHOVAH AND HIS CHRIST.

The psalmist, led by the Spirit of God, looks at the onward course of this world, and beholding the nations in

* Several writers are quoted, though names are not given. "*All things are yours.*"

tumultuous revolt against Jehovah, asks why this is, in such a manner as to imply the futility of it: "*Why do the nations tumultuously assemble, and the peoples meditate a vain thing?*" (v. 1. R.V.) While the Christ of God was quietly meditating (Ps. i. 2) in the law of the Lord, and doing His will, the people who prided themselves upon being the possessors of that law, and yet did not keep it, "assembled together . . . and counselled that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill Him." (Matt. xxvi. 3, 4.) They little knew that they did but "meditate a *vain thing*," but so it was, "and equally vain will every imagination be that exalteth itself against the counsels of God for the salvation of His people."

Under the leadership of the prince of this world, "*The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against Jehovah, and against His Anointed, saying, 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.'*" (vv. 2, 3.) The cause of Jehovah and His Anointed is *one*; and men cannot oppose the Son without opposing the Father. The rage of men was carried very far when the leaders of the world "crucified the Lord of glory"; but in days that are fast drawing near it will be manifested more fiercely still. Everything is hastening on to the fulfilment of the vision, "I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army." (Rev. xix. 19.) The "cords" and "bands" are the restraints of government, and the resolution to break them expresses the uprisings of men against the authority of God, as well as their contemptuous supposition that His rule is easily cast off.

This spirit is showing itself on every hand in the way of resistance to all authority; but especially does it find

expression at the present time in determined attacks upon the Word of God. The Scriptures of truth are as "cords" and "bands" that are irksome to men who have not learnt that the yoke of Christ is easy. But the most solemn thing we have to face is the fact that many who take His name, call themselves Christian teachers and talk about being "loyal to Christ," are following the example of avowed sceptics in denying the inspiration of the sacred Scriptures, and so seeking to relax their authority. When there is the spirit of submission to Christ His commands, so far from being "cords" and "bands," are acceptable to the heart.

II. HOW THESE PLOTS ARE REGARDED IN HEAVEN.

Here we get a "door opened in heaven" and are admitted to view the real state of matters from that lofty stand-point. "There, on His everlasting throne sits the Almighty King, in whose sight all nations and kings are but as a drop of the bucket." "*He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Sovereign Lord shall have them in derision*" (v. 4). In the Book of Revelation God is described throughout as the One that "sitteth upon the throne," and it is for our joy and strength to contemplate Him in this aspect. The waves may rage below, but all is calm above, and His perfect repose should reassure us when we are tempted to be disquieted. Whatever combinations there may be against God and His truth and His authority, they cannot affect either. He can "laugh" at all, not indeed as One who exults over sin and its consequences; but as the One who knows that no thought of His can be hindered. (Job xlii. 2, M.) He can give His adversaries time to mature all their plans, and try all their experiments, knowing that, whenever He pleases, He has but to speak and the counsels of the nations shall

be brought to nought, and the devices of the peoples shall be made of none effect. (Ps. xxxiii. 10.)

At present He keeps silence as to the execution of judgment, and only speaks in *grace*, though in faithfulness He warns of the judgment that must fall upon those who do not in their hearts obey the gospel. Soon "the day of salvation" will have run its course, and "*then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure*" (v. 5). The word that will "vex" or "trouble" them (see Ex. xiv. 24) is this: "*Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion*" (v. 6). The pronoun *I* is very emphatic, and expresses strong antithesis: *You* have done your worst, but notwithstanding all your opposition *I* have *firmly placed* My King upon Zion, My holy hill. Some render *anointed*, but others say the verb never signifies to *pour on* but to *pour out*, and consider that, as the figure is derived from the founding of metals, it conveys the idea of stability and solidity.

III. THE GREAT DECREE.

Another voice is now heard. The One of whom "the Sovereign Lord" (v. 4) has spoken as "*My King*" (v. 6) now appears, and says, "*I will declare the decree: Jehovah hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee*" (v. 7). When God raised His Holy One from the dead He did so with this salutation, which, as His decree to be acknowledged, shall yet be declared to Israel and the whole world. In Acts xiii. Paul refers this word to the resurrection of the Lord; but it was not then that for the first time He was owned as the Son of God. Let us never forget that the truth of the eternal, essential Sonship of the Lord lies at the foundation of everything. "*God sent forth His Son,*" and He, being thus sent forth, "*took upon Him the form of a servant.*" Therefore

while to the eye of faith there was always a display of His moral glory, there was no manifestation of His own proper awe-inspiring majesty. Consequently they who "took counsel" and "set themselves" against Him derided Him, put Him to open shame and thought they had silenced Him for ever.

Then it was that He "was declared to be [*i.e.* marked out as, in a distinct and peculiar sense] the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. i. 4.) And then as the Risen One He received afresh from the Father that title which was ever His, though its glory had been veiled by His humiliation. All other titles of the Lord as truly owe their worth to that glorious title of SON, as every sunbeam owes its brightness to the sun in the heavens whence it is emitted. It is interesting to see how a godly Jew looked upon this psalm, and treasured up its sacred words in his heart. As soon as Nathanael was convinced that Jesus was the *Christ*, *i.e.* the Anointed One, he said, "Rabbi, Thou art *the Son of God*; Thou art *the King of Israel*." (John i. 49.)

While the hopes of all rebels are overthrown, the kingdom they oppose extends to the ends of the earth: "*Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen* [*i.e.* nations] *for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession*" (v. 8). How solemn is the thought that the continuance of the present condition of things, and the lengthening out of the day of grace, depend upon the will of Him whom men disown and disregard! When the fitting time comes He will present His request, and then it will quickly be said, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." (Rev. xi. 15.)

Such will be the condition of the world at that time

that His first act must be one of terrible judgment: "*Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel*" (v. 9). The rebel hosts and anti-christian powers must all be put beneath His feet. The potter's vessel when shivered cannot be mended, and therefore the figure denotes utter ruin. "The hearts, which now yield to the impressions of His Spirit, are broken only to be formed anew, and to become vessels of honour, fitted for the Master's use. Those which continue stubborn and hardened must be dashed in pieces with the stroke of eternal vengeance."

IV. EXHORTATION AND WARNING.

In the last section of the psalm a conclusion is drawn from the preceding, and a gracious admonition is given: "*Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth*" (v. 10). Those who are leaders in rebellion are called to set the example of submission; yet these are the very people who put wisdom and instruction far from them. Their own fancied dignity stands in the way of their acknowledgment of Him who alone can bestow lasting honour. There have indeed been among such a few who, by God's grace, have been instructed, and have shown true wisdom in obeying the word, "*Serve Jehovah with fear, and rejoice with trembling*" (v. 11); and, blessed be His name! there are a few still.

But no one can really serve Jehovah without doing homage to the Son, for "he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him." (John v. 23.) Hence the command "*Kiss the Son*," a kiss being an ancient mode of showing allegiance, and especially of offering worship. (See 1 Ki. xix. 18; Hos. xiii. 2; and for probable explanation of the mode, Job xxxi. 26, 27.) "*Lest He be angry*" reminds us that there is such a thing

as "the *wrath* of the Lamb," which must burn against those who have set at nought "the blood of the Lamb." When that wrath is manifested they who have not bowed to Him will "*perish in the way*" of disobedience which they have chosen. And though He is long-suffering, none should presume on this, "*for His wrath will soon be kindled*" (R.V.), and then shall all who have made Him their refuge prove to the full that "*blessed are all they that put their trust in Him*" (v. 12). "For when the glory of man shall fade away as the short-lived flower of the field, and when all that is called great and honourable in princes shall be laid low in the dust, He shall give unto His faithful servants a crown without cares, and a kingdom which cannot be moved."

A LETTER ON PRIDE AND HUMILITY.

Written nearly 800 years ago.

"Anselm, servant of the Church of Canterbury, to his beloved friend Cuno, greeting.

"Your gentleness desires that of three kinds of pride concerning which I spoke to you, I would by letter recall to your mind two which have escaped your memory. I said that they are three; one of *thought*, that is, when anyone thinks of himself more highly than he ought to think, against which it is said 'Be not high-minded, but fear,' and which he denies to exist in himself who says: 'Lord, I am not high-minded, I have no proud looks.' Another is of *will*, when any one wants to be treated with more consideration than is his due; against which it is said, 'How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another?' Another is in *deed*; against which saith the Lord, 'When thou art bidden to a wedding sit not down in the highest room.' This when a man treats himself better than he ought.

"Against each of these forms many sayings are found in holy Scripture if they are sought out. Against all it is said,

'Whoso exalteth himself shall be humbled,' and 'God resisteth the proud.' And many other passages there are. Of these three, when each one is by itself, that is the least which is in deed only, because it is done through ignorance alone; and yet since it is a fault it ought to be amended. Of the other two that which is in will alone is the more to be condemned, because it errs knowingly. But that which is in thought, is only the more foolish, since it does not manifest itself, and to itself appears quite right.

"Opposed to these forms of pride are divisions of humility: that is, that one should *think* humbly of one's self, and, as regards the estimation of our relation to others, *wish* humbly for one's self, *act* towards one's self humbly. For each form of pride a man is called proud; but as to the various parts of humility, even for two, unless all the parts are there together, a man is not called humble; just as a man is said to be ill when one limb is ailing, but we do not say he is well, unless healthy in every limb. I have thus brought this briefly to the remembrance of your affection. If your prudence will frequently reconsider it, you will understand it more fully than is here set down. Farewell, and pray for me, that as God has given me to comprehend pride and humility, so He may give me to avoid the one, and acquire the other."

REVISED VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

XXVIII.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS (*continued*).

CXXIII. 2—The *hand* expresses protection or bounty; ren. "state" Es. 2. 18.

CXXIV. 1—"let Israel now say," cf. 118. 2.

CXXV. 1—"are as mount Zion," as in *v.* 2. *v.* 3—"For the sceptre of wickedness."

CXXVI. 6—Perhaps the foll. would be better, being more exact, "goeth forth *weeping*, bearing *seed for scattering* . . . with *singing*, bearing his sheaves."

CXXVII. 2—"for you *that ye rise up early, and so late take rest.*" With "*sorrow*," which seems better than "*toil*," cf. Gen. 3. 16, 17.

“So he giveth *unto* his beloved *in* sleep.” See Jer. 31. 26. Amidst the wreck and ruin around him Jeremiah found his sleep sweet, and the visions of the future precious.

CXXVIII. 3—“vine *in the innermost parts of* thine house.”

CXXXI. 2—“Surely I have *stilled* and quieted *my soul*.” The Heb. is more exactly “*calmed* and *silenced*,” which reminds us of the two dangers to which, in perplexing circumstances, we are exposed, either being ruffled as a troubled sea, or complaining and saying what we ought not to say. “*Like a weaned child with his mother, my soul is with me like a weaned child*,” *i.e.* I have weaned myself as a mother weans her child. The Heb. word for weaned implies being satisfied, and points to what is given as being better than what is lost. This is the divine aspect of all weaning; cf. Phil. 3. 7, 8.

CXXXII. 1—“*for David* all.” *v.* 3—“the *tent*” M, in contrast with “a *tabernacle for the Mighty One of Jacob*,” *v.* 5. The word for “Mighty One” occ. only Gen. 49. 24; Is. 1. 24; 49. 26; 60. 16; and must not be confounded with the word used in Is. 9. 6 and freq. It has the idea of nobility rather than might. *v.* 8—“*resting place*” for “*rest*,” so *v.* 14. *v.* 17—“a *horn to spring forth unto David*.”

CXXXIII. 2—“*precious oil*.” “to the *collar*” M. *v.* 3—“*Like the dew of Hermon that cometh down upon*.”

CXXXV. 4—The word for Lord in this verse is *Jah*.

CXXXVI. 24—“and hath *delivered*” or *rescued*.

CXXXVII. 7—“*against* the children of Edom the day of J.”

NOTES AND REPLIES.

Is the language of Psalms xxxviii. and lxix. the language of Christ, or is it too much to say He made the sins of His people His own?

A surety makes the responsibility of another his own, and the Lord Jesus as the Surety of His people took their sins upon Himself and could speak of them as His own. This is clear from Ps. xl. which is declared in Heb. x. to be the language of the Lord Jesus. So Ps. lxix. 9 is quoted as the utterance of Christ both in John ii. 17 and Rom. xv. 3, and *vv.* 22, 23 are quoted by Paul in Rom. xi. as fulfilled in “the casting away” of Israel because of their rejection of Christ.

Ps. xxxviii. has been much misused, and we must be very careful not to interpret the psalms so as to attribute to the Lord anything that is not fully borne out by the plain teaching of the New Testament. “I will be sorry for my sin” (*v.* 18) is a resolution that well becomes a *sinner*; but could not be the language of One who was

sinless, though in grace He took upon Himself the sins of others. There can be little doubt that many expressions in this psalm are figurative; that is, the "arrows" of *v. 2* are not literal arrows, but the chastenings or judgments of God; so the "wounds" (*v. 5*) and the "loathsome disease" (*v. 7*) or rather "burning" (R.V.) may refer to the anguish of spirit which was the result of the pressure of God's hand, just as in Ps. li. David speaks of "the bones which Thou hast broken."

Ps. xxxviii. may probably be read as the language of David during the rebellion of Absalom, when he poured out his heart to God as one who felt that he was reaping what he himself had sown. (2 Sam. xii. 7-14.) But while there was this between David and his God, looked at from another point we must see that Israel, led by a deceiver, was rejecting God's anointed king. As thus rejected, David was a type of Christ, and much of his language may have been truly used by the Lord as His own. In reading the utterances of David we have to distinguish between what could only be true of one who was by nature a sinner, and what might be the words of One whose only connection with sin could be as the bearer of the sins of others.

What are we to understand by the Lord's addressing Peter as Satan in Matt. xvi. 23?

The Lord saw behind the words of Peter the great adversary who prompted those words. The aim of Peter was to turn the Lord from the thought of suffering, and, though he knew it not, there was in his words a clear echo of that temptation in the wilderness, when Satan offered the Lord all the kingdoms of the world without suffering and conflict, if He would but fall down and worship him. So Peter, minding the things of men and not the things of God, could rejoice in the thought of the *kingdom*, while he did not like to think of the *cross*. The solemn rebuke addressed to Peter has double weight when we consider that it was the utterance of Him of whom it is said, "Grace is poured into Thy lips," and it must have fallen with awful significance upon his ear, in contrast to the words so recently uttered, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona."

The great lesson for us to learn is how near our deepest fall may be to our highest exaltation, and that however true we may be in our allegiance to our Lord, and however devoted in our lives, yet, if not maintaining our communion with Him, we may soon be led aside to adopt principles and utter words in which He, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, will discern some device of the great adversary.

“MY SERVANT JOB.”

THE book of Job is one of the oldest histories that we have in the Bible, and it has to do entirely with God's personal dealings with His servant. It is a record by which God would unfold to our understanding what He is to us, and what we are to Him.

Every thoughtful reader of the Bible must observe how large a proportion of the histories of Scripture have to do with the personal dealings of God with individual souls, and how small a proportion is occupied with the outward histories of the world. Thus while there are so many chapters containing the *personal* history of David, there is but one chapter in the whole account which gives us any idea of the extent of his dominion, though that is what man would most care to know. It is well for us to consider this, for it shows that in the eye of God the smallest details of personal life are of more importance than any outward position in the world.

It is to what we *are* that God directs His thoughts, far more than what we *do*; and the most trivial details of personal history frequently affect our character more than a great deal that attracts the attention of those around us.

By means of these inspired histories God would teach us inwardly what He is, and that whilst His dealings with us are sometimes very mysterious, they contain mysteries of love filled with untold good. By a right use of these histories we may become better acquainted with God, as the God of Job, the God of Abraham and the God of Jacob, and thus may be raised above mere abstract thoughts of love and mercy, and be enabled to contem-

plate the actual manifestation of the love and mercy of God in His dealings with His people. It is because these histories enable us to do this that they come to us with such unspeakable blessing. It is thus that the Bible brings God into a man's home, into his family and into his circumstances. When we speak of God's dealings as mysterious, we often use the word in a sad and dark sense; but let us seek to bring sunshine into it, by learning that at the bottom of the mysteries there will be found infinite love and unfathomable wisdom.

The book of Job opens with a picture of prosperity and joy. We see a servant of God in the midst of his family, carefully watching over the spiritual welfare of his children. This is what is seen down here; but God unfolds to us what was going on in heaven, where Satan presented himself "before the Lord." Job knew nothing of what was passing up there, or of how his ways had been observed by Satan; and perhaps we little consider that each child of God is a spectacle to angels, good and bad, as well as to men, both saints and sinners.

"Hast thou considered My servant Job?" is God's question to the great adversary, as he stands before Him. Great indeed is the honour conferred upon any one when God singles him out from among His chosen ones, puts His finger upon him and says: "Hast thou considered My servant . . . that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" It is well to be reminded of what is going on in the world above us, and of how God looks upon us one by one, and sometimes singles out and presents one as a spectacle for the powers of light or of darkness to behold.

God speaks as if He would prove to Satan that righteousness and truth are realities, however much he may

have ignored them. “*Hast thou considered My servant Job?*” says God. Satan had seen his sacrifices and his outward behaviour; but the question here is, Hast thou seen *him*?

The great secret let out by Satan in his reply, ought to fill our hearts with joy. He says, “Hast Thou not made an hedge about him, about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?” Job had been called upon to serve and worship God with a hedge of divine protection encompassing him, and this is true of all who fear God. (Ps. xxxiv. 7.) But what Satan insinuates is that Job was what he was only from selfish motives, because it was for present profit; and that if God withdrew the outward tokens of His favour Job would cast off the fear of God. Therefore in order to convince Satan, and to make manifest to others that the righteousness of Job was a reality, God allowed Satan to test him, that the depth of his righteousness might be proved in the depth of his woe. God first gave all that Job possessed into Satan’s hand, and then put his very person within his reach, and all that Satan could get as the result of the terrible calamities he brought upon Job was the evidence of his “integrity.” Job “rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb . . . The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord”; and afterwards, when tempted to curse God and die, Job’s instructive reply was, “What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?”

There is no stoicism in this blessed man of God. He rent his clothes in the time of his woe, he fell on his face before his God, and, as a worshipper, he worshipped still. When God brings sorrow upon His children He means it

to be sorrow; but He will heal the broken heart, He will bless the tears as they fall, and extract the bitterness from them. It is interesting to notice that in the Hebrew the words for *rebellion* and *bitterness* are derived from the same root, and they are closely linked together, for surely it is the rebellion of an unbroken will that makes the bitterness of sorrow. Job was able to say, God *gave*—it was not mine; God *took*—it was all His, and He had the right to do with it as He would. Satan's spirit of revenge must surely have been stirred when he saw Job stripped of all and still worshipping.

We are apt to forget that all we have is His; yet would we desire it to be otherwise? In one sense what we have is our own (Acts v. 4); but in the highest and truest sense we are but stewards, and while we are called to use what we have *as stewards* who must give an account, we are also called to learn the lesson that He has the right to do what He will with His own. Blessed indeed are they who are prepared to learn this lesson, for it is a lesson too high for many, and the place to which it leads is a place too exalted in the school of God for many to reach. When He leads any of His children thus we can only say, with James, "We count them happy which endure." As a special example of this endurance he cites the case of Job: "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy." (Jas. v. 11.) And God's word by His servant to us all is, "Be ye long-suffering therefore" (v. 7), that is, Be ye prepared to suffer long; you may be called to suffer for a day, or a month, or a year, or a lifetime; but be prepared to suffer long. It is one of the most precious characteristics of God that He is long-suffering, and He would have us to suffer with long patience (see R.V.m.), because "the coming of the Lord

draweth nigh,” and that will put an end to all our suffering.

Do we thus count Job happy? Do we count one another happy when called to endure trial? Not perhaps in the present, for “no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous”; yet surely we ought to so count one another when we remember that “nevertheless *afterward* it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” (Heb. xii. 11.) Oh! let us write upon the pages of life’s history, especially the dark and trying ones, these precious words that are given to us as characteristic of God’s dealings with His people, and of which His dealings with Job afford an illustration, “*very pitiful and of tender mercy.*”

We can have no conception of what God felt when He looked upon Job week after week, month after month, perhaps longer. Let us ask who suffered most, God or Job? Can we draw aside the curtain for a moment and see the heart of God? Yes: we get an expression of it in Christ, whose language we read in Ps. xxxv. 13, 14. There it is said of Christ with an unfathomable depth of meaning that David never knew: “When they were sick, My clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting. . . . I behaved Myself as though he had been My friend or brother: I bowed down heavily as one that mourneth for his mother.” This was the compassion of Christ for His enemies, and if so what must be His sympathy with His friends? But *His* sympathies were *God’s* sympathies, and *His* feelings were *God’s* feelings. We, who find it so hard to get into sackcloth for those around us, cannot fathom what this means! “I prayed for Mine enemies,” said Christ, “and they would not have My prayers, and so they came back to My own bosom.”

All this as a revelation of the compassion of God we little understand ; but it helps us to realize the force of the words "*very pitiful and of tender mercy.*"

It is well for us to remember that Job had had no revelation of the cross of Christ, and therefore while we cannot justify, and should remember that Scripture does not justify, the outpouring of his spirit when he "cursed his day," it would be far less excusable in us to give way to such expressions. This terrible ordeal came upon him when the revelation of God was very scanty, whereas our eyes have seen the love of God in Christ. Yet even by Job Satan was completely defeated, and his question, "Doth Job fear God for nought?" was fully answered. After this, God took Job up, and used his friends to sift him and bring out the latent evil that neither Satan nor Job himself had seen, and in the end accomplished His own design.

In the last chapter of this blessed book we come to Job's confession. God had spoken to him from the whirlwind, and had revealed to him His wisdom in creation. From the evidences of God's wisdom as displayed in His works He would have Job infer His wisdom in His ways with His people. Job then obtains such a knowledge of God as he never had before ; but he also gains a knowledge of himself that he never before possessed. God had made use of Satan to reveal to Job the mysteries of God's ways, and the mysteries of his own heart.

At the conclusion of God's first address to Job, "Job answered the Lord and said, Behold I am vile ; . . . once have I spoken ; but I will not answer : yea, twice ; but I will proceed no further." (Chap. xl. 3-5.) The blessed God is not satisfied with that confession, and therefore speaks again, and after God's last address to him Job said, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear :

but now mine eye seeth Thee : wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” (Chap. xlii. 5, 6.)

What had all the malignity of Satan accomplished for the man of God? It had brought him into the immediate presence of God, and led him for the first time to *see* God. This is the end of all discipline, the end of all the mysterious dealings of God which we frequently so little understand, though when we do understand them we see how the mercy of our God to us has been manifested in them. It is easy to *say*, “I am but dust and ashes”; but to *repent* in dust and ashes is a very different thing. This repentance before God was needed by the best man upon the earth, and, if he needed it, how much do we need it? It is good for us to be brought down to dust and ashes, for, as one has said, We were made out of the dust and deserve to be burnt to ashes. This was the estimate of himself formed by the best of men when he saw God, and every thought that rises above it in the way of self-esteem is a thought of sin that itself calls for repentance.

When God’s end was gained Job had risen to a height he had never reached before, for he was far lower in his own estimation and far higher in God’s. Satan was defeated, God had triumphed, and Job was blessed.

It is interesting to see in Job’s subsequent history an illustration of the force of those precious words, “I will render double unto thee.” (Zec. ix. 12; comp. Isa. xl. 2.) The history of Job, viewed in its beginning and ending, may well teach us that there is nothing hopeless in the condition or circumstances of any child of God, apart from his own self-will. God gave Job double what he had before, and blessed him as he had never before been blessed, for, when His servant had come down to dust and ashes, God turned his captivity.

The only part of Job's possessions that were not doubled were his children. We may hope, as others have said, that those who were killed were not lost, but would be found again under better circumstances, and therefore God gave him the same number. The names of his three daughters, with their peculiarly significant meanings, may indicate what were the bright and happy thoughts that filled the heart of this patriarch as he emerged out of his calamity and sorrow, like Noah out of the ark, to enjoy the double blessedness which God gave him.

Jemima means *brightness* and *sunshine*, and thus expresses the contrast between the present and the past when all was so dark. Kezia points to the *fragrance* of the acacia tree, the bark of which is peeled off, and may suggest the thought of present fragrance as the fruit of past suffering. Keren-happuch expresses the *lustre of the eye*, and surely Job's eyes were never so bright as when he came out of the storm, and saw God face to face.

God grant unto us that life's history, with its lights and shadows, its sunshine and clouds, may all lead us to the better knowledge of Himself, who is unto us the beginning and the ending, and who would make all things in our life lead to precious manifestations of Himself. Thus will the one whom God owns as "My servant" be able to say with George Herbert,

"How sweetly doth 'my Master' sound!

'My Master'!

As ambergris leaves a rich scent

Unto the taster:

So do these words a sweet content,

An oriental fragraney,

'My Master'!"

H. G.

THE ONWARD PATH OF FAITH.

ROMANS V. 3-8.

BY THE LATE W. B. DYER.

TREASURE after treasure of grace and truth is opened to us in this chapter. By the words "also" and "not only so" we are led on deeper and deeper into the "unsearchable riches of Christ." These are the green pastures and the still waters, by which the good Shepherd refreshes and nourishes His beloved sheep. May the Holy Spirit use for our profit, and to the praise of our ever-blessed God, the following thoughts, however feeble, on *vv.* 3-8 of this precious chapter!

The love of God towards His people, manifested in the death of Christ for them when sinners, is *shed abroad* in their hearts by the Holy Ghost *when they are in tribulation*. The river of God thus makes them glad when the furnace glows around them. They *tasted* His love in the death of His Son, when first they believed the gospel of His grace. Justified by way of faith, they had peace with God. Their consciences were purged by the blood of Jesus. But as in their Christian course they advance into tribulation for Christ's sake, they enter into a far deeper experience of the love of God.

There is a consistency in the ways of our God. Bitter and sweet are correspondingly weighed out to us by His hand. The trouble of a convicted conscience and a terrified soul was calmed by His forgiveness and embrace, when first He met us at the cross of His Son. Thus our dread of His judgment was taken from us, and His own Word, by His own Spirit, spoke peace to our souls through the atoning blood of the Lamb. But, after this,

waves of rough tribulation may toss and shake us, and as we endure these, we learn much more of that blessed God who has thus loved and forgiven us. As the storm rages without, the Holy Ghost is graciously engaged in shedding abroad love within. And what love? *God's love—proved in the death of Christ for us as sinners.* This surely is the link between verses 5 and 8. The deeper knowledge of this love kindles the hope of v. 5, and leads the apostle to say, "We glory in tribulations also."

And why is it that *that* display of God's love is so sweet amidst tribulations, distresses and afflictions for Christ's sake? Is it not, in fact, because *tribulation* may be mistaken for *wrath*? The dregs of unbelief and ignorance of God may be stirred up under the trial; and if so, conscience will soon accuse us, and then that which love sends for our profit, will be supposed to flow from displeasure and wrath.

Hence, then, this sweet and effectual ministry of the Holy Ghost within, while tribulation rages without. These waves and billows denote no wrath, for being iustified by the blood of Him who was delivered for our offences, "we shall be saved from wrath through Him." They are sent, or allowed, by the same love that gave Jesus for us when we were ungodly, and they serve as the occasion for deeper discovery of that love to our hearts. The wrath due to us was borne for us, once for all, by the Son of God on the tree. Such has been God's wondrous work of love for us there. And now, if we are called to bear reproach for Christ's sake, that same love is poured the more abundantly into our hearts, so that our experimental knowledge of it grows with our need of its consolations and promises. Infinitely wise and gracious is the way of our God and Father.

Let us not, then, shrink from following our Lord and

Shepherd, lest while escaping trial for His sake, we lose also the continual and deepening experience of the love of God for us. As we bear *our* cross we learn more of the wonders of *His* cross. As we are conformed to Him as the *obedient and suffering Son*, we drink more and more deeply of that love which gave Him up to die in our stead as *sinner*s. Thus the gospel will be more valued the more closely we follow our Saviour. Grace opens to us with augmenting fulness as we tread the path of holiness. We become filled with the enjoyment of the love wherewith God loved us when we were dead in sins—that “great love” of which we were *then* utterly insensible, that love so ancient, so practical, so profound—just as we press forward in the path of faith and patience and obedience.

Thus the gospel of the grace of God lives most freshly and fully in the hearts of the most devoted and mature disciples. Who suffered with Christ like Paul? and who so deeply drank of the redeeming love of God? The cross was his theme; the grace of God to him was ever uppermost in his heart; and thus with humility and fervent love he preached that grace to others. Real spiritual progress lies in increasing conformity to Jesus and in deepening acquaintance with God, as revealed in grace, in the death of His Son for His enemies.

If these things are so, what must we lose if we refuse the path of obedience because of its attendant tribulations, and choose some self-pleasing by-path? For in that case our experiences and our condition will be the reverse of those already described. Our *first* tastes of the love of God are then our sweetest; our *first* experiences of its redeeming victories the deepest; our *first* love the warmest. Having been led to the cross of Christ for pardon and peace, and having some rays from the glorified

Jesus, our Forerunner, shining upon us at the outset, we gradually *decline* in light, love, peace and hope; and perhaps soon lose, through self-will and guilt, the very peace with God and the assured hope of glory (*vv.* 1, 2) which once we knew.

And is it not true that with this real and solemn declension, old carnal habits revive, though it may be in new forms, and the "works of the flesh" prevail, instead of the "fruit of the Spirit"?

In all these matters God acts by fixed and revealed rules. The path of believing obedience is the path of blessing; the path of self-pleasing is the path of coldness, doubt, defilement and fear. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die."

How much that we all mourn in the present spiritual condition of the family of God may be thus accounted for. Have not some who once rejoiced in the love of God, who had confidence before Him through Christ, and who promised well as to Christian devotedness and usefulness, too often exchanged peace and hope for doubt and fear? And are not their best hours those in which under some fresh and powerful influence, early faith and peace and joy in some measure re-appear?

But thus it should not be. Only let the young believer hold fast the revelation God has made of Himself in the Person and death of His Son; let him, leaning on the Beloved, press on, step by step, in the path of filial dependence, worship and obedience, feeding daily on the precious Word of God, and mingling praises for his salvation with earnest prayer for instruction, guidance and upholding grace, and then he will prove the truth of these precious verses. The eye (Ps. xxxii. 8) and the Word of his Father will lead him in paths which many bearing the

Christian name may condemn; many trials of faith, steadfastness and humility will arise; and Satan will lay many snares for one who determines to be an obedient child of God. But as that child of God holds on in the path of light, ever looking to Jesus the Author and Finisher of faith, let him suffer what he may, and from whom he may, his peace will flow more and more "as a river," and his experience of that love, which loved him, when an enemy, will be correspondingly purer and deeper. "Patient continuance in well-doing" is the path of communion, confidence and usefulness.

True indeed it is that lusts from within will also assail; our old lusts—those enemies which were once fondled and fed, and whose native strength grew by indulgence. Indwelling sin and carnal habits are mighty instruments in the hands of our adversary. But all these are triumphed over through faith in Jesus. In His death for us we see the true malignity, and the certain judgment, of our sinful flesh. He "who knew no sin," but was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh," bore in love the judgment due to us. Thus our sin brought death on Him, and thus we have died through Him. What incentives to mortify our lusts, whether of the mind or of the flesh, do we therefore find in the cross of Christ! That one offering of Himself for us reveals at once the love with which we are loved, our sinfulness and our desert, and the riches of the grace in which we stand.

Alas! that Satan should so much prevail, generally little by little, against the family of God in our present warfare. Are we not too generally feeble, wounded and fettered, like the inmates of hospitals or prisons, rather than like sons and kings and priests of God, and servants and soldiers of Christ? Yet for all this there is full provision through the grace of God in Christ Jesus. The

wounds caused by our unbelief, and the guilt of selfwill, in the family of God, are provided for by the one offering and the unchangeable priesthood of Jesus. So that the very affronts which divine love receives from those whom it has embraced, were as surely atoned for at Calvary as the pollutions of unregeneracy, when that love, though existent, had never been tasted.

We do well however to remember that there is One who is "able to keep us from falling." How blessed it is to prove the exercise of His power! His *pardonning* grace we know; His *restoring* grace have we not proved? But is it not our privilege to know His *upholding* grace? What must be the beauty, in the esteem of our God, of His children's growth from "babes" to "young men," and from "young men" to "fathers"! (1 John ii. 13.) It is true that the whole power of Satan, of the flesh, and of the world, resists this, and the general condition of a divided and lukewarm church does not promote it; but the desire, the Word and the sufficiency of our God are unchangeable.

If even one precious child of God shall feel searched and humbled while reading these thoughts, I must once more say, let no sense of declining or barren years in the family of God lead you to fall from His *grace*. If our hearts are contrite He will meet us where we are, and smile on us and succour us. Yea, He will even turn our past follies and ingratitude to our profit, humbling and instructing us thereby, and thus meetening us for His service. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," is a word written to the children of God, who also have "an Advocate with the *Father*, even Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John i. 7; ii. 1.)

Surely there are amazing depths in the love and mercy of our God and Father; depths that are not fathomed by

us when that love first fills the pardoned sinner's heart with joy; depths that are never fathomed by us though that love is our constant study and delight; yet depths that we now grow in experimental enjoyment of, just in proportion as we take up our cross and follow our blessed Saviour and Master.

This is not the knowledge which "puffeth up," or which genders pride and strife, for it is the knowledge of that love of God wherewith He loved us when we were *His enemies*, and which has so triumphantly redeemed us by the atoning death of His own Son. Let us therefore earnestly ponder the death of Him who said, "He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him."

A COMPREHENSIVE PRAYER.

PHILIPPIANS I. 9-11.

MEDITATION on the prayers of the apostle Paul, as recorded in Scripture, will greatly help us in drawing near to God, and presenting our petitions to Him; and we may profitably note the simplicity and brevity as well as the fulness and comprehensiveness of these prayers. Not that we can measure the length of time Paul spent upon his knees by the length of his written prayers; but those prayers show us that he had very definite requests to present on behalf of his fellow-saints, and that, like David, he was accustomed to *set in order* his prayers before the mercy-seat. (Ps. v. 3, R.V.)

Paul was not satisfied when sinners were converted to God; to him that was but the *beginning* of a course that should be "as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." (Prov. iv. 18.) He laboured that saints might grow in the knowledge of God and in

conformity to Christ, and his zeal never allowed the word *enough*. The salvation of God is not only salvation *from* sin and its consequences; it is salvation *to all* that is according to Christ Jesus, and as Paul sought to know this salvation in all its length and breadth, and depth and height for himself, so he toiled and prayed that believers to whom he unfolded "the mysteries of God" might prove it in like manner.

In writing to saints at Philippi the apostle had much to commend; but this only made him long the more for their further growth. He speaks of his thanksgiving for them (chap. i. 3), and of the constancy of his prayers on their behalf (v. 4), and then tells them what was the burden of his request (vv. 9-11).

"*And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.*" Paul himself had proved their love, and it is evident that the spirit which found expression in the words of the first convert at Philippi characterized them as a company; "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide." (Acts xvi. 15.)

But while he desired that their love might overflow, he would have it under the control of "knowledge and all judgment." Love to God finds its truest expression in obedience and subjection to the will of God; and true love to the Lord's people can never display itself in any manner that is out of harmony with this. But the more there is of the emotional in any one's character, the more liable is that one to be led away from the path of truth if there be not growth in *knowledge* and *perception*.

Where there is this growth there will be ability to "*prove the things that differ*" (R.V.m.), and as a consequence to "*approve the things that are excellent.*" The senses will be "exercised to discern both good and evil,"

and there will be power to refuse the evil and to choose the good. Even the question how far this or that may be allowed, in which the natural conscience sees no harm, will be banished by the consideration of how far things that might in themselves be good may give place to things that are worthy of being called *excellent*.

“*That ye may be sincere and without offence till [i.e. against, in view of] the day of Christ.*” The word for *sincere* means *judged in sunlight*, and implies that what is spoken of will bear such a test, being “*pure*” (2 Pet. iii. 1) and unadulterated. The light of God’s holy presence is to the believer what the sun is to the world, and in proportion as he is accustomed to test himself and his ways in that presence now will he be prepared for the coming day of manifestation.

“Without offence” means without occasion of stumbling, and reminds us of the word, “Great peace have they which love Thy law, and nothing shall offend them,” *i.e.* there shall be no stumbling-block to them. (Ps. cxix. 165, *m.*) They who love God’s Word, and own its authority, are moulded and fashioned by it, and are raised above all those things that ensnare such as are half-hearted in their allegiance to the truth.

Such a condition is one of fruitbearing, and thus the prayer concludes: “*Being filled with the fruit (R.V.) of righteousness which is by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.*” They who are *made* righteous in Christ are called to *be* righteous in their ways and conduct. Believers are already, what Israel will be in a coming day, “trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.” (Isa. lxi. 3.) The tree of righteousness, “planted in the house of the Lord,” and constantly drawing nourishment from heavenly streams, will bear “its fruit in its season,” and that fruit will be “the fruit of

righteousness." (Ps. xcii. 13; i. 3.) May this comprehensive prayer be fulfilled in writer and readers, and may we be taught of God to make it our prayer for "all saints," remembering how the Lord links together fruitbearing and praying with the words, "Herein is My Father glorified"! W. H. B.

THE FRIENDSHIP OF CHRIST.

NOTES OF ADDRESSES.

"I have called you friends." (JOHN xv. 7-15.)

"HENCEFORTH I call you not servants." Is not this word "*henceforth*" a marvellously significant word? Abraham "was called the *friend* of God," and God treated him as such when He said, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" The Lord did not make light of the friendship of His friend Abraham; it was indeed a marvellous friendship. The way of obedience was then the way of friendship, and so it is now. But then the Son of God had not borne the curse upon the tree; He had not then ascended up on high to procure the Spirit—the Comforter—through His one perfect offering. Therefore the word "*henceforth*" shows us that by comparison with the amazing advantages of *this* intimacy, which is the fruit of the indwelling Spirit, former friendships are passed away, though not made nothing of.

Now we see the Son of God made perfect through sufferings, having sunk into unsearchable depths of woe; and according to His past sorrows are His present joys with God the Father, as set forth in Ps. xxi. "Thou preventest Him with the blessings of goodness: Thou settest a crown of pure gold on His head. . . . Thou hast made Him most blessed for ever: Thou hast made Him exceeding glad with Thy countenance" (vv. 3, 6).

We think of God as the God of sin-avenging justice, commanding the sin-avenging sword to awake and smite our Surety; but now that word is fulfilled, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life." Then, next to this joy in the Father, comes—not the ceaseless ministry of holy angels, nor the subjection of all creation to Him, but—*His friendship with us*. It is joy to Him to give life, to bring the child of Adam out of death into life; but that is only the stepping stone to the higher joy of friendship.

Now, beloved, we know that the Father seeketh worshippers; that we are only seekers and worshippers because God the Father has sought the worship of our hearts; and that He delights more in our worship of holy fear and love than we can delight in His answers to our prayers. So the blessed Son of God craves our friendship more than we can desire His; He has all the heart to crave it that He had when He redeemed us by the death of the cross. But then there is a "whatsoever" in the condition on which this fellowship can be known. The blessed Lord proved in the garden—in answer to His prayer, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me"—that it was not possible for Him to pass into a state of glory and of joy without the cross, and He added, "Not My will, but Thine be done"; and then was fulfilled Psalm xxii. 1. If God's will could not bend to Him, not a whit less can the will of our Lord bend to us in respect of the path of friendship: "Ye are my friends, if *ye do whatsoever I command you*" (v. 14). This is the *condition* of friendship; v. 10 gives the *pattern*: "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

And then, beloved, observe these other words in v. 7, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall

ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." In chap. xvii. the Lord says, "I have given them *Thy* word"; but He also speaks of *His* words. You will remember also the sweet words of Psalm cxix, "Thou art My portion, O Lord: I have said that I would keep Thy words"; that is, I will have respect to every jot and tittle of Thy will as in Scripture revealed.

There is no other *if* added as a condition of friendship; but this "if" stands as a rock that cannot be shaken. So my great business, in order to become the friend of Christ, is first to know the will of the Lord as set forth in the Scriptures, and then never to make a league with the Canaanites, that is, never to yield to any temptation to come short of that will in my obedience.

Now the blessed Lord had nothing to unlearn. He could not say, "In Me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." He was under the law, and the law of God was in His heart, and the holy eye of God could have made no allowance for imperfection in Him. But no allowance was needed, for He could always say, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God." The law, broken by man, He had come to magnify, and as our Surety He spake the word, "*Mine* iniquities have taken hold upon Me."

As the result of this we do not stand before a sin-avenging God as criminals before a judge; nor do we stand in the simple relation of the creature to the Creator; but we stand in such a relation to God that His love must be to us what it is to the Son, and Christ's love to us is what God's love is to Him. It cannot be less. But the law of communion is unalterable, and my desire for it must be according to that law, with the entreaty for the Lord so to search me that there may be nothing in me to hinder the communion which He craves.

With regard to the imperfections of obedience which

accompany every deed and wish and thought, however holy, let us never think of them as less than sin which could only be blotted out by the blood of Christ. It is very easy to consider myself delivered from sin, root and branch, if I have a shallow conviction of what sin is. In Rom. vii. Paul said, "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not that I do." Oh, that we may be delivered from scanty thoughts of sin! If I do not stand before God as the criminal before the sin-avenging Judge, it is because Christ stood for me as my Surety. Oh! beloved, let us learn this, that on the one hand God could not possibly bear with us if we did not stand in Christ; and that on the other hand while we see our sins and are humbled, He says of us, "How holily, justly and unblameably!" Here is our perfectly pleasing God, as again we have it, "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father." (1 Thess. i. 3; ii. 10.) And, beloved, we ought to have the testimony that we please God. This testimony every child of God is responsible to have. But it is much easier for Him to be pleased with our endeavours to please Him, than for us to be content and satisfied with our attainments.

(R. C. C.)

Is not this matter of friendship with our Master very much akin to that heavenly integrity which is set before us in Psalms xxv. and xxvi? And we must ever be careful to remember that there is the communion of the blood for our cleansing when we fail to walk in the communion of obedience. "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" Agreed, that is, in the object of their walk; for they could not walk together except it

were towards the same object. Therefore, it is only when walking in the communion of obedience that we walk with Him. We have no excuses for the lack of this communion, or ground for making light of its scantiness. As we are taught of God we shall fully acknowledge that even for any cold utterance in prayer, one thing alone saves us from the depths of hell, and that is that He, at whose side we walk step by step, was wounded for us.

In Psalm xxv. 25 the psalmist prays, "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me"; and our acquaintance with blood-bought mercy should lead us into the footsteps of integrity. Then he says, "Judge me, O Lord: for I have walked in mine integrity" (Ps. xxvi. 1); that is not sinlessness, but uprightness. To this he adds, "I will wash my hands in innocency: so will I compass Thine altar, O Lord." I will stand at Thine altar while I am a man of integrity, seeking cleansing from guilt that I see not, and being assured that the evils which I do not know *Thou* knowest, and that Thou canst deliver me from them through that altar alone.

At the end of the psalm he says, "But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me." These shall be my footsteps still, so that I may be able to say, "I know nothing against myself; yet am I not hereby justified." (1 Cor. iv. 4, R.V.) Do I need redemption when walking in integrity? Yes; I need redemption from the sin that is still in me. "My foot standeth in an even place," where there is no ruggedness or uncertainty; for two things are here, integrity touching the altar, and integrity of desire to please God, and over both of these it is our business carefully to watch. As we learn His commandments let us hasten to keep them; and though we get but an inch forward in our walk with Him, He is pleased with that inch. (H. D.)

REVISED VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

XXIX.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS (*concluded*).

CXXXVIII. 1—"I will give Thee thanks," so v. 2 "give thanks unto thy name," and v. 4. Jehovah's word rests on the sure basis of His name. The foundation on which all God's words and promises rest is Himself and His character. v. 8—The word for "perfect" is a rare one, and denotes bringing to a consummation. In one Greek Version the same word is used that is ren. *perform* in Phil. 1. 6.

CXXXIX. 3—The M. "Thou *winnowest*" is more exact; it implies an examination by sifting; cf. Lu. 22. 31. v. 5—The Heb. for "beset" sig. *to bind up*, and is used for oppression and for protection. It has the latter meaning in 1 Sa. 25. 29 "*bound up* in the *bundle* of life," and also here. The "hand" is the open hand of protection as in Ex. 33. 22. There are two words ren. hand; the other is used in v. 10 for authority and control. v. 11—"darkness shall *overwhelm*." This word occ. Gen. 3. 15, "*bruise*," and Job 9. 17 "*breaketh*." v. 13—"covered," *i. e.* for protection, as in 140. 7, same word. It is not the common word for cover, but is always used of the cherubim as Ex. 25. 20. The word *overshadow* best expresses the thought. v. 16—"my *imperfect substance*" or form, *i. e.* the embryo; it is one word. v. 18—"When" should be omitted. The vision is past as in Jer. 31. 36—"I awake and still I am with thee." v. 19—"the wicked" is singular, *i. e.* "*the wicked one*."

CXL. 4—"purposed to *thrust aside my steps*," cf. 116. 8; 118. 13. v. 7—"God the Lord" is *Jehovah Adonai*.

CXLI. 5—"reprove me, (it shall be as) *oil upon the head*; let not my head refuse it." "calamities," or "evil deeds"; in 140. 2, A. V. ren. "mischiefs."

CXLIII. 3—"dwell in *dark places*." v. 10b—Ren. "Thou wilt lead me in." v. 11b—"in thy righteousness bring." v. 12—"And in thy lovingkindness."

CXLIV. 12—"When our sons shall be," and so in foll. vv.

CXLV. 5—"I will meditate on."

CXLVI. 9—"He upholdeth the fatherless."

CXLVII. 4b—"He giveth them all their names. v. 6—"The Lord upholdeth."

CXLVIII. 6—"a decree which none shall transgress," M. v. 13—"alone is exalted." v. 14—"and He hath lifted up."

CL. 6a—"praise *Jah*," M.

It will be noticed that Books I., II. and III. end with "Amen and amen," (Pss. 41., 72., 89.) Book IV. with "Amen, Hallelujah," and

Book V. with "Hallelujah" alone. Thus this last carries on the "Amen" of time into the final "Hallelujah" of eternity.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

What are we to learn from the command to Aaron to "wash his flesh with water in the holy place" before putting on "his garments" on the day of atonement? (Lev. xvi. 24.)

Aaron had on that "Atonement Day" put himself, as it were, out of his priesthood, by putting off his official garments of "glory and beauty," and returning to private linen dress; he had specially confessed that day his own sinfulness by a sin-offering "for himself" (v. 6), hence he now washed again, as Moses at the first washed him. (Lev. viii. 6.) He did this "in the *holy place*" as a confession that in that very sanctuary he had been only a sinful man all the year that had just elapsed. Compare the command to lay up the ashes of the red heifer "in a *clean place*" (Num. xix. 9), and the statement that "heavenly things themselves" needed to be purified. (Heb. ix. 23.) We should also specially observe that it is *as walkers* "in the light" that we need "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son" to cleanse us "from all sin." (1 John i. 7.)

Is it correct to say that the Lord Jesus kept the law for us, and that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us?

Scripture does not say that Christ kept the law *for us*. Christ magnified the law and made it honourable; He fulfilled it to the utmost and bore its penalty, and now He Himself "is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. x. 4.) So Scripture never speaks of the *righteousness of Christ* being imputed to the believer, but of *Christ* as his righteousness. That God "imputeth righteousness without works" is blessedly true, and it is only as standing in that righteousness that any one can be accepted before Him. God made His Holy One "to be sin for us, that we might be made *the righteousness of God in Him*," and His name for us now, as for Israel in their coming day of glory, is "*the Lord our righteousness*." (2 Cor. v. 21; Jer. xxiii. 6.)

We read concerning Christ that "Jehovah is well pleased for *His righteousness*' sake" (Isa. xlii. 21), and it is only as the Fulfiller of "*all righteousness*" that He can be "made unto us . . . righteousness." But the important thing for us to lay hold [of is the truth that *He Himself* is our righteousness, and that we are "the righteousness of God in Him."

THE SANCTIFICATION OF BELIEVERS.

BY THE LATE H. W. SOLTAU.

THERE is in the minds of many believers much obscurity and uncertainty respecting the doctrine of sanctification. This may arise from three causes:—First, from the habit of considering sanctification as exclusively the work of the Holy Spirit, and disconnecting it from the work of Christ. Secondly, from confounding the holiness to which a believer may practically attain, with that in which he stands accepted before God, through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus—in other words, by viewing sanctification solely as *progressive* instead of completed. Thirdly, from a misconception as to the nature of the flesh, and the supposition that the Holy Spirit by an inward process gradually purges out its evil, thus by slow degrees making the believer fit for heaven. Before investigating the Scriptures of the New Testament with reference to the three points of this subject specified above, it may be well to turn to some parts of the Old Testament where the typical sanctification of Israel and its priesthood is especially brought before us.

Sanctification under the law involved three great principles: first, judgment executed on evil; secondly, cleansing from defilement; thirdly, separation off to God.

Israel was a nation holy unto the Lord upon all these grounds. God severed them off from the nations to Himself; “Ye shall be holy unto Me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be Mine.” (Lev. xx. 26.) In effecting this He passed them unscathed through (as it were) baptisms of blood and judgment; typically cleansed them, and pro-

vided for the restoration of such cleanness by various sacrifices and washings.

God hallowed the first-born of Israel unto Himself, by judging the first-born of Egypt, and by the blood of the paschal lamb; they became separated to God because His wrath had fallen on the lamb in their stead. He passed over them when he saw the blood which spoke of judgment, whilst on the first-born of Egypt it fell with unmitigated severity. In a certain sense, that which is given up to destruction under the holy justice of God becomes consecrated; hence the same Hebrew word is used for *devoted* and *accursed*; the Latin word for *sacred* has the same double signification, as *auri sacra fames*, the *accursed* thirst for gold. The saved sinner is holy in the primary sense, upon the ground of the solemn judgment which was passed upon him in his Substitute.

Aaron and his sons were "anointed," "consecrated" and "sanctified," as priests to God. (Ex. xxviii. 41.) They were washed; blood was put upon their ears, hands and feet; and it was sprinkled with oil upon their persons and garments, in order to separate them off, as a priestly family, from a nation already sanctified to Jehovah. In the case of the cleansed leper, also, somewhat similar typical ceremonies restored him to his place in that holy nation from which his uncleanness had shut him out. It is to be observed that the ear, hand, and foot are touched with the blood before the oil is placed upon them; the cleansing virtue of the sacrifice made way for the holy unction.

Water mingled with the ashes of the red heifer (Num. xix.) is peculiarly denominated "the water of separation"; like the blood of bulls and goats, it sanctified to the purifying of the flesh (Heb. ix. 13), and has its antitype in the precious blood of Christ.

The tabernacle and its vessels, when first fashioned, were all sanctified by the anointing oil. (Ex. xxx. 26, 27.) No original uncleanness defiled them: but subsequently the sin of Israel penetrated into the holiest, and on the great day of atonement blood had to be sprinkled on and before the mercy-seat, and also on the golden altar of incense. Thus were the holy places reconciled and hallowed from the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and to this, probably, St. Paul alludes in Heb. ix. 21: "Moreover, he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry; and almost all things are by the law purged with blood." We do not hear of any sprinkling of the tabernacle and vessels with blood in the Old Testament, except on the occasion alluded to above.

From these instances we may gather the truth, that where sin or uncleanness had in any wise defiled either vessels or persons, they could be restored to holiness only by means of blood.

The presence of God necessarily sanctified every place in which He manifested Himself; whether the camp of Israel, the tabernacle, or the temple; and the very ground became holy in the region where He appeared. But Israel was a separated people, redeemed by blood, before He dwelt among them, and the way for His presence had to be prepared, as regards the tabernacle and the temple, by many sacrifices.

Holiness implies the knowledge of what is unclean and evil, an estimation of sin according to the perfect standard of truth, and a consequent abhorrence of and separation from all that is corrupt. Where this really exists, no error, however small, no taint however slight will be excused or palliated. Adam, before his fall, was innocent, but could not be holy. He had no power to appreciate what was sinful, although he was himself sinless.

The elect angels, on the other hand, are holy ; they have witnessed the fall of their fellows and of man ; have been upheld by God, and are able to estimate the fearful ruin sin has caused, and the estrangement and separation from God which have resulted. "A just weight and balance are the Lord's." (Prov. xvi. 2.) He alone has the power to weigh, and He has the perfect standard of holiness, truth and righteousness ; and has also manifested to the full His judgment of evil. Nothing less than the fearful outpouring of His wrath on the Holy One under the curse on the tree, could suffice either as a manifestation of His holiness, or as the measure of His estimate of sin. Any imperfection, any falling short of the full measure of the perfection of Christ is unholiness. The blood of Christ alone can hallow from such imperfections, and our acceptance in Him will alone suffice for our sanctification.

Let us now turn to the subject of sanctification as treated in the New Testament. It will be found that there are texts which speak of God the Father, and the Lord Jesus, besides the Holy Spirit, as engaged in the work of sanctification.

Jude begins his Epistle by addressing "them that are sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ, called." Here believers are regarded as made holy by and in the Father ; the Spirit of God manifestly directing our thoughts to the blessed truth that we have been set apart in His eternal counsels and are begotten by Him, and thus, having Him as our Father, are necessarily holy. In Heb. x. 10, sanctification is traced up to the will of God, "by the which will we are sanctified." He having foreknown His own, chosen them in Christ, and predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son, in due time provided the way by which they should

be set apart and sanctified to His own glory. In order to accomplish this wondrous work of grace, it was needful that the sinner should be cleansed, and made a new and holy being. By the one offering of Jesus, God has, according to His own will, sanctified and perfected for ever believers in Him. In the death of His Son they have been for ever buried as sinners out of the sight and remembrance of God; the body of sin has been destroyed; sin in the flesh has been utterly condemned, God's solemn judgment has been passed and executed, not only on their iniquities and transgressions, but on the very spring and source of evil—the flesh; and Christ being raised from the dead they have been quickened together with Him, and are thus new creatures, “called saints.”

God the Father calls as well as justifies, and His is a holy calling, so that, as it is expressed in Rom. i. 7, and 1 Cor. i. 2, believers are “called saints.” The insertion in these passages of the words *to be*, greatly impairs the force of the original. The authoritative calling actually constitutes believers holy. So we read, “Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (2 Tim. i. 9); “The called according to His purpose” (Rom. viii. 28); “Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly [or rather super-heavenly] calling.” (Heb. iii. 1.) Hence it appears that God the Father is the Sanctifier, because He has chosen, called, provided the means of cleansing for His people, and begotten them as His own.

In Heb. ii. 11, and xiii. 12, the Lord Jesus is spoken of as the Sanctifier. The former passage runs thus:—“Both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.” The church is here regarded as of one Father,

one life, one family, one-wise with Christ, so that He is not ashamed to call them brethren, and they are holy brethren, for He has sanctified them with His own blood, as chap. xiii. 12 states. The whole Epistle presents to us the Sacrifice and the great High Priest accomplishing a perfect and eternal redemption, in contrast with the mere fleshly sanctification under the law. Eph. v. 25-27 also presents Christ as the Sanctifier of the church: "Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it unto Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." This is a very blessed passage, for it lets us into the heart of Christ, and shows how His love prompted Him to give up His life in order that He might so cleanse and hallow the church as to make it meet for His own glory, and rest contented in contemplating its perfection. What a sanctification is this!

One text speaks of the saints as sanctified in Christ Jesus: "To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints." (1 Cor. i. 2.) It may be questioned whether the Greek preposition here translated *in* might not be correctly rendered *by*, as is the case in several other passages; indeed by the use of this preposition, the Spirit of God seems to convey the double truth of sanctification *by* and *in* Christ Jesus. The Lord Jesus has by His blessed work on the cross effected the holiness of the church; but that holiness is held in union with Him.

Redemption, in its widest sense, includes righteousness and sanctification; for the sinner is not only ransomed from all the penalties which by nature and practice he has incurred; but is redeemed to God, according to the heavenly song, "Thou hast redeemed us to God by Thy

blood." (Rev. v. 9.) Moreover, redemption is not only by, but in Christ. Believers are chosen in Christ and predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto God. They are accepted in the Beloved, and redeemed in Him. (Eph. i. 4-7.) In this great salvation God has made Christ to be everything to the believer: "Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, (that is to say) righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. i. 30.)

To attempt, therefore, to separate the work of the Holy Ghost from that of Christ in the salvation of a sinner, confining redemption to the one, and sanctification to the other, cannot but be productive of error.

(To be concluded.)

CHRIST IN THE PSALMS.

NOTES OF ADDRESSES.

I WOULD ask you, beloved, to consider Christ as presented to us in the first Psalm—Christ the learner, Christ the lover of the Scriptures, and Christ always prospering. In the first verse of the Psalm we have the past, the present and the future of the world, that is of all who are not born of the Spirit. The world is going on to its destruction, as the swine, into which the demons expelled by the Lord from the poor sufferer were permitted to enter, ran violently down a steep place and were choked in the sea. The last stage of the world's course is sitting in "the seat of the scornful." God never executes judgment upon the children of Adam without patience to the uttermost, but that patience is always abused by man.

In verse 4 we have both the judgment set forth and the character of those upon whom it is executed. The one word chaff includes those of all nations and all ranks who

are not reckoned amongst the people of God. The wind drives it away, clearing it as it were out of the floor. That is its doom, and its sentence is passed already. When the world least thinks of the execution of that sentence, when they say "Peace and safety," then will sudden destruction come upon them and they will not escape.

In consideration of this, how it becomes us to be so living, so to have Christ in us, as to rebuke the world's sleep of death. This we cannot do, save as the commandment in Colossians is obeyed, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." It is a marvellous thing when the sinner discovers that he is lost, and a still more marvellous revelation when the lost sinner meets the Saviour of the lost. That is the first step in the ladder, and you all know it; but we all need reminding of it. The next step is to know by the witness of the Spirit that I am God's child.

While the world is as chaff we have to do with certainties—the certainties of God's Word, His truth, His commandments, and His promises. We have not to do with uncertainties save as committing them to Him with whom nothing is uncertain, and who will show how pleased He is when we trust Him for the morrow. And how shall we have the heart of faith worthy of God? Not by neglecting His Word, or dealing lightly with the conscience; but by copying the Lord Jesus as the Learner, according to the word, "His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night." This is the secret of growth. "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water." The tree thus planted grows, and its growth is very sure. In Luke ii. we see the Lord as the Learner, "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions." The same passage gives evidence of His growth, for "all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. . . .

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

These words remind us of Isaiah l. "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and 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." Concerning the words that follow these, let us observe that in Romans viii. Paul takes them out of the mouth of Christ, and puts them into the mouth of every believer. The reason of this is that the justification of the Head on the ground of atonement, declared by resurrection, is our justification.

Does not the statement "Whatsoever He doeth shall prosper," answer to Psalm xci. ? There we read, "There shall no evil befall Thee, neither shall any plague come nigh Thy dwelling. . . . Because He hath set His love upon Me, therefore will I deliver Him. I will set Him on high, because He hath known My name. He shall call upon Me and I will answer Him. I will be with Him in trouble ; I will deliver Him and honour Him." Does not this express the mind of God towards Christ the Learner of Psalm i. ?

There was never a moment, but the blessed Lord, even upon His mother's breast, was looking onward to the glory, and to the pathway to the glory, even the death of the cross. Very plain is this from Psalm xxii. "He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver him : let Him deliver him, seeing he delighted in Him. But Thou art He that took me out of the womb. Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breast. I was cast

upon Thee from the womb ; Thou art my God from my mother's belly." There was no way in the eye of God, no way in the thought and mind of Christ, for prosperity, but by the death of the cross. It was not merely God's choice that by the gate of death heaven should be opened to Christ our Priest and Head, and so to us ; but I humbly affirm, according to Romans iii. that God only had choice between this, and leaving us as He left the angels that sinned. If He would have us as sons and daughters there was no other way to bring it about. Only thus could He "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Christ prospered by death and resurrection, and as He trod the path toward the cross, He never thought of the one without the other. He never looked at the glory apart from the way in which He would earn it, and never looked at the cross without its fruit.

We are to follow according to this pattern. Our chief cause of stumbling in the path of faith is not beginning with its glorious end. At the judgment-seat of Christ there will be no labour unrequited, no work without its wages ; but the wages will be a marvel, and we shall only see the riches of our Lord and Master's love and grace in giving such recompense for such work. Whatever service we render, small or great as it may be in the account of men, it must have its prosperous issue in the day of the Lord. We shall never faint when we are serving, if only we aim high enough, as did Christ. He always found His recompense in God. His constant testimony, according to John viii. was, "I do always those things that please Him." I always accomplish my own intent. Let it be our aim to have the same testimony.

Then we shall form a true estimate of our many imperfections if we consider ourselves as justified persons sent down into this world to be witnesses of Christ. We sprang

out of the earth in our first head; but now we are sent down into the world, as God the Father sent Christ, missionaries every one in the highest sense, and if we aim at the great success of pleasing God, we shall always succeed and never fail. Let us not be disturbed by uncertainties; but leaving the events of to-morrow with God, let us pursue the pathway of service for God, by taking heed unto His Word. The Lord dealt with the whole Word of God in complete obedience; let me aim at unswerving obedience, in all that He gives me to know of it, and while I find out the faults of my own work, He hides them from His eyes by His own blood, while He gives me the testimony that I walk holily and blamelessly before men.

(R. C. C.)

I would just give you one point of Bible study. You will find the study of the Psalms increasingly rich if you look at them in groups. Let us take the first six.

Starting with the first we see our ever-blessed Lord in His life here; in the second we have Him in quite another character. The first gives Him to us in His private life, His soul walk with God. The second presents Him in His mount Zion kingship, in His kingly official robes. A different portrait, but it has the same features. The second takes up the world where the first leaves off.

Again, in the second we get the blessed Jesus as King of Zion, staying Himself for His kingship day upon that same word on which He rested for the purity and richness of His soul here, as we see in Psalm i. The next four may give us pictures of His mornings and His nights, in "the days of His flesh." In Psalms iii. and iv. we see morning and evening psalms, and in v. and vi. a second pair. These were His in His mornings as He waked, and in His evenings as He lay Him down.

Psalm iii. 5 and 6 : " I laid me down and slept ; I awaked, for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about." I awaked to the enmity of a persecuting world. In Psalm v. He speaks of a flattering world, and prays, " Lead me, O Lord, in Thy righteousness because of mine enemies ; make Thy way straight before my face. For there is no faithfulness in their mouth ; their inward part is very wickedness ; their throat is an open sepulchre ; they flatter with their tongue." Thus the holy Lord was on the watch against a flattering world, as He was against a persecuting world. We in our day are subject to these flattering mornings, when things are quiet ; when we wake in our soft English bed, and with our breakfast, dinner, and supper to follow. But we are in a world that hates us, and is as hollow as a sepulchre.

But turn to the different nights. Psalm iv. 6-8, " There be many that say, who will show us any good ? Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased. I will both lay me down in peace and sleep"—because there is plenty of corn and of wine ? Nay, but because " Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." I don't put my trust in the British policeman that guards my door, but in the " everlasting arms," in which I am locked while I sleep.

In Psalm vi. we have the opposite kind of night : " O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger, neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure. I am weary with my groaning ; all the night make I my bed to swim ; I water my couch with my tears." But were these nights of sorrow less precious ? By no means. These were the two kinds of mornings and the two kinds of nights that wove the texture of that holy life below. (H. D.)

AN UNTRODDEN WAY.

“Ye have not passed this way heretofore.”—*JOSHUA* iii. 4.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY THE LATE J. L. HARRIS.

THAT is a marvellous utterance of the Lord Jesus, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” (*John* v. 24.) There was a time when we did not know what it was to have “passed from death unto life”; we had not passed that way, and we were not led that way by nature, for in fact we were under the power of death. But also as a matter of Christian experience we are often led by a path of which it may be said, “Ye have not passed this way heretofore;” yet the Lord is ever pleased to lead His people by the right way that they may go to a city of habitation.

The ark of the covenant was to go before the people, and where that ark went they could follow. The ark was the symbol of the divine presence with Israel, and *we* know it as a symbol of Christ Himself, the power of God and the wisdom of God. We do not know the way we are going, but we are called to keep our eye fixed on Him who says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.” The only way to face death without fear is to look at the death of the Lord Jesus. We have not passed that way, but He has, and has *abolished* death, and entered into His eternal glory.

Now let us look at two remarkable events; the passing of Israel through the Red Sea, and their passing through the Jordan. Forty years before the events of which we read in these chapters, we find the people passing through

the Red Sea, the waters of which became two walls, one on their right hand, and one on their left—walls of salvation. They had a high road to walk on in the midst of the sea; as the prophet beautifully expresses it, God “led them through the deep, as a horse in the wilderness.” There is a great lesson to be learnt from the Red Sea; it prefigured the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Death and judgment lighted on the head of our blessed Surety, and as a result there is a pathway of safety for the believer. If a man attempts to save himself by his prayers, or his repentance, or any of his own doings, he will be like the Egyptians who, assaying to pass through, were drowned. Many people do not think much of death till they have to meet it; then they put on a little solemnity and send for their minister. They have perhaps despised his prayers before, but now they are glad of his services; and no one can say that God may not bless any means even at the eleventh hour. But just as the Egyptians thought themselves safe in the Red Sea, and yet found it to be death and judgment to them, so those who are meeting death in their own strength, are rushing to certain destruction.

After a lapse of forty years Israel had to pass through the water again, this time a river, before they entered the land, and here too we find deep instruction. When they had been led to the border of the land nearly forty years before they were afraid of the giants, their soul fainted in them, and they murmured. Consequently they were all excluded from the land except Caleb and Joshua, who now with the younger generation were to enter it through the river Jordan. Our rivers are fullest in the winter, but in that country the rivers are fullest in the summer, because the snow that accumulates on the mountains in the winter, being melted by the summer heat, fills up the rivers. Thus the Jordan overflowed its banks at harvest

time, and this seemed like a barrier to Israel's entering the land, but God would lead them through it. I think we here learn something of the Lord Jesus in resurrection, for in Jordan there was *no judgment*, while in the Red Sea there was *no priesthood*. The river was very deep when it overflowed its banks, but as soon as the priests' feet touched the brim of the river the waters went back, and the priests stood firm in the midst of Jordan. When Joshua said to them, "Come ye up out of Jordan," they had, as it were, to climb up the banks, and then the waters returned to their place, and flowed over all the banks as they did before, so that not one person could pass over after the priests came up. The Lord Jesus is now before God as the great High Priest. Having entered into the holy place "He ever liveth to make intercession for us," "wherefore He is able to save to the uttermost [that is *right through*,] all that come unto God by Him." Salvation to the believer is an everyday thing, he does not know the way he is going, but the Lord Jesus is at God's right hand interceding for him. But we learn that the moment the Lord Jesus Christ rises up seven awful plagues are to be poured out (Rev. xv., xvi.), and then no one is able to enter the temple, and the intercession ceases. Jesus is now at God's right hand expecting till His enemies be made His footstool, and till then there is salvation, but the moment He changes His place it will be *too late*; the day of grace will have run its course, the waters of Jordan will return to their place.

The Red Sea then speaks to us of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Israelites saw their enemies dead, and they shouted "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously"; and so we can say, Christ led captivity captive, He triumphed over sin, He triumphed over death, He triumphed over them in His cross. Beloved,

there we see God's mighty act, there we see God as Judge, there we see God meeting sin in judgment. But in *Jordan* we see the priests acting for Israel, and we may be reminded of that blessed assurance, that "if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." If God has led us through the *Red Sea*, surely He will conduct us through the *Jordan*.

Death is the door of life, and not till we learn this can we follow Christ. To Peter, honest, bold, upright Peter, Jesus says, "Thou canst not follow Me *now*." Peter said, "I will lay down my life for Thy sake"; but Jesus told him that that very night he would deny Him three times. When Peter had discovered his need of the cross, and had learnt the heart of Christ, and the exceeding riches of His grace, then the Lord said to him, "Follow Me." Peter did not know till he was taught the meaning and the necessity of that word, "I lay down My life for the sheep." When the Lord let Peter fall it was to show him the value of the cross, and when Peter was alive to the preciousness of the cross he could write, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a *living* hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." The only way to meet death fearlessly is to see death vanquished by our Lord Jesus Christ. However we look at it we know it is a thing that nature shrinks from, it is a time of weakness and dishonour, but Christ is able to say to us, as He said to John, "Fear not; I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore."

We should observe that the ark went before the people about two thousand cubits, or nearly a mile. No one was allowed to go before the ark; they were to keep

their eyes on it, and doubtless they were surprised when they saw the waters which were running down suddenly stop, when the priests' feet touched them. Twelve men were to take twelve stones, and leave them as a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever that it was by no strength of their own that Israel passed over, but simply by relying on the living and the almighty God. This space of two thousand cubits may remind us that Christ is a *Forerunner*, that He is the *Firstfruits*; He has said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." So if we have to face death we shall find Jesus there, and shall go unharmed through the waters of Jordan. Let us not only keep our eye on the Ark, but on the living Christ and His ministry, and so see Him gently guiding us. He may call us to depart and be with Him, and that is a way we do not know, yet His presence is sufficient, for He has not only removed the curse, and delivered us from judgment, but He has abolished death, and made a highway for us through Jordan.

And in our wilderness pathway doubtless many of us can trace God's hand in leading us; sometimes our way seems hedged up, but He can make it plain and show us the path. Even when He allows His people to take their own course He displays His infinite wisdom. Did Peter think he would gain strength by a fall? And yet it was by this that he made a fuller discovery of himself, and learnt to look to Christ alone as his strength. But it was through the intercession of Christ that he was restored, and we have the assurance that "He *ever* liveth to make intercession for us." The Lord said, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I *have prayed for thee* that thy faith

fail not : and when thou art *converted* [*i.e.*, *turned from self-confidence*] strengthen thy brethren."

Beloved, we all know how circumstances depress us, how they drag us down, but let us think of Jesus at the right hand of God, saying "Fear not." You may often feel you do not know the way you are going, you have not passed this way heretofore, but be assured that the Lord will lead you safely. The priests' feet stood firm till the children of Israel had all passed over; and so I believe it is now; the Lord Jesus Christ will be engaged in His present ministry until all His people have passed over. Then we reach another thing—the coming of our Lord to receive us unto Himself; and when He rises up to receive His Church His enemies will be made His footstool.

We should seek to know more of the terrible reality both of sin and death, but let us see sin judged at the cross, and rejoice in the word, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Because He lives He is able to sustain our life, and therefore Paul could say, "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." Look at Him from the cross to the grave, and from the grave to heaven where He now is as the living way for His people. He will guide us safely through our trials, for He lives for that very purpose; and if it should be our portion to depart and be with Him He will make that way a way of peace for us.

You will, perhaps, be amazed when I tell you that it is not so necessary to watch against great crimes as against faults which may appear to us small and indifferent.—*Chrysostom.*

THE COMPASSION AND THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST.

JOHN vi. 1-13.

IN reading the precious records given to us in the Gospels we are contemplating One in whom love and power have their perfect combination, One who has compassion on the needy and is able to minister to their need. With men it often happens that one who could help another has no heart to do so, and one who would gladly give relief has not the ability. It is not so with the Lord. He is both able and willing; and a beautiful illustration of this is given to us in the miracle of feeding the five thousand men, besides women and children, with five loaves and two fishes.

This is the only miracle recorded by all four evangelists. It is the habit of John to narrate miracles that were not recorded by the other writers, and it is also clear that he records a miracle chiefly for the sake of its results. In this case a miracle that had been given by the other three, is repeated by John as an introduction to the great discourse of the Lord which we find in this chapter.

John tells us that "when Jesus lifted up His eyes, and saw a great company come unto Him, He saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" But he is careful to add that the Lord asked this to *prove* him, and not because He needed counsel, "for He Himself knew what He would do."

He who was about to feed this vast multitude was not so concerned about it as to forget those whose training He had specially undertaken. He could even pause to exercise the heart and conscience of *one* of that little company, for

in all that He did He was preparing them for the great work of being His witnesses unto men. The Lord would *prove* Philip, would put him to the test, to see how far he had profited by all that he had witnessed. But the only answer Philip could give was one that set forth the greatness of the need : "Two hundred pennyworth* of bread is not sufficient for them, that everyone of them may take a little." Philip was one of those who had seen the water turned into wine at Cana, and he had witnessed other manifestations of the Lord's power ; but as he looks at the present need he does not seem to express any confidence that the Lord is able to meet it.

As Philip dwelt upon the greatness of the need, so Andrew drew attention to the scantiness of the provision : "There is a lad here which hath five barley-loaves and two small fishes : but what are they among so many ?"

In face of all this how beautiful is the statement, "He Himself knew what He would do." This is of far-reaching application. He was never taken by surprise, or met by anything for which He was unprepared. It was absolutely true at all times and under all circumstances, that His purpose was formed beforehand, and He simply made use of circumstances to carry it out. What a comfort is this assurance to His people when they find themselves in difficulty and trial ! How it should encourage us to trust in Him who always knows what He will do, and whose love and power are infinite !

The Lord asks no more, but proceeds to act. He commanded that the men should be seated in an orderly manner, and then He "took the loaves ; and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down ; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would." The Lord gave thanks.

* *i.e.* between £6 and £7 worth.

Though He was Himself the Creator, yet He had taken the place of dependence, and even for the bread which He was multiplying to feed the multitude He gave thanks. What an example is He to His people as to receiving God's gifts "with thanksgiving," remembering that thus they are "sanctified by the Word of God and prayer." (1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.) And what a rebuke is this to those who are daily receiving mercies from the hand of God, and never give thanks for them! The first count in the solemn indictment brought against the Gentile world is that, when men knew God as Creator, "they glorified Him not as God, neither gave thanks." (Rom. i. 21.) And it is sadly true that numbers are still guilty of the awful sin of taking daily bread bestowed by God's gracious hand without ever giving Him thanks for it. It becomes children of God, as those who are priests unto Him, to give thanks continually for His goodness to the world as well as to themselves.

The need of the whole multitude was met, and they did not simply "*take a little*," as Philip had said, "for the distribution did not cease till they "were filled." Thus may we learn how strong is the arm of the Lord to carry out the dictates of His loving heart. Human need ever serves to bring into display the richness of divine bounty. In all this we have a picture of the way in which our deep spiritual needs are met. All who come to Christ with a sense of need prove the truth of the Word, "He hath filled the hungry with good things." But to have these good things we must have *Himself*, as He said to the multitude who were ready to receive *bread* from His hand, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst." Such is His fulness that the one who can say, *He is mine*, is beyond the possibility of any *need* that has not its immediate supply.

The bread with which He had fed the multitude could only satisfy present hunger for a time ; but He Himself, as "the bread of life," is able to satisfy every longing of the soul for eternity. And let us reflect that just as the bread was set before the people by the hand of the disciples, so by the hands of inspired writers, and also by means of all true "ministers of the Word," Christ is ever set forth as "the bread of life" for all who hunger. But as each one only received benefit from that bread by partaking of it separately and individually, so no one can be benefited spiritually without receiving Christ by personal and individual appropriation. The people might have seen the bread and acknowledged that there was plenty, and yet have died of hunger, if they had not eaten it. In like manner people may hear of Christ, and even acknowledge His sufficiency, and yet because they do not definitely accept Him as the gift of God, and take Him for themselves as personally as they take food for the body, they get no true blessing.

But everyone who does thus receive and feed upon Christ is made a possessor of eternal life, which shall soon be perfected in resurrection glory : "Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, *hath* eternal life ; and I will raise him up at the last day" (v. 54). Thus does the Lord Himself settle the question of eternal life by affirming that it is the *present portion* of the one who truly receives Him, though to know it in its fulness he must await the resurrection which His own hand will soon bring to pass.

One point more we will note in this beautiful narrative. "When they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." Wondrous word ! In whom save in Him could such a combination of bounty and care be found ? Had

any mere man been able to feed five thousand with five loaves he would have thought little of the fragments; but it was as natural (so to speak) to the Lord to give an example of care in the use of God's gifts, as to display His glory in the multiplying of the bread. In this He has given us an example, and it will be found that they who most seek to cultivate the spirit of true liberality, according to the mind of Christ, are most careful to guard against waste. As we thus ponder the ways of the perfect Servant of God, may we learn of Him, while we admire and adore Him!

W. H. B.

THE VEIL OF LOVE.

“And above all things have fervent love among yourselves: for love covereth a multitude of sins.”—1 PETER iv. 8. (See R. V.)

“Go weave a veil, nor may thine hand remove
 One fold which lends its simple aid
 Thy brother's unknown sin to shade;
 But interlace thy work with threads of love.

“Weave silently, lest some should guess thine art;
 Weave closely that no eye may see
 The fault which is but known to thee;
 Weave gently, lest thou wound that erring heart.

“Tell not thy brother what thy task has been,
 Nor 'mind him of repented sin;
 He knows a secret pang within,
 And weeps—tears which are by his Saviour seen.

“*Thy* task is but to veil from *other* eyes
 The traces which may still remain
 Of that tear-damp and secret stain—
 And thy reward shall wait thee in the skies.”

NOTES AND REPLIES.

How are we to understand Ecclesiastes xii. 11 ?

This is a most interesting verse with reference to the question of the inspiration of the Scriptures, and should be carefully pondered. The expression "*masters of assemblies*" should rather be rendered, as Hengstenberg renders it, "*the authors of the collections.*" The word for "*masters*" is used for the authors of the Talmud, and the word for "*assemblies*" means collections of sayings, as well as of people. Here the latter word has reference to the "*collections*" of writings which compose the various books written by the "*authors*" alluded to.

"The preacher" has just spoken of himself as the author of many proverbs, referring of course to the Book of Proverbs, which he describes as "*words of truth*" (*vv.* 9, 10), and connects with "*the words of the wise*" (*v.* 11), that is, the words of the wise men who are the authors of the collective writings of the inspired Word. These words are further described "*as goads, and as nails.*" The word for "*goads*" occurs in 1 Sa. xiii. 21. The word for "*nails*" is found with slight variations in 1 Chron. xxii. 3; 2 Chron. iii. 9; Isa. xli. 7; Jer. x. 4; it is always used for nails employed to fasten things together, and must not be confounded with another word of frequent occurrence, which, though rendered nail, signifies a *tent-peg* or a *peg* driven into a wall on which something may be hung. The two words thus beautifully illustrate two of the uses of the sacred Scriptures. They are as goads to urge on in the heavenly pathway, and in the service of God, those who are under His yoke, and they are as nails to keep them immovably fixed in the certainty of that which is revealed in the "*words of truth.*"

Though these words are given to us by various "*authors*"—a Moses or a David, a princely Isaiah or a herdman Amos, a Peter or a Paul—they all come by divine inspiration, being "*given from one Shepherd.*" What more beautiful description could we have of our holy Bible, in its human diversity and its divine unity, than that which Solomon gives in this singularly interesting passage? May its contemplation be helpful in these days of scepticism, when men trample the sacred Word under their unholy feet! We would render the passage thus: "*The words of the wise are as goads and as nails, (they are) fastened by the authors of the collections, (but) are given from one Shepherd.*"

EMMANUEL, WHICH IS, GOD WITH US.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY MR. H. GROVES.

THE gospel of Matthew, in the first chapter, brings before us that blessed title of the Lord, "*Emmanuel*, which being interpreted is, *God with us*." I sometimes fear that we get into a way of regarding the names of Christ as though they were but names. God would have us take hold of these names in our souls in all their deep meaning. The names express realities, and we should seek to grasp these realities in our hearts.

In the Old Testament we have some precious names by which God is known, and all these titles are illustrative of divine characteristics. The word for "Almighty God" is *El-Shaddai*, and it is interesting to observe that the word *Shaddai* is connected with the word for a mother's breasts. So we are called to think of God as the One whose mighty breasts satisfy every living soul. Then in the name *Jehovah* we have God as the covenant God of His people.

What is the Bible? It is the unfolding of God; and one thing we shall regret in the world to come will be that in the wilderness we did not learn more of God. Many of us are content to think that we shall learn what God is in heaven; but we are really called to learn what He is down here, amidst the toils of the wilderness, its sufferings, discouragements and perplexities. For in them all we have GOD — God always, God everywhere. The reason that we shall be a great blessing to angels in the future is because we shall be able to tell them what we have learnt of the fulness of God in our wilderness journeyings. To angels it is given to see some of the features of

the mighty character of God but we see God in *all* His fulness — God in His pity, His lovingkindness and His long-suffering grace; God in His motherly love; God in His fatherly power and might; God in every variety of circumstances, so that each child of God may have his own picture of what God was to him in the wilderness. Let us seek by God's grace to learn our lesson well here, and our time on earth will not be ill-spent. The more we are learning out what God is to us the sweeter and richer in blessing to our souls will be the days of our pilgrimage.

When God brought Israel into the wilderness it was to a place where they would find nothing but Himself. There were no fields from which to reap their corn; no running streams from which to draw water; no roads by which to track their path; but God was among them — God in all His sufficiency. What a blessed people! but they knew not their blessedness. Had they only known it, had they only realized what they had, there never would have been a murmur. I often feel that we are very much like Israel in the wilderness, always pitying ourselves and regarding ourselves as so unfortunate when we get into trouble and have this difficulty and that. How little we consider that all these things happen that God may be brought nearer to us! Each trial, difficulty and temptation should only be the occasion of our drawing from *El Shaddai* the needed help and comfort, for His breasts of consolation are never dry. God would have us bring every fresh difficulty to Him, every fresh experience, whether in the family, the assembly, or the world, and so get a fresh revelation of Him in some form that we had not thought of before.

In the Word of God, from beginning to end, every history has its own beauty. No book can ever be read

as we can read the Bible, because we see *God* in it and we see *ourselves* in it. We learn ourselves and our emptiness, and we learn God and His fulness. God does not wish us to bring supplies into the wilderness; but to leave them in Egypt. Many want their old treasures in their new pathway, and they get but little blessing. As God teaches us we shall learn the privilege of having empty pockets, and the blessing of weak bodies. A brother wrote to me the other day, "By the mercy of God I am very weak and frail"; and when he wrote it he meant it, because that season of weakness had made him much richer in spiritual blessings. We think ourselves very fortunate if we can carry a good deal of Egypt's treasure into the wilderness; but Moses left it all behind him. He would not, however, leave behind a hoof of what belonged to God. So it was with that blessed man Paul. He called Egypt's treasures dross and dung. The reputation and honour he might have had from his countrymen, and all his prospects in life, were nothing to him, and he made no attempt to carry them with him when he became a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In all the Old Testament Scriptures, even in their minutest details we have a revelation of God. We see what God was to His people of those days, and what He is ready to be to us now. Then when the Son of God came to this world God summed up every revelation of Himself that we have in Old Testament Scripture, and gave us the complete unfolding of His name in the Person of Christ, as Emmanuel. What is expressed by El-Shaddai, Jehovah, Jehovah-Rophi and every other title of God is seen in Him who is Emmanuel.

Do we then carry Emmanuel with us as we journey through the wilderness? Or have we simply the name without the realization of what it means? The All-

sufficient God, Jehovah the Healer, Jehovah the Blessor, Jehovah the Protector, Jehovah the Feeder, Jehovah the Comforter—these and all other titles are presented to us in the Person of Christ when He is called "*Emmanuel*," and that name is interpreted as "*God with us*." That is what it means; but we may deal with Scripture in such a manner as to lose the blessing God has for us in it. Some one recently asked me to recommend him a good commentary on the Bible. I replied, "The very best commentary I know is the Bible itself; it is its own commentary." Let us seek to honour God more than we do by looking to Him to unfold His Word to us, and let us as we begin each day seek to have Emmanuel—*God with us*—for that day.

There is enough in God for everything: no matter what the difficulties may be there is El-Shaddai—the *All-sufficient God*—to meet them. And God would have us know Christ as a personal living Saviour. Many seem to have more to do with the precious blood shed upon the cross, than with the living Christ Himself at the right hand of God. We thank God for what we have in Christ crucified; but let us thank Him too for what we have in the living Christ as One who is always near. Moses, speaking of Israel, said, "What nation is there that hath God so nigh?" As you get up in the morning, and as you go to bed in the evening, ask yourselves this question Where is Emmanuel? Is He up yonder, a long way off? Or can you say, "Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved"?

Friends, we want to know Christ as One who is *near* to us, and God is continually bringing His children into perplexities and trying circumstances, in order that they may find the needs-be of a present Christ. As long as things appear smooth we may get on without much of

His presence ; but troubles come and we want Him. In the Jewish Talmud a rabbi speaks of a rich man who gave his son so much every year ; the son came to his father once a year for his allowance, and the father saw nothing of him for the rest of the year. The father thought he would like to see his son oftener, so he decided to give him his allowance every morning, and he had to go to him every morning for it. This is the position in which God would have us. He does not want us to have storehouses of our own. He has given us Christ, and He wishes us to be coming to Him, so that He may have the continual pleasure of seeing our faces, and we may have the pleasure of seeing His face. Let it be our aim to see Christ in the morning, to see Christ all day long, and when we lie down for needed rest at night take care that we have *Emmanuel*.

We sometimes think of the word, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty," as referring to the future only. It is future ; but that which will be the glory of God's people in the future may be their privilege now, and faith lays hold of these Emmanuel prophecies and makes them present realities to the soul. We speak of the coming of Christ, and the precious promises of God's Word touching the future ; but it seems as if there were no fire in them for us. God grant that His word may have more warmth in our hearts ! If it be otherwise we shall find it solemnly true that "the letter killeth." The truth of God kills if that truth has not the fire of the Holy Ghost in it. May the Lord enable us to get hold of a Christ who is near to us—Emmanuel—a very present Companion, that we may not think of Him as far off when we need Him ! If we can do without Him He hides Himself till we learn our need of Him. God grant that we may never be able to get on without a present Christ !

THE MOTE AND THE BEAM.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ, in the Gospel by Matthew, instructs His disciples thus: "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." (Chap. vii. 2.) This is immediately followed by words which should be pondered by us who are believers in Christ: "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?"

It is well with the children of God if heart and eye be directed to Christ. "Looking unto Jesus" is a good word from Paul the Apostle; "Behold the Lamb of God" were words of John the Baptist.

The eye that looks unto Jesus, the heart that is taken up with Christ, sees other things in their right light. If you are "*beholding*" a mote in your brother's eye, hearken to the reproving word of the Lord: "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not, [in Luke, "perceivest not,"] the beam that is in thine own eye?" Our blessed Master would have us learn of Him, that we may know how to judge our brother's fault after a manner that is worthy of our high and heavenly calling: If thy brother hath trespassed against thee, trespass not thou against him by thy *manner* of handling the matter. "He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good."

By "looking unto Jesus," and considering His ways of grace and truth, of lowliness and meekness, of long-suffering and forbearance, we shall, as much as in us lies, be careful to prevent the breach of the bond of peace, and, by the help of our Lord, we shall be our brother's helper—

using diligent endeavour to "cast out the mote out of our brother's eye"—according to His Word.

On the contrary, if the eye be not directed to Him, if it be *beholding* the mote which is in the brother's eye, our common adversary blinds us, and we do not *perceive*, much less *consider*, the beam which is in our own eye; and the Lord, in the severity of His love, reproves us with the solemn word, "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly, to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." It is not the hypocrisy of the Pharisee that is here meant, but the hypocrisy of one, who, because of the evil manner of finding fault with his brother, is, of the two, the more faulty, even as the *beam* is more blinding than the *mote*.

Observe: This subject in the Gospel by Luke (vi. 39, 40) is immediately connected with: "Can the *blind* lead the *blind*, shall they not both fall into the ditch?"

Nicodemus came to Jesus in the darkness of the night, and the Lord indirectly reproves him before he leaves His presence. In speaking of the awful doctrine of condemnation (John iii. 19, 20, 21) He uses the words "*darkness*" and "*light*" no less than six times. But, before this, He instructs Nicodemus that God sent not His Son to condemn, but to save—to condemn sin, but to save the sinner. Connected with the doctrine of condemnation is the Lord's gentle, indirect reproof to this "man of the Pharisees," who "came to Jesus by night." He says, "*Light* is come into the world, and men loved *darkness* rather than *light*, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the *light*, neither cometh to the *light*, lest his deeds should be reproved; but he that doeth truth cometh to the *light*, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God."

Nicodemus is both encouraged and reproved; he did

come to Him who was the *Light*, although in the darkness of the night. We also should approve and encourage as far as, in truth, we may; but in all faithful love, condemn sin, in order to help our failing brother. It is one thing to suffer sin in a brother, to whom we ought to be as faithful as we are gracious, and another thing to perform the part of a severe judge; and so give our Lord occasion to say to us: "Thou hypocrite!" We should deal with a trespassing brother, after a Christ-like manner, endeavouring to *gain* our brother, and ever remembering the word of our Lord, in connection with this subject: "The Son of man is come to *save* that which was *lost*," and also, "If he shall hear thee, thou hast *gained thy brother*."

However much may be said on this subject, unless we bear in mind that He who came to save that which was lost was the Saviour *by His own death*; and unless we wait on God for the teaching of His Holy Spirit, and so have our hearts softened, by the remembrance of Him who died on the cross for us, we shall still—instead of "looking to Jesus," and beholding "the Lamb of God"—behold the mote in a brother's eye, and not perceive the beam with which the adversary, in his wiles, has blinded us.

We should remember that by nature there is much more than either mote or beam in our eye. We were so "shapen in iniquity" (Ps. li. 5) as to be at utter enmity against God, and blind to His love and wisdom. We were born blind. There are those, who, although truly the children of God, sometimes act towards their brethren who trespass against them, as if forgetful of the death of Christ upon the cross, forgetful that "*when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son*"; forgetful also that the same Lord who made atonement for our sins upon the cross, is the example for us to follow.

It may now be profitable for us to turn to God's retribution, as seen in the case of the Ephraimites, in the days of the Judges, when they came first to chide with Gideon, thinking he had done them wrong, and afterward threatened to burn the house of Jephthah upon him with fire.

Gideon, by gentle words, quieted their anger (Judges viii. 2, 3), reminding us that "with the lowly is wisdom." Jephthah handled not the matter so wisely, nor after so lowly a manner, but "gathered together all the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim," and killed many thousands of that tribe. (Judges xii. 1-6.) Thus the Ephraimites were punished for their trespass. Had they learned their lesson from the "soft answer" of Gideon to them—which "turned away their wrath"—they would not have stirred up the anger of Jephthah by their "grievous words." "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city." We may learn, from the error of the Ephraimites, the importance of the proverb, "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water; therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with."

Under the law of Moses, whatsoever an unclean person touched, that thing, by contact, became unclean; and whosoever touched the unclean thing himself became unclean. We are under the law to Christ; if therefore we come into contact with one who is unchrist-like, let us beware lest we put ourselves under Moses. Being under Christ, let us be Christ-like. Let us "recompense to no man evil for evil." If it be possible, as much as in us lies, let us live peaceably with all men. (Rom. xii. 18.) If we have a due remembrance of the mercies of God to us, and do not think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, we shall be able to bear with one who may think

too highly of himself, and by word and deed make nothing of us.

The Spirit of God by Paul, makes large demands upon grace, which is always largely bestowed upon those who, living in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit. He who said "I am a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people," gives us this instruction by the apostle: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Abounding grace is indeed needed for obedience to this exhortation; but God the Giver of grace supplies grace to the soul that desires it. Receiving the word, "My grace is sufficient for thee," we may indeed say, "Our sufficiency is of God."

The love which comes from God, when called upon to suffer, is ready to do so, and while *suffering long* it is kind, and doth not behave itself unseemly. This love seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, hopeth all things, endureth all things, and never faileth.

We may with profit observe the wisdom and grace of David, when he was falsely accused of pride by his brother Eliab—"I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart"; and when he was made nothing of—"With whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness?" His lowliness of mind is seen by his answer to all this: "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" It is God who gives power to the "soft tongue" to "break the bone." (Prov. xxv. 15.)

Let us hearken to God, through the words of the apostle Peter: "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing . . . He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil, and do good, let him seek peace, and pursue it." (1 Pet. iii. 9-11;

Ps. xxxiv. 13, 14.) "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "To him that soweth righteousness, shall be a sure reward"; but frowardness is in the heart of the man that "soweth discord." (Gal. vi. 7; Pr. xi. 18; vi. 14.)

Gideon, Jephthah, the Ephraimites, and David, all reaped according to their sowing. We all, at this moment, are reaping according to that which we formerly sowed; and we are continually sowing for the future. God give us grace to turn our present circumstances to account!

We do well to remember the words of the apostle John, in his first Epistle: "And now little children abide in Him, that, when He shall be manifested, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming."

XCV.

CHILDREN OF LIGHT.—"When men are walking in the dark, through an unknown and roadless country, they walk insecurely, doubtfully, timidly. For they cannot see where they are treading: they are fearful of stumbling against a stone, or falling into a pit: they cannot even keep on for many steps certain of the course they are taking. But by day we perceive what is under us and about us; we have the end of our journey, or at least the quarter where it lies, full in view; and we are able to make for it by the safest and speediest way. The very same advantage have those who are light in the Lord, the children of spiritual light, over the children of spiritual darkness. They know whither they are going: to heaven. They know how they are to get there: by Him who has declared Himself to be the Way; by keeping His words, by walking in His paths, by trusting in His atonement. If you then are children of light, if you know all this, walk according to your knowledge without swerving or straying, without loitering or dallying by the way, onward and ever onward, beneath the light of the Sun of Righteousness on the road which leads to Heaven."—J. C. HARE, M.A.

THE SANCTIFICATION OF BELIEVERS.

BY THE LATE H. W. SOLTAU.

(*Concluded from page 223.*)

THERE are two texts which speak of the "sanctification of the Spirit"; one in 2 Thess. ii. 13, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth"; the other, 1 Peter, i. 2, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." In the first of these the apostle addresses the Thessalonians as chosen by God to salvation, which election had been made manifest by the Holy Spirit separating them off to God, and by their belief of the truth. Here the sanctification of the Spirit is not alluded to as a progressive work, but as an accomplished act, as much so as their belief in the truth. The gospel had come to them in power and in the Holy Ghost, so that they had received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost, and had been manifestly separated off from idolatry to God, to serve Him in holiness, in contrast to the uncleanness of their former lives. Thus had the Spirit's sanctification of them been made apparent.

In the second text, Peter writing to the scattered strangers of the dispersion, commences in the same way by alluding to their election of God, which election was unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; and this purpose of God had been accomplished through sanctification of the Spirit. The Holy Ghost had by means of the sprinkled blood and the communication of faith, separated them off from their Jewish

brethren in the flesh, as saints to God. Let it be again observed, that sanctification, as alluded to in this text also, is a finished work of the Spirit, and not a gradual operation of the Holy Ghost. Of the latter we shall treat hereafter.

Two passages of Scripture speak of sanctification *by* or *in* the Spirit. The first is Rom. xv. 16, "That the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable being *sanctified by* the Holy Ghost." The other is 1 Cor. vi. 11, "But ye are washed, but ye are *sanctified*, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and *by* the Spirit of our God." In the former, the word translated "offering up," is the same that is used in the Septuagint of Psalm xl. 6, for meat offering, *mincha* in the Hebrew, and is quoted in Hebrews x. 5, 8, "*Offering* Thou wouldest not." It seems as if the apostle viewed the Gentile church converted through his agency as a new meat-offering presented to God, like the two wave loaves on the day of Pentecost—the presence and pervading power of the Holy Ghost having sanctified these Gentile first-fruits unto God, separating them off through faith in the blood of Christ from the uncleanness around. In the latter text washing, sanctification, and justification, are as much connected with the name of Jesus as with the Spirit of God—the Spirit having cleansed, justified, and made them holy, by connecting them with the blessed name and work of the Lord Jesus, and by taking up His abode within them.

In these Scriptures sanctification is viewed as fully accomplished through the power, agency and presence of the Holy Spirit, cleansing the sinner by means of the blood, communicating faith and life, and thus setting him apart as holy to God. Looked upon as redeemed by, and in union with, the Lord Jesus, and being made a child of

God, and the temple of the Holy Ghost, the believer is at once and for ever made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light; he is complete in Christ, and has received out of His fulness. Herein there can be no progress, it is a work accomplished, and he who is thus blessed of God is created in righteousness and true holiness. In this respect there can be no more advance in sanctification than in justification—"Ye *are* washed, ye *are* sanctified, ye *are* justified." But as the justified sinner has to make advances in practical righteousness, so also, though perfectly sanctified, he has to increase in holiness. Many are the exhortations in the Word of God to this end; and the Spirit of God, as the Spirit of truth dwelling in the believer, convicts, leads, instructs and strengthens the soul, by means of the Word of God. He enlightens the conscience, discovering by means of the Scriptures the secret things that are hateful to God, and enabling him to eschew that which is evil and follow that which is good.

In the last wonderful pouring out of the heart to God on behalf of His people, by the blessed Lord, previous to His own baptism in death for them (John xvii.), He twice presents them to God as "not of the world, even as I am not of the world." They were as perfectly separated off in holiness to God out of the world, as the Lord Jesus Himself was; for He regarded them, in the anticipation of faith, as standing before God in the full value of His own approaching sacrifice. At the same time He prays, "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth." And again He says, "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

Perfectly and eternally holy, the Lord Jesus has yet sanctified Himself through death and resurrection, so as to be, even in position, separated off to God, as far as the

heaven of heavens is from the earth. The believer stands in this perfect holiness, complete in Christ; but he has by faith in the truth, practically to separate himself from the world, its uncleanness and its defilement. He has also to make progress in this sanctification, till at length, on the morning of the resurrection, he wins Christ, being found in Him and altogether like Him. In the above quotation from John xvii. we see what stress is laid by the Lord upon the Word of God. He prays that the Father would sanctify them through the *truth*. He, Himself, as the great High Priest, has passed into the glory, in order that by the truth they may be sanctified. Practical holiness and freedom from the bondage of the world and Satan (John viii. 32), are only to be attained through the Scriptures of truth, under the teaching of the Spirit. The cross and the glory as unfolded in Scripture both have sanctifying power.

Have we sufficiently considered the Scriptures in this light? Are they to us as the water by which God would wash and sanctify us? Have we not too much disconnected the Holy Spirit's action within us from the Word of God?

In 2 Cor. vii. 1, the apostle grounds the exhortation, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," upon the fact of our having the promises which he had previously mentioned: thus, the very power to attain to practical holiness is made in part to depend upon our knowledge of God's blessed promises. In Rom. xii. 1, 2, we have, in like manner, a powerful exhortation to holiness, deduced from the wonderful lists of God's mercies enumerated in the preceding chapters of the Epistle.

Separation from evil, both within and without, is, as regards ourselves, one important feature in practical holi-

ness. Previous to the command given to Israel by God, "Ye shall be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. xi. 44), a catalogue of unclean beasts, birds, fishes, and creeping things was given, that they might know how to distinguish the unclean from the clean. In some cases the internal structure as well as the outward form of the animal must be ascertained. In other cases, the ordinary habits or appearance were at once to be sufficient indication of their unfitness for food. We must, in like manner, form our judgment as to what is holy or unholy, from the precepts laid down in the Word of truth, and learn to separate the precious from the vile, if we would be holy in all manner of conversation. Things which to-day seem to us innocent or harmless, may some time hence appear, through the light of truth, to be positively evil. "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from secret faults."

From what has been already adduced, it is manifest that the sinner, immediately he is born again, born of the Spirit, is not any more regarded by God as a corrupt mass of sin and uncleanness, but as a saint, a holy one—one created anew, after the image of Him that created him. A simple, though most important truth is connected with this, the truth expressed in the statement, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The two natures remain distinct and unmingled. The flesh is not improved by its proximity to the Spirit, and that which is born of the Spirit is not deteriorated by its nearness to the flesh. The work of the Holy Ghost in the believer is not a process of renovation, or improvement of that which is old—not a converting of flesh into spirit; but He acts in and with the new man, strengthening, refreshing and leading on in knowledge and power, and enabling the

child of God to keep under and mortify the flesh with its affections and lusts. The carnal mind is neither eradicated nor amended, it is like an evil beast which may be fettered but not tamed. If one of the chains be removed, its violence and unsubdued energy of evil will be found as strong as ever.

There is deep instruction in the words (Rom. viii. 13), "If ye *through the Spirit* do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." The flesh can and does, to a certain extent, mortify itself, or rather some of its works. The drunkard may from motives of carnal expediency, abstain from indulging his lust; the covetous man may, for the sake of his reputation, become liberal; but in all these and such like mortifications there is no power of life. In monasticism and asceticism, which say, "Touch not, taste not, handle not," there is no holiness; the deeds of the body must be mortified *through the Spirit*; the members which are upon the earth must be put to death through resurrection power—the affections being set on things above—and not through the antagonism of one earthly lust to another, nor for the sake of indulging one propensity at the expense of another. The wasted form of the ascetic, or the rough garment of the monk, may hide a heart as fat as grease; may conceal a soul swollen with pride and bloated with impurity. We must *walk in the Spirit*, if we would not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

There are, then, two distinct operations of the Spirit. First—He communicates life to the soul through faith in Christ; thereby separating the saved sinner as a holy person to God. Next: He takes up His abode in the believer, and through the truth of God leads him on in practical godliness and holiness. The Father, also, by His discipline, works to the same end, it being His blessed will that we should be partakers experimentally of

His holiness, and bring forth the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

As in natural things the parent does not disown the infant because of its weakness, or cast it out because its life is feeble, but expects that by care and nourishment it will make increase, and that its powers will be gradually developed; so the new-born babe in Christ is as truly a holy child of God as the most advanced saint; his life and powers will grow and make increase through the sincere milk of the word ministered by the Holy Ghost.

In conclusion, let it again be urged upon the people of God that they more diligently read and meditate on the Word of God. This is the weapon to be wielded against Satan and his temptations. This will keep us from the paths of the destroyer. This is the lamp for our feet, the truth that will cleanse us within; and we may be assured that when we are employed in such meditation the Holy Spirit is most distinctly aiding and strengthening us. "Having therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

A SEVENFOLD MENTION OF "SINS."

HEBREWS X.

THERE are few definitions in the Word of God; but there is one which describes *sin* as "the transgression of the law" (1 John iii. 4), or as the R.V. more correctly gives it, "lawlessness." In Heb. x. we have the word "*sins*" as well as "*sin*," the latter being sins in the aggregate; or we may say *sin* is the evil root inherited from the first transgressions, and *sins* the fruit of that root. Let us observe the sevenfold use of the word "sins" in this chapter, which is deeply instructive.

1. "Conscience of sins" (v. 2). Sins upon the conscience are a heavy burden, and they must have been so to the Israelite of old, even as they are to those now convicted of them by the Holy Spirit of God. No more striking instance of this have we in Old Testament times than in the case of David whose inward throes are given us in Ps. li. His memory served to maintain this condition, for he said, "My sin is ever before me."

2. In verse 3 occurs the expression "*remembrance of sins.*" The solemn transactions of the day of atonement (Lev. xvi.) revived the memory of past sins, whilst it powerfully reminded the worshippers that God had not forgotten them. Pressing both his hands upon the head of the live goat Aaron confessed over it "all the iniquities of the children of Israel and all their transgressions in all their sins." This was done "once every year." Why? Because "it was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away *sins*" (v. 4).

3. In the verse just quoted we have the third allusion to "*sins.*" Sins remained untaken away by the annual atonement, even when those sins had been borne by the scapegoat into a land not inhabited. The offerings of the day of atonement maintained Israel's national standing as God's worshipping people; but they could not give access to God Himself, or bring to any one the sense of absolute forgiveness and personal acceptance with God.

4. And what was true of the annual atonement was equally true of the *daily* ministering of the priest in the offering up of the morning and evening lamb: "Every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away *sins*" (v. 11). Hence no seat was provided for those who ministered in the tabernacle of old. What then was the proof that those sacrifices could never take away sins? Their repetition;

for "the worshippers once *purged* should have had no more conscience of sins" (v. 2). May we not ask if the priest of Israel, instituted into his office by divine authority, had no power to take away sins how shall one now arrogating to himself that title take them away, whether by mass or by absolution? Of no servant of Christ is it written that he is a priest, save as all believers are priests. The people of God are "a royal priesthood," and are called to offer the spiritual sacrifices of praise and prayer, thanksgiving and almsgiving. The only priest in this dispensation is the great Priest who has passed through the heavens, and to whose perfect work the chapter before us bears witness.

5. The session of Christ is the evidence of complete atonement for sins: for "this man after he had offered one sacrifice for *sins*, for ever sat down on the right hand of God" (v. 12). And the proof that by the one oblation of Himself upon Calvary He hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified is found in the fact that the worshippers once purged have now no more conscience of sins. That offering is never repeated, either in fact or figure, and He who presented it now sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and is ever in the presence of God for us.

6. Hence, next, the witness of the Holy Ghost is quoted in his testimony to the grace of the new covenant, "Their *sins* . . . will I remember no more" (v. 17). The last remembrance of the sins of worshippers was at the cross, when the holy wrath of an offended God was righteously poured upon the agonised heart and frame of Him who, as the co-equal Son of the eternal Father's bosom, had voluntarily undertaken to become our Substitute. The worshipper himself cannot forget his sins, but God remembers them no more. And as Joseph encouraged his penitent brethren to come near while he "talked with them," so are believers invited

to "draw near in full assurance of faith, having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and their bodies washed with pure water."

7. Our last reference is to the statement "there remaineth no more sacrifice for *sins*" (v. 26). This was a solemn warning to those who were in danger of forsaking "the knowledge of the truth," that if they abandoned the blood and mediation of the Lord Jesus there was no hope of salvation. A return to the ancient ritual of Israel could not possibly place them where they were before Christ died. *Then* they were in the divinely appointed way of acceptance "through the forbearance of God" (Rom. iii. 25), but now the last sacrifice for sins under the old covenant had been offered; moreover the ancient veil had been rent from the top to the bottom, and if the offering of the body of Jesus once for all were set aside there remained "no more sacrifice for *sins*." Those who after this turned back to Judaism would crucify the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame, would be guilty of counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing and doing despite to the spirit of grace. The Spirit of God who works on the line of redemption by the blood of Jesus alone could never again renew such to repentance. The only avenue to His grace would be for ever closed.

And is there not also in this a solemn warning against the danger of those who in the present day are substituting the *example* of Christ for the *sufferings* of Christ as the way of salvation, and are seeking to explain away the truth concerning His sacrificial blood by defining it as the self-sacrifice of His daily life on earth?

May the Lord's own be kept faithful to the grace wherein they stand!

H. A. T.

OBED-EDOM.

WE may get many precious and profitable lessons from the grouping together of scriptures bearing upon the same subject. Any who have not carefully brought together the various passages in which Obed-edom is mentioned may be surprised to find how much is said about him and his sons in connection with the ark of God. Obed-edom was a *Levite* of the family of Korah, and he is called "the Gittite" because he belonged to the Levitical town of Gath-rimmon. (Josh. xxi. 24.)

David very properly desired that the ark of God should be taken to Jerusalem, but for conveying it thither he adopted a method of his own devising, and had not respect to the express command of God as to how it should be removed. In consequence of this the chastening hand of God fell upon them, as David said afterwards, "The Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought Him not after the due order."

It is at this point of the narrative that the name of Obed-edom becomes prominent. "So David would not remove the ark of the Lord unto Him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. And the ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; and the Lord blessed Obed-edom, and *all his household.*"

The ark ever brings a blessing to those who welcome it as a guest.

"And it was told King David, saying, the Lord hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that pertaineth unto him, *because of* the ark of God. So David went and

brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness." (2 Sam. vi. 10-12 : see also 1 Chron. xiii. 12-14).

"So David and the elders of Israel and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the house of Obed-edom with joy." (1 Chron. xv. 25.) "So they brought the ark of God and set it in the midst of the tent David had pitched for it. . . . So he left there before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, Asaph and his brethren to minister before the ark continually, as every day's work required. And *Obed-edom*, with their brethren, threescore and eight; Obed-edom also, the son of Jeduthun and Hosah to be *porters*." (1 Chron. xvi. 1, 37, 38).

"Concerning the divisions of the porters: Of the Korhites [*viz*, sons of Korah]. . . . Moreover the sons of Obed-edom were *Shemaiah* the first born, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethaneel the fifth, Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth: *for God blessed him*." Read Psalm cxxviii. "Also unto *Shemaiah* [his eldest son] were sons born that ruled throughout the house of their father; for they were *mighty men of valour*. The sons of *Shemaiah*; *Othni*, and *Rephael*, and *Obed*, *Elzabad*, whose brethren were *strong men*, *Elihu* and *Semachiah*. All these of the sons of Obed-edom: they and their sons and their brethren, *able men for strength for the service*, were threescore and two of Obed-edom." (1 Chron. xxvi. 1-8). "Behold that *thus* shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord."

Happy, indeed, are they who welcome Christ—the ark of God—into their house! They shall be blessed, and their children after them. They shall be meet "door keepers" and "porters" for the ark; they shall "excel" on the

harp. Their children shall be "strong men" "mighty men of valour" for God, "able men for strength for the service of God"—all the days of their life. A. O. M.

"WHEN I AM WEAK THEN AM STRONG."

THIS evil world, the flesh, the cruel devil,
 Make but occasions for Thy grace to shine,
 For if through them I learn that I am helpless,
 Through them I prove what mighty God is mine.

The trials on the way, the disappointments,
 Are all but graving tools to cut the gem ;
 When once the disciplining all is over,
 The stone may grace the royal diadem.

The scalding tears ! Ah, they but clear the vision,
 Lest it be blinded with the dazzling light
 Of Him who will unveil His matchless beauty—
 'Mid heaven's brightness e'er the brightest sight.

The bleeding incense* tree gives forth the perfume,
 And beaten oil the sanctuary light ;
 The pruning knife secures the fruitful branches,
 The silvery stars shine not except at night.

From *smitten* Rock bursts out the sparkling water,
 From *death alone* eternal life we gain,
 The *buried* wheat alone can yield a harvest,
 The blood must *flow* ere it could cleanse a stain.

The painful "thorn" is sent to keep us lowly,
 The furnace burns the fetters off our hands,
 The torch's light shines through the broken pitchers,
 Dark clouds with blessings break when God commands.

Oh ! as we journey through "the vale of weeping,"
 Let faith transform it to a living "well,"
 So that once more "the eater" may yield "sweetness"
 And from a "bone" a cooling fountain swell.

M. I. R.

* The late Dr. J. Hamilton wrote:—"Frankincense is a resin which exudes spontaneously, or is obtained [by incision, from several species of *Boswellia*—a genus belonging to the natural order of *Amyridaceæ* or incense trees."—Ed.

DAVID AND PAUL.

1 Chron. xxviii. 2; Phil. i.

NOTES OF ADDRESSES.

THERE is a similarity and also a contrast, that we may consider with profit, between two servants of God—David the beloved, and the man whose life, as set forth in his Epistles, is such an example to us. We will first look at 2 Sam. xxiv. 1-14, and 1 Chron. xxi. 1-4. Let us remember the deeply solemn fact that it was after David's grosser sin—the sin of adultery covered by murder—that he sinned in numbering the people. We might have imagined that after so deep a repentance as is shown in the utterances of Pss. li. and xxxii. ; after the execution of the judgments pronounced, and God's marvellous display of grace in setting David on his throne again more firmly than ever, he would not have forgotten the greater demand for walking in deep and constant humility before God.

But if we see the workings of pride in David let us consider the advantages *we* have that *he* had not. We have seen the Son of God come in the flesh; seen Him spit upon and crucified; seen Him bruised by the Almighty power and unsparing justice of God; and we can say by God's Holy Spirit, that "we see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honour." David's eye of faith was very keen; but he could not see as we see. Another thing to our advantage is that we are not called to the place of earthly glory. Many a Christian is in such a place, but the calling of the believer is not to that, whereas, by God's appointment, David was the greatest king in all the world.

Now, beloved, we are told that *the Lord* moved David, and also that *Satan* provoked David, to number Israel. Whilst Satan tempted David in malice, God moved him in judgment, because he saw the pride of heart, not only in Israel, but in that most lowly man David. For a most lowly man he was. We remember how three times he utters the words, so sweet, so full of God's grace, "Who am I?" Deep acquaintance with God marked the man, and it was his custom to walk with God. The *trespass* was not the *character*. Nay, delight in God was the mind of the man, whether keeping the sheep in his youth, or hunted by Saul as a partridge upon the mountains, or conspired against by an ungrateful son Absalom. He was a man who delighted in God, and therefore a man after God's own heart, as is every child of God who has delight in God Himself.

Now when David had committed the grosser sin he was asleep as to affection and conscience, and God sent Nathan to wake him up. Then his wrath was kindled, and, thinking he was passing sentence upon another, he pronounced severe judgment upon himself. If we have a bad conscience we shall, in our self-love, forgive our own trespass, but be very severe upon our brother; but if we have a good conscience we shall take our brother to the mercy-seat and bow there with him. But did you ever find in the mouth of the ungodly, or in the books of the wisest and best men in the world, any judgment of pride as a filthy thing, such as we have from the lips of the Saviour? "Out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, *pride*, foolishness: *all these evil things* come from within, and *defile* the man." (Mark vii. 21-23.) The natural conscience never condemns pride. Only the

Scriptures do that; and only through the knowledge of the crucified Son of God do we see it, abhor it, and deal with it aright.

Now observe that whereas David had Nathan to wake him up when he had committed the grosser sin, he has now no one to rebuke him, except the marvellously enlightened and heartless Joab; a man whose heart was stony while his understanding of God was wonderful. It is remarkable, too, that when only Judah and Benjamin sided with David, and when Joab, his good counsellor, had murdered Abner, his words were, "These men, the sons of Zeruah, be too hard for me"; but now he is too strong for the stoutest of the two, for "the king's word prevailed against Joab." But how soon David's heart smote him, and he saw the filthiness and the guilt of his self-exaltation. There had been no atonement money, nor any thought of it, for whereas Moses twice numbered Israel to show the faithfulness of God, David did it to show his own greatness. But he would never have seen the guiltiness of his sin if it had not been his habit to walk with God.

Then, beloved, observe that so soon as he is on his feet again he is more than himself, and when he has his choice as to the judgment that shall fall upon him, he says, "Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for His mercies are great." Oh what a prayer! It is not, Now, let the Lord put double honour upon me; but there was all that in it to the ear and heart of God. When the first murderer had committed his murder he said "My sin is greater than that it may be forgiven." (Gen. iv. 13, *marg.*) But his greater sin was that there was no confession, and he went out from the presence of the Lord. How much darker was David's sin; but David makes confession and is straightway forgiven. The necessary discipline was

sent; but that only brings out the depths of repentance of the true child of God.

When the tabernacle was set up fire from heaven was sent as the blessed token of approval. Now David comes with his sacrifice in the face of all Israel, and receives this same token of God's approval. (1 Chron. xxi. 26.) Then honour upon honour is heaped upon him, and his highest honour, you will admit, is, that while he was the greatest of all the kings of the earth, he was the lowliest of all the saints upon the earth. This is beautifully seen in 1 Chron. xxviii. 2: "Then David the king stood upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people." He was an old man; we might almost say that he had lived two lives. He might have sat as an old man, and he might have sat upon his throne as king. But the consciousness of being *king* gave way to the sense of being the *brother*—"Hear me, *my brethren*, my people." How this reminds us of the words of Him of whom among all personal types, David is the richest: "I will declare Thy name unto *My brethren*!"

Let us now turn to Philippians i., and look at the man who was altogether like David in regard to his heart for God, but who had the great advantage over David of having heard the voice of the risen Saviour. The Lord appeared to him, and in the glory of His presence he saw the length, breadth, depth and height of the holiness of God, because he saw the cross in the glory, interpreted by the resurrection. But there was another vast advantage that Paul had. It is good to judge our circumstances in relation to the health and prosperity of the inner man. David's earthly glory nourished the flesh against his spiritual prosperity. Next to the power of God's Spirit and God's grace Paul was preserved by his circumstances. All Paul's circumstances starved the flesh;

David's circumstances fed it, and specially that feature of it which is fairest to the natural man, but foulest to the eye of God, its *pride*.

In this chapter we see a lovely example of God's mind in His servant Paul. The good work of verse 6 is not regeneration, but fellowship. The work of regeneration was equally wrought in the saints at Corinth; but the work of fellowship was not as blessedly wrought in them as in the saints at Philippi. Paul was a pattern evangelist. A man may be a true evangelist, and may win souls; but to be completely furnished as an evangelist he must have the shepherd's heart, though he have not specially the shepherd's gift. Who can tell the yearning, the love, the endurance and the faithfulness of the "bowels of Jesus Christ" (v. 8) in which Paul longed after the children of God?

I would say, beloved, that the Lord may seem to set His servants to labour, and leave them without wages; but if He does not pay at one time He will at another. The beloved Paul had nothing but hardship in Jerusalem, and was then sent to Rome as a prisoner, and, between Jerusalem and his two years' imprisonment at Rome, had to suffer shipwreck. But the Lord will pay in His own way and time. Who would have thought that this was God's way of sending the gospel into that den of Satan—the palace of the emperor? Yet as a result we have the word, "All the saints salute you, *chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household*" (iv. 22).

Now just as Aaron and Miriam imputed pride to Moses, when the pride was not in him but in themselves (Num. xii.), so some of the brethren imputed pride to Paul (vv. 15, 16). But the apostle forgets himself, and says, "Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice" (v. 18). He expresses the mind of

Christ, which should be in the church of God and in every member of Christ toward all the church of God. If we would send the gospel to other portions of this foreign country called earth, the messenger should go with a heart for the whole church of God first, because the heart of Christ is first upon the church. Paul learnt that from the word, "Why persecutest thou *Me!*" but it was a lesson that he was always growing in the knowledge of. Let me have the love of Christ toward the church, and I shall have the bowels of Christ toward the world, and shall love all the servants of God, and pray for them in all their work. (R. C. C.)

MORIAH LESSONS.

I would remind you of the memorable *place* at which honoured, beloved David abased himself for his pride in numbering the people. It was at the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, where the temple was afterwards built by Solomon his son. In 2 Chron. iii. 1 we read, "Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father." This appearing of the Lord is twice recorded, just as his sin is twice recorded. Not twice is David's sin in the matter of Bathsheba recorded; but we have the twofold record of his sin of subtle pride as monarch. And then we see that he would not offer an unbought offering; but one that was really his own, and might thus be the expression of his soul's abhorrence of his pride. I would mention some other references to Mount Moriah.

The first reference to Moriah links it with family life, for it was there that Abraham offered up Isaac his son. When at the command of God, Abraham thus gave up the child, so unutterably dear to him, God said, Stay thine hand. Abraham had been called upon to sacrifice

the heir of all the promises, the very one by whom he was to be made into a nation. Would not that waken his pride? But he did as he was commanded, and Mount Moriah thus shows us that no pride can be admitted within the family door-way. Moriah means *provider*, Jireh and Moriah being only different forms of the same verb. Can you trust God to provide when you are called to sacrifice that which is dearest to you? You will not be disappointed, for God will vindicate His own honour. And beloved Abraham, "strong in faith" could say, "I and the lad will . . . come again to you"; for obedience is the best eye-salve to the eye of faith.

The second special event connected with Moriah is that which has just now been spoken of, and is connected with the pride of governmental position. It is of Jerusalem that God says His eyes are there continually; but God cannot tolerate pride even in Jerusalem. If in the assembly of the people of God I think myself a top and superior person, let me remember that that is *God's* assembly, as much as Jerusalem was God's Jerusalem, and He cannot tolerate pride in the one any more than in the other. But, having taught the lesson, God again arrests the hand that was ready to smite, "When the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented Him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand." Jehovah looked into David's heart before David could put his confession into words, and by His prophet commanded David to rear an altar on Mount Moriah. It is as though He had said, 'I have plenty of sacrifices upon Mount Moriah, and if only he humble himself he can use the preciousness of the sacrifice to blot out the sin of his pride from My eyes.' Not only then am I to pour contempt upon my family pride; but also on my pride of

ministering in the assembly, for into that ministry pride may come. There may be the pride of knowing Scripture better than I did, and the pride arising from the culling of its teachings with an unjudged conscience.

Now for the third occurrence at Mount Moriah let us turn to 2 Chronicles iii. David is in the grave, and Solomon is called to follow on in the same path as king of Israel. His temptation is to pride of another character than David's; it is not the military pride of counting the warriors; but the pride of building a temple. It was built upon the mount where God's judgment had been averted in the days of his father by the blood of the sacrifice, for thus the spot had been marked out and prepared. There is a house being built now, and the exhortation to saints is, "Building up yourselves on your most holy faith." This will not be done by a witty head over this Book; money cannot do it; nor can a good meeting-house ensure the edification of saints. They must be built up as *living stones* upon Him who is *the living stone*.

Now we find that when Solomon had finished his building he got upon his knees, and that so that every one could see him. Paul's word to Timothy is, "I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men"—let that be the beginning of all church-work. Solomon was upon his knees because he was upon Mount Moriah. God had honoured David with heaven-sent flame, and Solomon prays, "O Lord God, turn not away the face of Thine anointed: remember the mercies of David Thy servant." (2 Chr. vi. 42.) The next verse gives the answer, "Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifice; and the glory of the Lord filled the house."

The true glory of the temple was not the glory of its stones, of its corridors, of its costliness and workmanship; but the glory of the Lord: "And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because *the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house.*" It is a lovely moment when we are awed into happy silence by the felt presence of the Lord. A third lesson then from Mount Moriah is to pour contempt upon all the pride of natural religion. That same temple was followed by another, and another, but as soon as the Son of God died far away upon Calvary the effect was felt within those thick walls, and the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom. Thus did God tear down the veil of earthly religion, and now there is nothing between Him and His people, but they worship face to face with Him.

Moriah's lessons must begin where our affections are keenest; we are called to yield up to God the things we most value, trusting Him to return them to us as sanctified blessings. Thus shall we learn to say from the heart, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (H. D.)

CHRIST AND THE SCRIPTURES.

ADDRESS BY MR. T. NEWBERRY.

"Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me."—JOHN xii. 44.

THE word "*but*" at the beginning of this verse, which is omitted in translation, connects it with the preceding statement, "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him." If there were those among these rulers who believed, like Joseph of Arimathæa and Nicodemus,

who after the death of Christ came forth so boldly, and manifested their faith so fully, what was it that kept them back? The answer to this question is plainly given in the words, "They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." The Holy Ghost emphasizes these two words *men* and *God* by placing the article before them, thus pointing them out as to be particularly looked upon and specially regarded: "They loved the praise of *men* more than the praise of *God*."

"Jesus cried and said, He that believeth *in Me*." It is always "*in Me*" in the gospels, till we come to the last two chapters of Luke. There we read, "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached *on His name*." In the Acts also it is *on*: "Believe *on* the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." But always in the gospels, with the exception just named, the preposition is *eis*, not *epi* nor *en*, and, as thus used after the word for believing, it denotes a faith that identifies the believer with the Person of Christ.

I point these things out because I feel the importance of attending to every word of the Holy Ghost, and every form of expression He has been pleased to use. The smallest letter and the smallest deviation is of importance, as our Lord Jesus indicated when He said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." (Matt. v. 18.) The *jot* corresponds with our letter *i*, and is the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet, and the *tittle* is a minute mark that distinguishes one letter from another.

"*He that believeth in Me*." The participle with the article, as here used, denotes *character*. It means, *he that is a believer in Me*; not simply for a time, under the impression of some exhortation, or word, or manifestation; but he that by continually believing is a believer. He

that is such a believer in Me "believeth not in Me but in Him that sent Me." We notice that when our Lord Jesus would emphasize a truth He uses very strong language, stronger perhaps than we might think necessary. For example He says, "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, . . . yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke xiv. 26); and again, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." (John vi. 27.) So here His object is to show what alone is true faith in Him.

When the Lord Jesus was in Jerusalem at the feast (John ii. 23) "many believed in His name when they saw the miracles which He did; but Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men." He knew that the faith which stood simply upon the observation of outward signs might soon give place to doubt or disbelief. Therefore He did not commit Himself to them. But when Nicodemus came to Him saying, "We know that Thou art a Teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest except God be with him," thus connecting His teaching with the authority of God, He could open His whole heart to him.

Now, who is a real believer in Christ? Not one who is charmed with the human ideal—the perfection of beauty in the human character—the Unitarian and rationalistic ideal of Christ! Not the one who regards Him as the highest specimen of humanity—the fairest, the holiest, the purest man, the best teacher, the wisest instructor, that ever trod the earth! Such a faith comes short of what our Lord means in the words, "He that believeth in Me, believeth not in Me, but in Him that sent Me."

When Christ asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I am?" human opinions were plentiful. Some said,

John the Baptist; others, Elias, or one of the prophets. But when the Lord further asked, "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter made his noble confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Now any of the bystanders might have learnt that and repeated it word for word; but that would not have made them real believers. The Lord, however, showed that Peter was a real believer, when He said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven." This is the description of a true believer in Christ. He is one who believes in Him—not because of the beauty of His character, the purity of His teaching and example; not because of historical evidence handed down from the earliest times; not simply because the understanding is convinced, or the affections are charmed; but—because taught by the Spirit of God. This is true faith, the faith of God's elect, the faith that saves the soul and purifies the heart, the faith that brings life eternal, a faith that is the result of divine revelation: "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Flesh and blood did not reveal the truth to Peter; he did not learn it of his fellow-disciples; but he learnt it from the Master's own lips; it was truth revealed to him by God.

That which God reveals He always reveals by the Spirit: "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no one but the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. ii. 11.) This is a threefold cord that cannot be unstrung; these are three links in the chain uniting the soul with God—the revelation of Christ by the Father, through the power of the Holy Ghost. The instrument by which He

acts is the Scripture; but what is the Scripture? It is God's testimony to Christ, by inspiration and revelation. The Holy Spirit inspired the letter of the Scriptures, and He reveals the spirit of them to the dependent reader. That is the truth for the day. The Scripture is God's revelation of Christ—God's testimony to Christ, and "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

God reveals Christ in the Word, reveals Him through the letter of Scripture by the Holy Ghost. I do not know a better illustration of what the Word of God is than that furnished by the *phonograph*. A person speaks into the instrument, and the vibrations of the disc caused by the voice imprint the words spoken upon the prepared tablet. So holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The very breath of God caused those motions which have imprinted the words upon the tablet of the sacred Scriptures. There they are retained, so that not one jot or tittle—one single minute touch of that motion of the Holy Ghost can be obliterated from the sacred page. God's Word is God's record of man—man's sin and man's redemption—written for eternity, and for the whole universe. When these heavens shall have passed away that Word of God, the indelible impress of the Spirit of God, shall remain, outliving the stars and systems that we are familiar with.

But it is not enough that a person should speak into the phonograph, and that the needle of the instrument should record the impressions upon the prepared tablet. In order that the words may be heard, and that the impression may become vocal, the tablet must again be placed under the same power by which the words were first impressed upon it. Then the imprinted vibrations become vocal, and the very tone, emphasis, spirit and pathos of the language, are given forth and heard afresh.

So it is with the Word of God. The words of Jesus that God spoke through Him have been imprinted upon the tablet, and the Holy Ghost, who has imprinted them there, makes them vocal. When we are in communion with the Holy Ghost; when we apply to Him for His present teaching; then He takes of the things of Jesus and shows them to us. But they are not the things of Jesus alone; they are the things of the Father as revealed in Him, as He said, "All things that the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you." (John xvi. 15.) The Spirit reveals the things of Christ, with every ray of divine glory shining in them.

But the Spirit not only makes the words of Jesus vocal, for, "It is the Spirit that *quickeneth*," said Jesus, "the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you they are spirit, and they are life." (John vi. 63.) When God's testimony is received into the heart by the Holy Ghost it becomes spirit and life, and that Word of God concerning Christ revealed to the soul is in that individual the seed of God, living and abiding for ever. It is by this that he is born of God, and he can never perish, nor can any pluck him out of the Father's hand.

The one who thus believes in Christ by the revealing of the Father, through the Holy Ghost, by means of the inspired Word, does not look upon Christ as a man simply, but knows Him as the One sent from God, and thus believes in the Father who sent Him. So He says concerning the one who receives not His words, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day; for I have not spoken of [*i.e., from*] Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." (John xii. 48, 49.) On another occasion He said, "If I bear witness of Myself,

My witness is not true." (John v. 31.) Under the law it was not sufficient for a man to bear witness concerning himself; it was at the mouth of two or more witnesses that any matter had to be decided. Now to us there are three that bear witness, "The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost"; and again, "It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." (1 John v. 6, 7.) Thus we believe in Christ on the authority of God; and we receive God's Word on its own authority.

This, I repeat, is the truth for to-day. That word of Christ to the Jews has come to my soul with amazing power, "*He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God.*" (John viii. 47.) Those who say that the Scriptures—from Genesis i. to Revelation xxii.—are not the Word of God, declare plainly that they are not of God. They are atheists in the true sense of the word; they are without God and without hope in the world. I cannot make light of this matter. Of such it can only be said that by their own assertion that the Scriptures are not the words of God, they declare plainly that they themselves are not of God, for "*He that is of God heareth God's words.*" When God by His Spirit speaks to the soul, that soul finds the utterance of God in every part of the sacred Scriptures. To such an one they give forth, like the revolving cylinder, the voice and tone the Speaker has expressed in them.

We thus receive the Word as *God's* Word, and God's Word not to teach us geometry, geography, the history of the world or natural science, though these things are embodied there; but to teach us Christ by His Spirit. And the Christ whom we believe in is *the Christ of God*—Christ in all His divine glory and fulness. When God reveals Christ, He reveals Him in such a glory that we see "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Oh!

beloved friends, there is the secret of satisfaction! Who would go to the Passion-play after such an apprehension of Christ as this? Many have gone who never knew Christ by divine revelation, being attracted by curiosity, and have received damage to their souls almost irreparable, because there the human is substituted for the divine. One who has seen "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"—who has seen the glory of Immanuel's cross—would shrink from the sight of that Passion-play above all the sights on the face of the earth.

"*And he that seeth Me seeth Him that sent Me.*" We have already said that when the Spirit of God reveals Christ He reveals Him in such transcendent glory that we are conscious that we are gazing on a glory divine; and it is that halo of glory that sets forth the manhood of Christ with such transcendent beauty and such exceeding power. The true human beauty of the Lord never shines with such distinctness as when seen under the Shekinah of the divine glory.

When I read many of our hymns and hear them sung I feel that there is a great lack in them. In many there is no allusion to the *Father*, and no recognition of the *Spirit*. They are taken up with Christ as *the man*, in His human sympathies. God does not so reveal Him, but always as Immanuel, and as we are taught of God we shall apprehend Him as such. His divine glory will be realized, and will find expression in our prayers and songs of praise. Whenever you see Christ as revealed by the Spirit you see the Father—"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." You see the Father's glory, the Father's love, the Father's countenance. If Jesus takes a little babe and folds it to His breast you see divine love shining out. It is the glory of God that shines, and it shines gloriously, in "the Man Christ Jesus."

"FRUIT IN OLD AGE."

A BRIGHT CLOSE TO A VERY LONG PILGRIMAGE.

DURING very many years a humble dwelling in a small street at Barnstaple has been the loved resort of children of God from all parts, and very full and unfailing has been the testimony borne to the spiritual refreshment as well as the gracious hospitality experienced under that roof. The two "patriarchs," as they were familiarly termed, charmed all who visited them by the apostolic simplicity of their manner and the warmth of their loving and well blended instruction. The survivor of these two, dear Mr. Robert Chapman, thus describes the closing day of their long service together, and the peaceful departure of his friend and companion, WILLIAM HAKE, at the very ripe age of 95, and after eighty years of pilgrim life:—

9, NEW BUILDINGS,

BARNSTAPLE, *Nov. 5th, 1890.*

On Tuesday morning, November 4th, my beloved fellow-labourer Brother Hake joined us at our early breakfast hour, 7 o'clock. In the afternoon he rendered loving service by bearing me and others company to the station to cheer a visitor who was leaving us. We returned together, held in my room our usual Tuesday afternoon prayer-meeting, in which beloved Brother Hake took fully his part. At our tea-table at 6 o'clock we had a goodly company of young disciples of Christ, to whom Brother Hake spoke joyfully on the words "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." The meeting afterwards began with

"We go with the redeemed to taste
Of joy supreme that never dies."

All who sang, and some who heard outside the room, felt that the singing was heavenly, the deep bass of the dear aged one perfecting the harmony. After prayer, the first psalm was read. Brother Hake took occasion to draw contrasts with the walking, standing, and sitting of the first verse. "Enoch *walked* with God: Elijah *stood* before the Lord; David *sat* before the Lord." After he had thus for about an hour been the brightness of the assembly, his speech failed, but with support he walked to his bedroom. Our dear young brother Idenden in faithful love sat up with him. I joined them about 4 in the morning. Brother Hake grasped my hand, and held it until he could hold it no longer, and breathed out his spirit to the Lord at 7.10.

His beloved Mary is sustained of God. Surely our God is the Father of mercies and the God of comfort. He is "wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

R. C. C.

His dear daughter's brief added word is that after her loved father had given her a last fond embrace his eyes were constantly looking upward. "Home, home, rest, rest," were among his last distinguishable words.

Friends will probably read again with increased interest the paper signed "xcv.," *The Mote and the Beam* (page 246), which contains such words of wisdom and instruction as our dear brother loved to give.

CLOSING WORDS.

THESE pages complete the twenty-first volume of the *Golden Lamp*, and bring the periodical to a close. When it was begun the motto chosen for its title page was *Truth in Love*, and to this the editors have sought to adhere. The unfolding of the truth and the defence of the truth have been the steady aims of those who have conducted it; but, though at times very decided words against error have been called for, it is hoped that there has seldom been any transgression of the law of love.

In concluding our labours we would remind our readers of the two chief and growing tendencies of the day. The general tendency is to *latitudinarianism*. If we yield to this we shall ultimately find ourselves associated with those who make light of truth, brand every firm stand for the authority of the Word of God as narrow and old-fashioned, and applaud all compromise by which barriers between the church of God and the world are broken down.

If, however, our eyes are opened to see the awful departure from God to which a step in this direction may lead us, we have to be on our guard against what is perhaps a more subtle danger, that is, the opposite extreme. To be among the faithful few appeals to the loyalty of our hearts; but, in pursuing this path, we may unconsciously depart from the mind of Christ. In our zeal for Him a narrow spirit may be engendered, and, under the plea of contending for the truth, that spirit will manifest itself in ungracious speech and harshness of conduct, the absence of grace being evident to everyone but ourselves.

The one tendency is to embrace the world, ignoring the fact that the people of God have been separated from it by the cross of Christ (Gal. i. 4) ; the opposite tendency is to disunite the body of Christ. Nothing but communion with God can preserve us from these evils, and enable us to avoid the one without yielding to the other. Only as we begin with true fellowship with the Father and the Son shall we rightly act toward *all* the children of God—*all* the members of Christ, and toward the world also. This communion with God is nourished by growth in the knowledge of His will as set forth in His Word, while it is hindered by human theories. If our minds are occupied with the latter we shall in one way or other miss the mark, and shall be acting from man's point of view, either in our *inclusiveness* or our *exclusiveness*. That which is "*with us*," externalism in some form—broad or narrow—will be the constraining power, and not the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost.

In the example of our Lord Jesus we have "grace and truth" in perfect combination. He *received* Nicodemus who came to Him *by night*, and gave him faithful and loving instruction, with words of gentle reproof, leaving the truth of God to do its work. The result was that Nicodemus came boldly outside the camp when others shrank back. When another, with great profession, said, "Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest," the Lord did not receive him with open arms and flattering speech, as one on His side ; but bade him count the cost : "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests ; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head."

It must not be forgotten that the Master could see further than any disciple can, for He knew the heart ; but that does not alter the fact that in His ways of "grace and truth" He has left us an example. We are to be

guided by what we *know*, and not by what we *suspect*. If anyone takes the place of being a disciple of Christ, we are surely to give credit for sincerity, even though it may be accompanied by much ignorance, unless we *know* to the contrary. If that person has not learnt *all* the truth, and is not obeying *all* the commands of the Lord, we may well consider that we did not at once learn all the truth that we now know, and also ask ourselves whether our obedience is in proportion to our knowledge.

That each one is responsible to the Lord for perfect obedience to the whole of His word is a truism; but that we are responsible not to take the Master's place of passing sentence upon *His* servants is equally true. Let us therefore make it our great aim to learn *all* the will of Christ and obey *all* His commands. Then shall we be more and more slow to sit in the *judgment* seat in dealing with fellow saints, and rather seek the *mercy* seat for ourselves and them.

The sure corrective of one-sidedness is taking the *whole* of Scripture for our guidance. We have in the Bible all that we need; but we need all that we have. And in our closing page we would reiterate the truth, often expressed before, that only as we hold fast the truth of the perfect inspiration, and therefore the absolute authority, of *all* Scripture shall we be able to stand, as upon a rock, amid the surging waves of the infidelity and the lawlessness that surround us.

It is with real reluctance that we close what has been to us a labour of love, and in so doing would express our thanks to all who have been our helpers. Commending our readers to God and the Word of His grace, we say from our hearts, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in uncorruptness." (Eph. vi. 24 R.V.)

EDITORS.