

THE
GOSPEL MESSAGE:

CONTAINING

SIMPLE GOSPEL TRUTH.

VOL. III.

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N O T E.

IT is in unfeigned thankfulness to the Lord that we have been privileged to edit a third volume of God's message of love to guilty sinners. Deeply do we value the prayers of saints in this "work of faith and labour of love," and so earnestly entreat every Christian into whose hands this volume may fall, to pray that the Book may be largely owned of God in the conversion of many.

W. S.

December, 1874.

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SOLEMN APPEALS.—No. 1.

GOD AND THE SINNER.

God and the sinner must meet! From this meeting none shall escape. "For it is written," yes, written by the Spirit of God, "As I live, saith the Lord, *every* knee shall bow to Me, and *every* tongue shall confess to God; so then, *every* one of us shall give account of himself to God." Rom. xiv. 11, 12.

Oh, my unsaved friend, ponder this theme! There is none more solemn to an immortal soul. What! Hast thou to meet God? to bow before Him? to confess to Him? to account to Him? You have; and Jehovah has pledged and sealed the certainty of it by His own life: "*As I live*, saith the Lord." O that the dear unsaved, reader of these lines would pause and consider: "Am I prepared to meet God—if summoned into His presence to-night, or now, would it be well with thee, my soul?"

God is holy, and thou art *unclean*; God is righteous, and thou art *guilty*. Wilt thou, then, meet Him in thy sin and guilt? Yes, as a sinner, all unclean and justly condemned, thou must—thou shalt meet Him. Reader, I have met Him, and found Him a God of love; just too, yet the "justifier of Him which believeth in Jesus." *My* sins, *my* guilt, have been borne by Jesus, and in Thee—Thou risen One from the dead, I have met God. Oh, I have accepted His judgment upon me. I have turned away my gaze from faith and experiences to God's beloved Son—on the Tree

made sin—and I have peace with God. My reader, hast thou given in thy account to God? or, art thou waiting until the Judgment-day? Alas! alas! that day, when it comes, will be a day of terror and wrath to thee. God and the sinner will then meet, but in judgment. In that day “the lake of fire” will be unveiled, and thou wilt be cast into it. Christless soul, beware! that awful doom may not be far distant. But God and the sinner may meet *now* and settle this question of sin. God invites thee to meet Him. “Come *now*, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” (Isaiah i. 18.) Jesus, the sinner’s adorable substitute, has been on the Cross answering for the sins of all who believe. My sins were neither slurred over nor lightly dealt with. Divine holiness, divine righteousness, and divine love have been fully told out in the Cross of Christ. Oh, I have met God in Christ, and I look forward to meet Him with deepest joy. The Lord Jesus has answered to God—has met the doom and judgment due to me, the sinner. In love He gave His Son to die. In righteousness He laid my sins upon Him and judged Him for me, and instead of me. Now, the same blessed Lord Jesus who bore the judgment has been raised up out of the dead—a Saviour now at the right hand of God.

“There is life in a look at the glorified One.”

SINNER!

“There is life at this moment for thee.”

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION.

NOTES OF A GOSPEL ADDRESS.

“To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us: we pray in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”—2 Cor. v. 19-21.

NO. I.

MAN’S CONDITION.

THERE are some expressions, my beloved friends, some Scriptures, which seem to breathe forth in a most sublime manner the very heart of God. Of course we know that every sentence of this blessed book comes from God; but there are some expressions which bear a peculiar stamp upon them—have a peculiar ring, if I may use the expression—and they embody in a brief compass a volume of the deepest, richest truth of God. Some sentences are so suggestive, not only of what appears at first sight, but the more one tarries upon them the more their divine fulness and beauty seem to be poured upon the heart. Now the expression which is to form the thesis of my address to you to-night is, “*The ministry of reconciliation.*” That is my theme for this evening. That is the message I believe the Lord has directed me to unfold to you.

Now this is a marvellous expression; for, in the first place, it proves what man’s condition is—that he is an enemy—an enemy of God. The very moment the sentence falls upon the ear—the very moment you take it in—it involves this—that you are at enmity with God. Tremendous thought! It is not a question of the outward forms which our nature takes, or the line of conduct which the person pursues. There is the drunkard, the thief, and the extortioner; but no matter what may be the line of character assumed, this passage sets forth the fact of man’s condition, and that condition is one of enmity with God. The very fairest specimen—the most educated, cultivated, refined, and religious—apart from Christ,

it matters not what they may be, they are all classed by God under one head, under one title, and that is, that they are His enemies. They have not a single thought, or desire, or affection of the heart that is toward God—*not one*. That is the way the condition of the natural man is expressed in the third of Romans; and if you search the Scriptures you will find that the natural man, from the centre to the circumference, has not a single thing which is not at enmity against God—not a single link, or point of connection, between him and God. If you ask me how I know this, I say it is to form my thesis for to-night. I take nothing more; and I say that I could not read the words as they are put here—"the ministry of reconciliation"—without acknowledging the fact of his enmity. For if he were not, why this ministry? If he had aspirations and desires toward God, ever so faint and feeble, what need of this ministry? What I am speaking of now comes down to the deepest point of your condition—it takes in every man, woman, and child, savage or civilized; it takes the sinner, and strips him head and foot, and turns him inside out, and shews him what he is, that his condition is one of enmity against God. People may say—These are your views, and I have mine. But it is not so; for if they were mine, or man's views, they would not be worth a feather; but they are the imperishable records of this volume which is open before me; and were I to gather them together, I could not only occupy you from now until midnight, but until to-morrow morning, with the catalogue, but I confine myself to this one—"The ministry of reconciliation." I say to every soul here unconverted, it is my message is for—you are in a state of enmity with God. I am not talking about your peculiar and characteristic sin, or what sort of a life you have led—for these are not always displayed upon the surface.

I may go out into yonder field, and there is a tree that I have been watching for the last ten years, and have been examining it from year to year, watching its progress, waiting for its bearing, and this year I have discovered its character by seeing a *crab* upon the top of the tree. There is another tree which I have been watching from year to year, and this one has borne ten thousand crabs. But the tree to the right has only borne one crab the whole of the ten years that I have

watched it; still I am compelled to come to the same conclusion with regard to them both—that they are incorrigible crabs. If you ask me what inference I draw from this, I say that you and I possess in ourselves a crab-tree nature. You may be respectable and religious apart from Christ, but mark this, my beloved friends, your condition is that of an enemy—an enemy against God. Ah! though you may walk the streets of London, respected by your fellows—though you may be a professor, a church communicant, a constant worker in the vineyard, a Sunday-school teacher, still you are in the condition of enmity against God. Now, man being in this state, let me ask you—Have you found it to be true? Has the light of it flashed upon the soul? Have you been brought to a stand-still by it? Have you been brought to see this—been brought to know it true of yourselves? Have the scales dropped from your eyes? Have the moral bandages which Satan puts before the eyes been torn off? Nothing short of the most earnest and real dealing will do for the immortal soul. It is not my business to mislead you as to your state; therefore, I say, the first thing you must get hold of is, that from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, you are at enmity against God—that the heart, the centre of the moral being, and the whole of that which goes to make up the moral man, is at enmity with God. Have you been brought to recognise this truth? Have you been brought to repent? I am not one of those who object to the word repentance. I do not expect much good will be done until you have had the ploughshare applied pretty deeply. It is of little use for me to speak to you of the *results* of the life until you have the life. I might talk to you about the life-boat until I was tired, and still you might know nothing about it. But if you were drowning, and wallowing in the surf, and just about to go down, and there was a life-boat brought to you, you would know more about it than the most skilful boat-builder in England. And the more you felt your condition and the terrors of it, would you feel the necessity of the life-boat. But still you must bear this in mind that it would not be the feelings which would save you, but the life-boat; but the more you felt, the more you would value the life-boat.

THE WORST OF BOTH WORLDS.

A YOUNG gentleman, at one of our watering-places lately, was bent upon going out in a little boat, when the sea was much too rough for him to do so with safety. The boatman strongly urged him not to attempt it, but the young man would not be persuaded, and offered to pay him *double* the ordinary charge if he would go. This tempted him, against his better judgment, to consent, and they both put out to sea. They had, however, only reached a point just beyond the pier, when their boat was capsized through the violence of the waves, and both of them were drowned!

Poor man! He thought to get two shillings instead of one, but he lost them *both*, and his life too. Dear reader, do you beware of trying to “make the best of both worlds,” lest *you* lose them both, as the animal in the fable, who saw in the water the reflection of some meat he was carrying. Catching at the *shadow* he let go the *substance*, and lost them *both*.

Once there was another man that had a Friend who was very kind to him. His name was Judas, and he was the “familiar friend” of Jesus the Saviour. Others hated Jesus and thirsted for his blood, and they wanted this Judas to sell Him to them for money. He knew well his Master’s power, and thought he could trust Him to take care of Himself, so he covenanted with them to sell Him for thirty pieces of silver—the price of a slave. He thought to get the money, and that Jesus would deliver Himself: and he had the money, but Jesus did not save Himself; and when Judas saw it he was struck with remorse, and brought back the silver, threw it down in the temple, and went and hanged himself. He, too, had thought to make a good bargain, but *he lost the Saviour, and the silver, and his soul too!*

Dear fellow-sinner, do you think to have the world, now, with all its vanity and all its sin, and the Saviour when you can have no more of it? Be warned against the experiment. The “double fare” may cost you your life! The only satisfying and unfailing portion is the Lord Jesus. His precious blood purges the *conscience*—His love fills the *heart*. Receive

Him and you will care little for anything else ; you will be glad to know that you are "not of the world," *even as He* is not of it, and will wait with joyful expectation His return to take you clean out of it, unto Himself.

Before Judas left the world, he lost the silver for which he had sold his Saviour and his soul. You may come to a moment before *you* leave the world, when you will feel that all the wretched things for which you have bartered your soul are no longer yours to enjoy. You will have done with this world : it will have done with you—and what about the other world? Be wise in time!

W. T.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

QUESTION.—"I find many and conflicting opinions as to the Gospel, and I should like a divine answer, if possible, to the question—What is the Gospel of God?"

A. "The Holy Ghost has penned one. You will find it in 1 Cor. xv., 'I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you . . . For I delivered unto you *first* of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures ; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures.' Here we have the Gospel very clearly stated indeed. In the main, it consists of three divine accomplished facts. (1) Christ died for our sins. (2) He was buried. (3) He rose again the third day, all according to Holy Scripture."

Q. "My question is fairly answered, I admit ; but now I want to know with whom originated the Gospel—God or man?"

A. "Why, God to be sure. Man's only part in the work was his sins, his only work *now* to believe on *Him* whom God hath sent. John vi. 28, 29. God is the source of the Gospel ; it took its rise in the heart of God. If it is the love that embraced me *when* I was a sinner, I read, '*God* so loved the world ;' if it is the gift to be received, '*He* gave his only begotten Son.' If, as to our sins, God laid them on Jesus—if as to the means by which we can righteously stand in His

presence—God devised them, ‘that His banished be not expelled from Him.’ O, it is blessed for the poor tried heart to repose upon God! It is God’s love, gift, righteousness, life, and glory, received on the simple ground of faith. Note it carefully, beloved, that these eternal and inestimable blessings are in nowise dependent upon your feelings, experiences, prayers, or works. Simple faith in the sure testimony of Holy Scripture as to what God *is* and *has* wrought for the sinner secures those priceless blessings. Nothing else, nothing more is needed. Peace *with* God and testimony *for* God must be necessarily feeble and imperfect, if God, as the source of the Gospel, be not simply apprehended.”

Q. “Kindly answer me another question. What is the the object of the Gospel? Is it the salvation of the lost?”

A. “The glory of Christ is God’s object. Christ undoubtedly came into the world to save sinners; but His first, His chief concern was the glory of His Father. So, now, *the* object of God is not the sinner, but Christ. Christ, ‘through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot *to God.*’ So resurrection from among the dead, by the glory of the Father, was the result of Christ having glorified God on the earth, *finishing* the work which the Father gave Him to do. Now, whether it is *life* or *judgment*—the one being His glory as Son of God, the other His glory as Son of man—the point is that God has decreed that ‘all shall honour the Son.’ Have I life in the Son of God? It is that I should honour the Son. Will judgment be my portion? It is that I should honour the Son of man. The eternal and fixed purpose of God is the glory of Christ. I am saved for the glory of Christ—saved that I might honour Him! What vigour of heart, what confidence of soul, what firmness of tread, what holy and distinct separateness of walk, what true service and faithful testimony would be ours, were we to cherish the thought that we have been saved for the honour, the glory of Christ! Thus my salvation is infallibly secured; it reposes on a solid and divine ground; it links me indissolubly with the Son of God, because bound up with the glory of Christ.”

May every reader of these lines ponder these deeply interesting themes in the sight of God!

“READY TO FORGIVE.”

“Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul; for thou, Lord, art good, and *ready to forgive*.”—PSALM lxxxvi. 4, 5.

THERE are many sincere souls who feel the burden of sin and are yet in thick darkness as to the character of God. They need the knowledge of His love to lighten their path. In tender mercy God has met this need—telling first, He “is love;” then pointing to its manifestation in the gift of His Son—the propitiation for our sins. (1 John iv.) This is the foundation on which He as a *Forgiver* rests; this gives Him *position*—makes Him *ready* to forgive. (See Romans iii.)

But I desire my reader to take in another thought. In His *character*, He is One *ready* to forgive—that is, *quick* to do it, as well as *prepared* to do it; and this balm is found in the verse above.

We see David proving the Lord as a forgiving One in Psalm xxxii. Methinks that quick as the lightning’s flash that forgiveness came. “I acknowledged . . . and Thou forgavest.”

So with Isaiah, when stricken to the dust under a sense of his unfitness for the presence of One thrice holy, owning himself “undone,” one of the seraphims *flew* to him as a messenger from the altar. (Isaiah vi.) And I listen to a tale from the lips of One who spake as never man spake. He tells of a Father’s way with a prodigal, who

owned his guilt—One whose heart's love caused Him to *run* to meet the returning child—to kiss him and press him to His bosom—to make him meet to enter in and witness *His* gladness at the son's return. (Luke xv.) Quick to forgive He surely is!

And say, dear reader, Who is not ready to do what suits their heart and gives them joy? Is a mother slow to have compassion on the one she bore—(Isaiah xlix. 15)—or a father slow to meet the desire of the child he loves? (Matt. vii. 11.) And are those subject to like passions as we are to have a place in your esteem, as eclipsing God in His ways of grace and love? Put away the thought. What saith He:—"As the heavens are higher than the earth, *so* are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." "Scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die; *but* God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Anxious one, see there His *character*, and let your songs ascend, as did the jailor's, who "believed—rejoicing in God."

And what will be the result? what the benefits to you? Ah! "if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." I will speak of one. *You* would be ready; ready to live, ready to die, or meet the coming One in the air. This is good news surely. Ready to look on

Him “your many sins had pierced,” and know no fear in His presence—to look death in the face in his onward unsparing march ’midst the ranks of Adam’s race, and meet the proud monarch of the tomb with the challenge, “Where is thy sting?” Ah! good news indeed, you say. Beloved soul, it is good news. Take the message in, therefore, and let your praise be loud and long to Him whose love thus casteth away your guilty fear.

Let us see this in practice, as before we saw forgiveness enjoyed. What saith the apostle? “I am now ready to be offered” (given up to martyrdom). 2 Timothy iv. 6. Is he afraid? No. Fear does not cross his path. We see him elsewhere *desire* to depart. (Philippians i. 23.) Blessed triumph this! Yes, when God acts, He *does* triumph. Thanks be to God who giveth the victory!

But you say, May I claim and count upon that, seeing that I am all weakness, unworthiness, and sin? You may indeed. The one before us stood at the head of the list of sinners, yet *he* found a stay for his soul in every hour. His own words tell—“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” (1 Timothy i. 15.) “In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” (Colossians i. 14.) And more still, “God hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” (2 Corinthians v. 21.)

Tell me now, dear anxious soul, Is all this not worthy of *your* acceptance? and surely it would be *your readiness*.

To the careless one I say, "*Be ye ready also*, for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not." And, solemn thought, He "*is ready to judge* the quick and the dead." (1 Peter iv. 5.)

A. R.

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION.

NOTES OF A GOSPEL ADDRESS.

NO. II.—THE SOURCE.

THERE are four distinct things which I want to name in connection with this ministry. *First*, What is the source of this ministry? *Secondly*, What are its foundations? *Thirdly*, What are its features. *Lastly*, What are its spheres?

Firstly, What is its source? The fact of there being this "ministry of reconciliation" proves that man is an enemy—an enemy of God. Mark this, that it is not God who is man's enemy, but man is the enemy of God. And so there is nothing in the Scriptures about God being reconciled to us—never. I make this statement deliberately and advisedly, and as the result of years and years of close examination of the Scriptures. Scripture never speaks of God being reconciled to us, for the simple reason that God never was the enemy. And who made you think that He was? The devil told you so. It is his object to make you think so. "I knew that thou wert an austere man." Such is the language of the human heart. But He is not so, for He is a *God of love*. Love, too, of the deepest, finest, and fullest qualities, is flowing out to you, who are in the deepest state of ruin and bankruptcy. "God is love," but is that love to me? Yes! and He cannot be anything less. And in the activities of His love He goes out to every creature under heaven, and presents a full, free salvation.

upon the spot. This I do not stop to prove, but the more you look into the Scriptures the more you will see the truth that God is not spoken of as being reconciled to us; but it is us to Him. Now we will come to the source of this ministry, and this is found in the heart of God. It may seem too familiar to speak in this way. But still the truth of Scripture is that God is the source of this ministry. God's heart is full of love, and that is what we want. That is what the poor broken-hearted sinner wants. The poor, and hopeless, and wretched, and hell-deserving sinner wants, not to get to theology, and schools of divinity, not to arguments about religion, but to the heart of God—not to the stepping-stone of divinity, but to the heart of God. The heart of God—blessed be His holy name—is the living source from which this “ministry of reconciliation” gushes forth, and rolls down to every heart that desires to receive it. The heart of God; oh! that delightful word! And you say, is that what God is to me—love? Yes! With all my enmity? With all your enmity. With all my guilt? With all your guilt. With all my trespasses? With all your trespasses. That is what God is to me and to you. If I could get to the vilest wretch in the slums of London, I could with confidence whisper into his ear, “The heart of God loves you.” There is no limit at all; theology makes many, but God makes *none*. Every day that I preach and speak I think of the lofty platform on which I stand. We may have the most evangelical confidence, because this ministry comes to us through the bleeding wounds of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross. Need we wonder at the course of the river when we see its source? Come, my fellow-hearers and broken-hearted ones! come, ye anxious ones, and drink of this river which flows from the heart of God! Ah! you say, my sins, my sins! But I will show you how God deals with them. You say, I have been a wretched drunkard, and a trouble to my home and family. I have been a pickpocket, and everything that is bad. Now I begin to see that the light is come upon me, that the whole of my evil conduct has been the result of my condition, and that I have been an enemy of God, and how could I produce anything but evil? No, you could not! Whether you produced ten thousand crabs, or one, you could not produce anything

but crabs ; but you must be grafted into a good tree, and become a part of it. And now about your trespasses. They will not be imputed to you. Not one! God says so. And it must be so. "He was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." Bringing back, recalling ; not replacing, not condemning ; not a single word about such a thing. Not the smallest reference to the multitudes of sins, although they were as red as crimson. You may mourn over them—very right you should—but God will not bring one to you. Oh! my beloved hearers, what a ground I am treading upon! What a theme! what a thesis! How much presses upon the soul at this moment! Oh! what a feeble testimony is this to a subject so grand! Had I the tongue of an angel it would fail to tell out the theme, for it is the heart of God.

"IT IS FINISHED."

John xix. 30.

WE GENTILES are not told to pray
 To put away OUR sin :
 By birth and choice so far from God,
 We never could begin.
 But (God be praised!) I KNOW it,
 Tho' ruined by the fall,
 CHRIST HAS my soul REDEEMED,
 Yes! CHRIST HAS DONE IT ALL.

I have not now to seek HIM ;
 In love He SOUGHT FOR ME,
 When far from God I wander'd
 In sin and infamy.
 He ope'd my ears—He taught me
 To listen to His call :
 He sought me!—He HAS FOUND ME!
 Yes! CHRIST HAS DONE IT ALL.

And when in heavenly glory
 My ransom'd soul shall be,
 From sin and all pollution
 For ever—ever free,
 I'll cast my crown before Him,
 And loud His grace extol :
 THOU HAST THYSELF REDEEMED ME!
 THOU, THOU HAST DONE IT ALL.

"I CAN TRUST HIM."

"I CAN trust Him; I can trust Him; I can trust Him." These are the words that fell upon my ear the other day from a young man on his deathbed. Happy words they were. He knew his guilt (Rom. iii. 19); that he was without strength to save himself (ch. v. 6); that in him dwelt no good thing (ch. vii. 18). Yet, looking to the love of God, and the gift of that love, His well-beloved Son—and *that* Son's agony amid the dark, dark shades of death and judgment on Calvary's tree—His wrath-bearing for the unjust, in that hour when He did cry, "Thy wrath lieth hard upon Me, and Thou hast afflicted Me with all Thy waves" (Psalm lxxxviii. 7), and His place now high in brightest glory *as Saviour* (Acts v. 31).—Yes, with that One before his soul, my young friend could say, "I can trust Him," and repeat in my hearing the text he clung greatly to, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou *shalt* be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.)

Say, reader, *Do you* trust Him? They are *blessed* that do so. (Psalm ii. 12.)

A. R.

TO YOUNG CONVERTS.

No. 1.

YOUR STANDING AND STATE.

DO you see clearly, my young fellow-believer, the difference between your *standing* and your *state*? Your standing is perfect, your state is imperfect; your standing is divine, your state is human; your standing is unalterable, your state is changeable; your standing is unassailable, your state at the mercy of every wave. Changes and circumstances can never in the very least degree affect your standing; your sins and failures even cannot touch its perfectness. How is this? Because our standing is in Christ. It is in "Him" we have redemption and forgiveness of sins. We were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. We are before God, in Christ, holy and without blame. We are accepted in the Beloved—complete in Him, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places "in Christ." Now this is our standing. Do you not see that all this is the work

of God? Did I put myself in Christ? The blessed Lord, risen from the dead, is the life, righteousness, glory, hope, completeness, and standing of the saint of God—not of some Christians, but of *all* believers. This is not to be attained to, for God has given you this perfect standing in Christ. Suppose you knew everything in the Bible, and was very pious and learned, that would not make your standing more perfect. The standing of a new convert is as absolutely complete as that of the most advanced saint; there is no difference. Your feelings and experiences, and even your sins, cannot mar or blemish that lovely work of God. He has put you in Christ, and His work will stand to all eternity. But, perhaps, you say, “I do not feel all this—I do not realize I am in Christ complete and accepted.” Perhaps you do not, but it is true, nevertheless. Yes, God Himself has done it all, and His Word assures me of its truth. Your heart—which conversion has never changed or improved in the least—will very likely tell you that your position in Christ before God will continue just so long as you behave and conduct yourself well. But never mind what it says; put your finger upon any of the blessings I have referred to in Ephesians i., and *rest* there. Will God’s Word ever fail? Will it even totter beneath your feet? Has God made His Word dependent upon your feelings or experiences? Can the eternal efficacy of Christ’s work be ever impaired? *Never*. God has settled His Word in a region where the breath of unbelief cannot taint the holy atmosphere, and where no possible circumstances can sweep across its peaceful shores: “For ever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven.” Psalm cxix. 89.

Well, but what of my state? you may say. My answer is, never confuse your state with your standing. Be clear and simple before the Lord as to your position in Christ. Your state should flow from your standing. The more simply and firmly you grasp the reality of your completeness in Christ, the more devoted in service, holy in life, and singleness of purpose will be the result. Make Christ your object. Live for Him—to Him. Never occupy yourself with your state, save to judge it, and pass along. If only Christ fills the heart and mind, all else will take their right place.

SOLEMN APPEALS.—No. II.

GOD'S WORD AND GOD'S WORK.

DEAR UNSAVED FRIEND,—You have held in your hand, times without number, the precious volume of inspiration, but have you ever reflected that that “Word”—that sacred volume—either seals your condemnation or your justification? It is the only true, because *divine*, revelation of what I am—a *lost sinner*. O, my soul, has God penned these words? He has; listen—’tis the voice of God to thee—“I have found my sheep which was *lost*,” “I have found the piece which I had *lost*.” (Luke xv. 4-9.) Reader, thou art that *lost* sheep; thou art that *lost* piece of money. O, hast thou taken it in? Hast thou weighed in God’s own presence for one five minutes His judgment upon thy state and condition? Do you say, “I do not *feel* I am lost—I do not *realize* I am dead, lifeless, like a piece of money.” O, this is part of thy terrible condition, that while God is ringing in thine ears the truth of what you are, you feel it not; calmly and unmoved you listen to the solemn statements of God’s Word, without feeling one bit. But if this is thy state, that thou feelest not, God has sent His Word to the Gentiles, who are “past feeling.” (Eph. iv. 17-19.) God is not looking for, or expecting feeling from thee. Does He ask *you* to feel or realize that He speaks truth? No, my reader; no. However painful and humbling it

may be, O receive the statements of God as to your true condition before Him—LOST and DEAD. Have you accepted His Word? Then let me tell you something of His work; yes, my friend, His work—not yours. “Deliver him from going *down* to the *pit*: I have found a ransom.” (Job xxxiii. 24.) God has wrought a work for thee, poor sinner. Man is going “down to the pit,” but God says, “Deliver him.” In this deliverance of man from the pit I see love and righteousness. Where? Love in the *gift* of Christ; righteousness in the *cross* of Christ. O sinner, thou art in thy guilt, sin, and enmity to God, but He loves thee. ’Twas for thee, for a ruined world, He gave His Son. This is a theme too vast for human pen to portray, or tongue tell out. My friend, I want you to drink it in; I want your soul to grasp the truth of God’s love to you—to you in your sins.

O, my soul, muse o’er the wonders of His Cross! What marvels are told out there! My part in that scene—my sins and guilt. God has found a ransom. His well-beloved Son bears the judgment due to the sinner. “The Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all.”

“And have I not to lay my sins on Jesus?” said a young man. No, I replied, slowly repeating the precious text, “The Lord—hath—laid—upon HIM”—*that’s it*—“the iniquity of us all.” Yes, my reader, it is God’s work. The sins, doom, and guilt of *all* who believe on Jesus have been borne by the Spotless One. “My God! my God! why

hast Thou forsaken me!" expressed the anguish of His soul when bearing sin. Now He is risen up out of the dead—raised, glorified, and seated in heaven. The work is finished, needing neither thy tears, feelings, or experiences to add to its infinite value.

"Jesus the curse sustains,
Guilt's bitter cup He drains;
Nothing for us remains—
Nothing but love."

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION.

NOTES OF A GOSPEL ADDRESS.

NO. III.—ITS FOUNDATION.

WHAT is the foundation of this ministry of reconciliation? How can God act like this? It is through the work of Christ upon the Cross, and that is the basis on which I am speaking to you. The reign of sin is death, but the contrast of this is, that grace reigns through righteousness. It is now the reign of grace. But do you suppose for a moment that it reigns at the expense of righteousness? No; it is not so. Sometimes one hears a milk-and-water Gospel preached. Grace, grace, grace is preached, but it is preached at the expense of righteousness. This is not the truth of Scripture: grace reigns *through* righteousness. When God forgives you your sins He does so in righteousness, perfect righteousness. He is glorified in doing so. He reaps a glorious harvest in forgiving you your sins. Blessed be God! its grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. Now let me ask, where was the act performed, so that God, still maintaining His righteousness, could forgive the sinner? It is upon the Cross, for mark these words, "He hath made Him to be sin." The sinless, spotless, holy Lord Jesus Christ was made *sin*—not merely a sin-offering—and God did it upon the Cross. There was *I* all sin; there was *Christ* all sinless. God took all my sin—not merely my trespasses—and transferred it to the head of His Son. In place of sending me to hell, He

bruised His Son upon the Cross, that He might have the joy of pardoning you and me, and that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

SAFE OR SAVED?

IT is important to distinguish between *life* and *salvation*. Many have life who are not saved. I do not mean such persons are not safe. All who have life are undoubtedly safe; they will not come into judgment, having been screened from God, the Judge, by the "precious blood of Christ;" but what *we will be* may be very different from what *we are*. We ought to be as conscious of *present* deliverance from all that belongs to a "man in the flesh" as we will be when in the glory with Jesus. The present consciousness of full, joyous, happy deliverance is what I term "salvation." Scripture uses it, I think, in this way. And if it be asked, How am I to get it? how get deliverance from my doubts and fears? I answer, "Repent, and believe *the Gospel*." It is important to note this for the peace of our souls. I believe the turning-point in the experience of many lies in this: They are brought to believe in a full-orbed Gospel, and the moment they do they *are saved*—not merely safe, but saved. Cornelius was a safe man, a converted man, *before* Peter went to him and told him words whereby he and all his house would be *saved*. Acts xi. 14. How many really converted people are in the position of Cornelius before Peter's visit; that is, *safe*, but not *saved*?

Now the whole matter hinges upon this: Does my reader believe the Gospel? Not merely, has he heard "the Word of Truth" in its convicting and life-giving power. The Apostle clearly distinguishes the two in Ephesians i. 13; the "Word of Truth," and the "Gospel of your Salvation." It is of consequence to note this distinction, because it is in the "Gospel" that "the righteousness of God is revealed." Rom. i. 16, 17. There only do I see God executing judgment upon "the flesh," and upon myself too, in the person of Christ on the cross. With many it is a long and protracted struggle before they are brought "to submit themselves to the righteousness of God," or, in other words, to own "that in me—that is, in my flesh—

dwelleth *no good thing.*" When the soul has been brought to *that*—when it is no longer help but deliverance that is sought, and the man cries out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" then, and not till then, is the Gospel believed and the man *is saved.* The first word of thanksgiving is in verse 25 of chapter vii. of the Romans. All through the chapter the soul has been going through a certain *process* to produce a certain *result.* The man has submitted himself to "the righteousness of God;" he owns the flesh unimprovable and incurable, and passes judgment upon it by crying for a Deliverer or Saviour *out* of the condition—not to be helped in it, but taken *out* of it.

My reader, are you engaged with "the flesh"? Are you trying to bring it into compliance with the mind and will of God? I beseech you, turn from all such efforts to the Deliverer? Own God's judgment upon the *nature* as well as upon the sins committed, and you will pass on to salvation, resting calmly and in peace upon the work of the Son of God, who not only met your guilt, but has *condemned* sin, root and fruit. This is a truth for faith to take up.

LIFE NOT IMPROVEMENT.

HE that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

John iii. 36. I have underlined these words, as I want you to ponder over them. Can tongue or pen describe the reality of eternally bearing God's wrath? Christless man, be warned now; your soul is in peril. An hour hence and you may pass into eternity, and then, and then the quenchless fire, the undying worm, the speechless anguish, the unutterable woe; all, all so terribly real. The wrath of God will then eternally abide upon the unbeliever. Now that wrath may be removed by faith in Jesus, *then* it never will be; now by faith

in the Son, who has borne God's wrath to the uttermost, your guilt will be cancelled, your sins forgiven, and present and eternal justification divinely assured you.

Now, my friend, I ask you a plain, pointed question. Are you trying to avert the wrath of God by improving your state, by mending your ways, by correcting your conduct? Are you becoming more religious? I beseech you give it all up, it is all lost labour, every bit of it. Let me tell you very plainly, dear friend, that all your efforts, your very best endeavours to stand before God on the ground of religion, morality, or character, can only end in sad and bitter disappointment. God does not "improve." He "creates." He does not change the old nature, or better the Adam-life, but has condemned it in the death of Christ. The Lord Jesus did not say to the blameless, moral and religious Jewish teacher—"Ye must be *improved*," or "ye must amend your life." No; but He passed sentence of death and condemnation upon the nature of Nicodemus. "Ye must be born again." As if He had said, "Nicodemus, you may be very good, very pious, and very learned, but you have a *bad* nature, and so, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again (or from *above*), he cannot see the kingdom of God." John iii. 3.

You may polish the nature, improve the life, as much as you like, but God will not have it, nor its fruit either. The whole question is—Is it

Adam-life or not? If so, God has condemned it in the cross of His Son. The fruit, the outflow of the new nature God delights to accept, but the fruit of the Adam nature or life, God will on no account accept. Is it life or improvement therefore? Life, certainly. Ye must be born from above; a new nature must be imparted; not the old one sanctified or worked into the new. Flesh and spirit are distinct, and will ever remain so. "That which is born of the flesh *is* flesh," and cannot be anything else, christianise it, civilise it, educate it as much as you choose. Now, do you accept this as true—that you have a nature radically bad, and which God condemned when Christ was made a sacrifice for sin—condemned it on the cross?

I will now in a few words tell you how this life is communicated—how man is born from above. The Son of man has been lifted up on the cross. God dealt with Him instead of the sinner. The Lord Jesus sustained the curse—paid in blood the dreadful score God had against the sinner now believing in His name. Thus the glory of God has been secured, the righteousness of God established, His truth vindicated, His holiness untarnished, and His love and grace fully come out. All this the cross of Christ most blessedly unfolds. Now, man cannot stand before God on any ground save on what Christ *did*. He set aside the old nature and its deeds—the Adam life, with its sins and responsibilities, He closed up in His cross. Man in nature cannot stand before God. Christ risen up out of the dead, after finishing the work

and glorifying God in it, is now the head of a new race. He alone is the fountain of life. Eternal life is in the Son. And now the whole question turns on this—Have I believed on the Son? “He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life.” Man is born of water and of the Spirit.” This is not the water of baptism, but the Word of God; the water being the well-known symbol of the “Word.” Eph. v. 26. The Word of God tells me I am a sinner, ruined in my circumstances, depraved in nature, alienated in heart, and rebellious in will. The Word reveals to me the closing up of the old Adam history in the Cross of Christ. It also unfolds and makes known to my soul a Man in the glory, the accomplisher of redemption, and now the centre and head of God’s new creation. The Spirit implants the “Word”—thus producing a new nature. He lodges the seed of eternal life in the one believing. Thus the Word and the Spirit act in every conversion.

Turn, then, dear reader, from your feelings, from the nature and its fruit. The Word of God is a *Divine* basis of rest, a *settled* ground of rest, and an *eternal* foundation. Receive the engrafted Word, which, applied by the Spirit, is able to save thy soul; but do not turn to the Spirit, nor to His outward or inward operations. He is the *agent* in conversion, not the *object*. “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” John iii. 14, 15.

SOLEMN APPEALS—No. III.

DOING OR DONE?

Nothing either great or small;
 Nothing, sinner, no;
 Jesus did it—did it all,
 Long, long ago.

WHEN was this *done*? Nearly 2000 years ago. Who did the work? Jesus; for “the Lord hath laid on *Him* the iniquity of us all” (Isa. liii. 6). Where was the work *done*? On the cross; as it is written—“Who His own self bare our sins in His own body *on the tree*” (1 Peter ii. 24). But is it finished or finishing? Jesus said, “It is finished.”

“It is finished!” Yes, indeed,
 Finished every jot.
 Sinner, this is all you need;
 Tell me, is it not?

Yes, beloved reader, the work is *done*, and the Saviour of sinners and the accomplisher of redemption has gone up on high and sat down 'midst God's glories, because His work for thee is *done*. Oh! believe it, 'tis a finished work. His work for the sinner is done, His work for the saint is doing.

Reader, as thou standest beside His empty tomb, as thou raisest thy thoughts to the throne of God, on which He now reposes, O triumph and adore in that mighty work of love done for thee! The complete and final putting away of sins from before God and a purged conscience is the present fruit to all who believe on His name. Dost thou believe it is done; or art thou foolishly trying to make thy peace with God? Peace *has* been made

by the blood of Jesus, and the only question now is, Wilt thou rest on the sure testimony of God to the perfectness of the Saviour's work? His place in the glory of God, seated, crowned, and glorified, is the grand fact that sin has been disposed of according to the glory and righteousness of God.

Art thou doing? art thou on the ground of works before God? Know that He imputeth righteousness *without* works. "Oh," you say, "He is making intercession for me; He is acting as a Priest before the face of God for me." O sad delusion! Sinner, satan is thus blinding thee to thy true state. Thou art lost, and you need a Saviour, not a Priest; thou art dead, and you need life, not intercession.

Art thou a saint? art thou saved? hast thou eternal life? "I cannot say that." Ah! is that it? Then let me plainly tell you that you have nothing, absolutely nothing whatever to do with Christ as the Intercessor or Priest before God. He is an Intercessor and Priest for saints, not for sinners. Neither priesthood, advocacy, intercession, nor anything else will avail for thee. It is the precious blood of Christ which cleanseth from *all* sin. Prayer won't do it, the reading of the Scriptures won't do it, attendance at ordinances—all, all are utterly useless to put sins away. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. The work, then, is done, not doing; finished, not finishing; accomplished, not accomplishing. Thousands of *doers* are sinking into hell, thousands of *believers* are entering heaven.

Come, friend! believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; rest in His finished work. "Come unto Me" are His gracious words. 'Tis His own invitation to thee, poor sinner; but soon, soon His voice will cease to utter the blessed, welcome word, "Come." "Depart from Me!" will one day shortly fall on the ears of every Christ-rejector. Be warned to flee from coming wrath, be entreated to accept salvation now. "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."

PERILOUS TIMES. ●

WE think the present opportunity a favourable one for bringing before our readers a few thoughts which have been pressing upon our mind of late.

We are well warned in Holy Scripture that "perilous times" should come and Antichrists arise in the last days. Those days, foretold nearly 2000 years ago, have now set in; hence it is of the last importance that we have understanding of the times "to know what to do." Most seasonably to us has it been recorded of the children of Issachar, who, in company with the tribes, gathered around David in Hebron to make him King over all Israel, that they were "men that had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do." 1 Chron. xii. 32.

Now, while we thus press upon our readers a true "understanding of the times," we have no desire that they do so from the newspapers, or that they occupy themselves with all the evils around. On the contrary, without presuming to lay down rules, we are perfectly convinced that "the family newspaper"—that record of satan's doings in the world—habituates the mind with evil; consequently, communion with God and practical Christianity must suffer immensely. The family newspaper we regard as *the* snare of Christian households. Some known to us find the perusal of the daily paper essential

to business; others peruse it to mark the course of events, and to trace in the light of the Word of God the downward tendency. This *may* be done to the glory of God, but it needs incessant vigilance and the spirit of self-judgment, lest defilement instead of profit be the result.

It is to the Word of God, then, to which we would direct the attention of our readers, as affording definite and abundant instruction as to the moral value of all that is passing around, and in which the true character of the times may be distinctly learnt.

The only sign, then, of the last days, so far as I am aware, is growing evil. On this Scripture instructs us carefully and minutely, as in 2 Tim. iii.; Jude; 2 Peter; Matt. xiii., &c.

At present I would seek solemnly to warn my readers of one deadly error in these "perilous times," and which within the last few years has met with more general acceptance than any heresy ever promulgated. I refer to the *denial of eternal punishment*. This frightful heresy has been hailed by many thousands on both sides of the Atlantic, and at the present moment is spreading like wildfire. The results of this Antichristian doctrine are appalling to contemplate. Self-will may satisfy itself to the full, if not bridled and checked by the fear of eternal consequences. Deny eternal punishment, and you throw open the floodgates of sin and wickedness—you break down the great barrier to evil which is now rolling in like a flood on every hand. I know of no heresy like this, so successful in sapping the foundations of good government. Only remove this divine safeguard, and what is—what *must* be—the consequence? Man, undeterred by the dread of eternal punishment, will do as *he likes*. Individual accountability to God, atonement, and the heinousness of sin are truths of the deepest moment to man—none more so; but this untruth of satan's reduces these profound subjects to a NOTHING. I have rarely, if ever, found persons who had embraced this heresy rest there. In general those I have known have lapsed into Unitarianism and infidelity. Of course God can and will keep His own, which is an immense comfort in days like these.

I utterly reject the thought of making this an "*open* question." I am perfectly satisfied that it is a "*closed* question"

in the pages of the New Testament. It is a part of the faith of God's elect. The following Scriptures ought, I believe, to satisfy any honest mind that the punishment of the wicked is eternal in the full force of the word:—John iii. 36 ; v. 29. Matt. x. 28 ; xviii. 8, 9 ; xxv. 46. 2 Thess. i. 8, 9. 2 Peter ii. 9-17. Jude 13. Rev. xiv. 9, 10 ; xx. 10-15 ; xxi. 8.

O, my reader, can you for a moment entertain the thought that God poured out the vials of His wrath upon His beloved Son to save men from non-existence—from annihilation? O where is the judgment of God—where the majesty of God—where the sense of sin, were this annihilation heresy true? Could a measure of punishment in “the lake of fire” be an adequate expression of the severity of the sufferings of the cross? How is it possible that the non-existence of the wicked could express the judgment of God upon sin? What is sin? Is it not an affront upon the majesty of God? How, then, could you possibly make a limited period of punishment, with the cessation of existence at the close, the answer to what God is in His nature and being? Again we repeat that the holders of this heresy can have no idea what sin is. O how blinding the power of satan over the minds of men!

Most earnestly and affectionately would we urge upon all our readers to shun, as they would a pestilence, this awful error. If found amongst your friends or in your religious magazines, part company with them at once. Do not hesitate to act boldly and decidedly, and *the Lord will be with you.*

WILL THE GOSPEL INTRODUCE GENERAL BLESSING INTO THE WORLD?

The salvation and glory of the Lord filling the earth and known to its utmost bounds form the burden of prophecy, song, and desire of “holy men of old.” This result is sure and certain, because “the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it;” but that this blessed issue will be accomplished by the preaching of the word is nowhere said in Scripture. We can be dogmatic when Scripture speaks plainly and decisively. That the Gospel has borne precious fruit in every nation under heaven we gladly own, and thank God for it too ; but that is a very different thing from the dream of men that the world will

be converted by the spread of the truth. No ; the tide of evil has set in, and nothing short of the intervention of the Lord in judgment will effect a clearance of the scene and deliver the groaning creation.

FACTS AND SCRIPTURE.

If I turn to facts, or look into the Word of God, I find both opposed to the theory of universal blessing brought in by the Gospel, or by any agency, moral or spiritual. We have had the Gospel preached in the world for about 2000 years ; and when I turn over the pages of history, what do I find? Why, that the Gospel, as to *outward results*, has lost ground immensely—ground which she will never recover for God. The Star of Bethlehem arose in the east, and, if I read Scripture aright, it will sink in the west. What about the teeming millions of India, China, and Africa—regions where the bright beams of Christianity had penetrated at a very early age of the Christian era? What about the east—the birthplace of civilisation, the cradle of Christianity? People are eager as to the researches of Livingstone and others in the interior of Africa, believing that thus Christianity will yet be introduced and flourish amongst the savage tribes and nations inhabiting that vast continent. Why, Africa and other nations, named and unnamed, have been evangelised. Heathendom has been shaken to its very centre by the entrance of the light of life ; but the glorious light has been deliberately quenched, and the whole of the East, great portion of the north of Europe, and other parts of the world, are enveloped in moral darkness and death.

It is well known by those conversant with these things that the numerous legends everywhere found have a mixture of Divine truth in them, while the idolatry with which they are interwoven makes the application of Romans i. 21-32 simple, but withal very solemn.

It may be worth while to note another fact of importance—namely, that from about the seventh century Christianity has been steadily losing ground. Previous to the commencement of the middle or “dark ages,” as they have been well styled, the extent of ground covered by the Gospel was immense, compared

to the present. Of course it will be understood that I speak only of public manifested results—not of people savingly converted to God. The Gospel is “the power of God unto salvation to *every one* that believeth.” Rom. i. 16.

And now, if I turn from the records of history to the precious volume of inspiration, does it not emphatically declare, in statements too precise to be gainsaid, that the present scene will only darken in the closing in of the last days—that instead of a general reception of the Gospel, the mystery of iniquity, which is surely and rapidly working, will develop the apostacy—*i.e.*, the general abandonment of Christianity on the part of Christendom, and the rise of the personal Antichrist, who will deny every distinctive truth proper to Judaism and Christianity, and establish idolatry in these lands, and persecute and slay the then saints of God?

A WORD TO THE UNSAVED.

Thy prospects are dark and gloomy. The storm is gathering. All is fast ripening for judgment. And O, my reader, were the issues for all time, it would be a serious thought; but no, they are for all eternity, and the end is at hand. How, then, does it affect you? Are you in the power of the cross of Christ outside the world-system, its ways and judgment? Do you know, as a present matter of faith, that for you judgment is past and gone for ever? Can you in faith look back upon the vacant cross and empty tomb, and know your *past* settled there? Christ, risen out of death, has gone on high—passed through the heavens to the right hand of God—and is there the Source, the Spring, the Head of a new race—the second Man, in whom alone eternal life is found.

The judgment upon the world—upon Christendom—is at hand. The Lord of Life is coming to execute judgment upon *living* persons on the earth. “God commandeth all men everywhere to repent; because He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised Him from the dead.” Acts xvii. 30, 31. Why will ye die? Why court sure and inevitable destruction from the hands of the Lord—the Judge? Salvation, full, present, and free, may be yours this instant, if

you only believe in the name of the Son of God. Atonement has been wrought out amidst the unfathomable anguish of the cross. God has accepted it, and now presses reconciliation upon every soul of man. Jesus rests upon the throne of God, His joy and delight, as on earth, to receive sinners. May the Lord lead you, beloved reader, to rest on the *person and work* of the Son of God!

THE DYING CORPORAL.

“IN 1864 (says Major Malan) I was visiting in King’s College Hospital. I had often spoken of Christ to a dying man; he had been a corporal in the 92nd Highlanders. The day of his death, while speaking to him, an old soldier, who had lost a leg at Delhi, came into the ward and began to give me an account of the blowing in of the Cashmere Gate. The dying man listened, and when the description was finished, signed to me to come to him. I put my ear close to his mouth, for he could hardly speak, and these were his last words—‘Ah, sir, it’s naething but the love of Jesus can burst the gate of the sinner’s heart.’”

“The love of Jesus!” How the heart swells as it muses o’er the wondrous words—a love that suffered, bled, and died. His love was displayed in life in opening the eyes of the blind, in unstopping the deaf ears, in richly feeding the hungry, in god-like practical benevolence. He suffered, He wept, He prayed, but sin and guilt—*our* sin and guilt—was not borne until He reached that *point*, “forsaken of God.” Then love triumphed. Then love rose victorious over all the sinner was and did. The blessed Son of God stooped in mighty love from the glory, and purged our sins on the cross; then He passed from the gloom and darkness of the tomb to the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Has this love burst the gate of thy heart? O, open your heart and let it in! Behold the magnificence of that grace which has triumphed in the scene of man’s misery and sin—not surely at the expense of holiness or righteousness; nay, for love, holiness, righteousness, and truth harmoniously blend and combine to secure to the sinner a salvation worthy of God to give, and worthy the hearty acceptance of my beloved Reader.

“I WILL APPEASE HIM.”

GENESIS xxxii. 20.

‘I WILL appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me.’ Such was Jacob’s scheme for reconciling his offended brother to him. He judged of Esau’s state of feeling towards him by what he would have felt himself, in Esau’s place. He would hate his brother if he had been cheated by *him*; though a good “present” might turn his heart towards him and put the matter all right. So he sent his “present” to Esau, to “appease” him. Esau did not accept it at the hand of Jacob’s servants; and it turned out that Esau did not need any appeasing; his heart was all love towards his brother. But Jacob knew nothing of this; he measured Esau by himself, and made sure it needed a present in order to “make his peace” with the one he had offended.

Beloved reader, is this a picture of your thoughts about that God you have offended by your sins? Jacob was not now indifferent about the question: his conscience was fully awake; and, knowing himself an offender, he “feared” Esau. May be you are no longer careless, as you once were, as to the eternal condition of your precious soul. You *know* you are a sinner, and you *fear* the consequences. You are about to *meet* the One you have offended, and you know it. Moreover, you are willing to make almost any sacrifice, if only you could put the matter right between your soul and God. And it may be you are doing, as you think, “the best you can to make your peace with God.” Be assured, dear friend, you are making a *very serious mistake*. God *is* offended by your sins; you *are* going to meet Him; and it will never do to meet Him without the solemn question of your sins being first settled some way. But the great mistake is, you think to settle it with God *yourself*, instead of coming to Him as a lost and helpless sinner, on the ground of *His* having settled it, to His own satisfaction, in the work of Christ. Be assured, *all* you can bring Him, of your efforts, can only be what Cain brought to God—the fruit of *his* tilling of the ground God had *cursed*! Could God accept it, as though there were no question of *sin* to be disposed of, before Cain could make acceptable *presents* to God? He could *not*.

"Unto Cain and his offering God had not respect." It was the fruit simply of Cain's labour and the *ground* God had *curst* on account of man's sin. And is our *nature* any better than Cain's garden? Has He not told us His estimate of it? "The old man, which is *corrupt*." (Eph. iv. 22.) Can a *corrupt* tree bring forth good fruit? Can God accept that which is not good? Impossible! But you say, "What more can I do? I do the best I can." That may be; but will you own that the best is bad, and "they that are in the flesh *cannot please God*"? And the question is not to be settled by your bringing, and God's accepting, a present from *you*, either bad or good; but *God* has made a present. "He gave His only begotten Son," and to as many as *receive Him* He gives the title to become the children of God. Have you *received Him* as your Saviour? Those who have do not speak of making *their* peace with God, but thank God that He has "made peace" by the Cross of Christ, and has reconciled them to Himself on the ground of it. Observe, dear reader, the great difference between the two. Jacob said, "*I will appease him*," that is—

He is the one to be appeased :

It is *not done* yet ; but

I am going to do it.

Believers in Christ say, "*He hath reconciled us*." (2 Cor. v. 18.) That is—

We were the persons to be reconciled :

The thing *is done* ; and

It is *God* who has done it.

Now I ask you, dear reader, to ponder prayerfully this question, Are you trusting to what *you* are *going to do* for *God* ; or are you resting, as one "ungodly" and "lost" in yourself, on what *God has done* for *you* ? Are you measuring what is in God's heart towards you, by what you find in yours towards Him? Or have you by faith seen in the cross the *proof* of God's love to you, and been reconciled to Him through the death of His Son? At the cross there was, on man's side, only sin, and hatred of God : no goodness, no doing his best. It was his *worst* ; yet there most fully is seen the wondrous, the undeserved love of God ; for *who* had given the blessed, sinless victim, to suffer there and thus for sin? The very God whose majesty

had been outraged by the sin, but whose heart loved the sinner! That “blessed God” who gave Him to be thus a sacrifice, so that what *we* were in our badness might be put out of the way, and we might be free to learn and know and enjoy all that *He* is in His infinite goodness. Will you think to “make peace with Him,” as though *He* needed to be reconciled? Why, He is “commending *His own love*” to you, in that Christ died for sinners, as sinners and nothing else. The enmity is all on your side; and on His side it is all *love*; and He can afford so to act even towards sinners, guilty and in enmity, the cross vindicating His justice as hating and judging sin. And now in the Gospel it is “as though God did *beseech*” His enemies to be reconciled to Him: yet you think to “appease” Him by some earnest effort after goodness of your own! If I have offended a person, it is not for *me* at all to propose terms of reconciliation, but for the person I have offended. And if some one else *has* come in to make the satisfaction the offended person requires, the great question for me is, whether *he* is satisfied. If he is, then surely I can afford to be. *God* was insulted by my sins: every moment I lived it was a reproach to the righteousness of His government. Was it for *me* to settle about what ought to satisfy the claims of His justice? To talk about doing *my* best, and not being able to do any more? Surely not. I bless God that *He* has devised a plan far more glorifying to Him—far more satisfying for me. For I see on the cross my Substitute, given by God, making satisfaction to the throne of God for all my offences; and in the acceptance of Christ in glory, I see the *proof* and witness that what was done on the cross *did* satisfy God. Surely I may well be satisfied too, and through grace I am. The believer can say, not “I *will* appease him, . . . and afterward I *will* see his face; peradventure he will *accept* of me;” but, He “*hath* made us accepted”—we “*are* made nigh”—“He *is* our peace.” He “*having* made peace,” and “preached peace,” we “have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Eph. i. 6; ii. 13, 14, 15, 17; Rom. v. i.)

Again, dear reader, which is it with you—“*I will appease Him,*” or, “*He hath reconciled us*”?

FROM THE MANGER TO THE CROSS.

Son of the Father! in Thee all fulness dwelt when Thou in
 Lowly grace did'st take a place below—a Man amongst us men.
 Oh, what a stoop was Thine from yon bright land of light and love,
 To this sad earth where sin and sorrow reigned supreme!
 Thou camest down and took a place, and that place not the highest;
 Not in some stately palace, but in a stable wast Thou born!
 Oh how my soul is moved within me, as I gaze upon Thee,
 Holy One, low lying in a manger! Cast upon God from
 The womb was't Thou. Hoping in Him e'en from Thy mother's
 Breast, a fit beginning to a life of trust. As a tender plant
 Before Him Thou did'st grow. Perfection first was seen in Thee,
 Unblemished and unspotted Lamb of God—perfect as a babe.
 And later on, when twelve full years had rolled away, perfect as a boy;
 Occupied e'en then about Thy Father's business; those first
 Recorded words that fell from purest lips so soon to taste
 The vinegar and gall. And so time passed, and Thou in favour
 Grew with men and with Thy God. King of Glory! did yon
 Blue sky which Thine own hands had spread remain the same
 To Thee as unto other men through all those years of unrecorded
 Life? The same Lord Jesus till that day when Thou on Jordan's
 Brink did'st stand. True Shepherd of Thy sheep, dependant
 Son of Man. The scene was all too much for heaven. Those thirty
 Years of silence now must end, the Father speaks and owns Thee as His Son.
 Oh what a sight indeed for angels and for men! Repentant sons
 Of Israel stand around, and Thou true Son of David kneeling
 On the ground. Sinless Thyself, confessing other's sins!
 The Heaven's rent in twain. The eternal Spirit in dove-like
 Form discovering a rest, and the Father's voice heard
 Declaring "In the Beloved Son is all my pleasure."
 'Twas well, Anointed One, that this should be, and well
 Again when on the mount, the Father's unchanged love
 Was told abroad. And well when in yon garden Thou
 Did'st agonize, sweating those drops, those swollen drops of blood—
 That an angelic messenger should strengthen Thee; for Thou
 Was't heard in that Thou feared. And so I trace Thee
 In Thy path of rare dependence and obedience on to that cross
 Which ended all Thy sorrow. Bruis'd Saviour nailed
 To a tree. Thirty silver pieces was Thy price, a goodly price
 Indeed, an ox would bring as much. Deserted by Thy friends,
 Disown'd by the people Thou had'st come to bless, and
 Worse than all, forsaken by Thy God. Methinks I hear,
 E'en now, that cry of agony, "My God! My God!" abandoned
 Hast Thou Me? Oh, why, Lord Jesus, did the heavens seem
 As brass above Thy head, in this Thine hour of deepest need—
 Thine hour of deepest sorrow? Unheeded Thou dost cry—
 "My God! My God!" is heard in heaven and before the Throne of God;

But came back unanswered on Thy thorn-clad brow !
 Sin Bearer, Thou, Sin Purger—and Sin Expiator.
 Grappler with all the powers of darkness, and all the hosts of hell,
 Bruiser of Satan, and spoiler of his prey! Helpless one,
 The huge, fierce billows of Almighty ire were breaking o'er Thy soul.
 The deep dark waves were spending all their strength on Thee.
 Shut out from light ! Shut out from God ! made sin itself,
 That I in Thee, Thou risen One, might God's righteousness be made.

GOOD NEWS.

WHAT AM I TO BELIEVE?

THE Gospel is good news of God—God's goodness, not *about* you, but *to* you—*about* His Son Jesus Christ. The Gospel is not anything about you; you are not called upon to believe you are a Christian, or to believe yourself saved. This would not be true till you have come to Christ. But you are called upon to believe, to credit what God has said about His Son, to take Him at His word. And what is this testimony? Christ has died for sin; God has raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His own right hand, and now declares that whosoever (and that takes in you) believeth on Him shall never perish, but have everlasting life.

Faith is a very simple thing,
 Though little understood;
 It frees the soul from death's dread sting
 By resting on the blood.
 It sees upon the throne of God
 A victim that was slain;
 It rests its all on His shed blood,
 And says, "I'm born again."

• HOW CAN I MAKE MY PEACE WITH GOD?

You never can, no mortal ever could; you need not attempt it. If this question comes from the

depths of an anxious soul, oh! then, listen—*Peace is already made*; Christ has made peace through the blood of His cross (Col. i. 20). God now preaches peace through Jesus Christ, and it is to be had by believing. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. v. 1). “Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the *just* for the *unjust*, that He might bring us to God” (1 Pet. iii. 18). Reader, mark this expression, “bring us to God;” that means to the knowledge of God, to the favour of God—the friendship, the presence, and the enjoyment of God for ever. The *Just One* took our place that we might get His. He having once suffered and died for our sins, all who believe on Him *now*, stand before God as complete and perfect as the work of our divine Substitute can make them, for it is written—“By *one offering* He hath *perfected for ever* them that are sanctified” (Heb. x. 14).

DEATH IS NOT THE DEBT OF NATURE.

It is “the wages of sin” (Rom. vi. 23). Men try to hide the shame of death by calling it the debt of nature. Death came in by sin. It is appointed unto men once to die, and after death the judgment; but blessed be God, Christ has died. He endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God; and to believers the bitterness and shame of death is past, and they have eternal life.

“I hear the words of love,
I gaze upon the blood;
I see the precious sacrifice,
And I have peace with God.”

Reader, if you reject God's great salvation, you must perish; if you make light of Christ, nothing remains for you but the second death—the lake of fire eternally. "Flee from the wrath to come!"

"I CAN GO THROUGH THE DOORWAY NOW."

I HAD been speaking for some time the other evening on the first murder ever committed, and of the voice of the blood shed crying into the ears of the Lord God against the murderer, and after pressing upon my hearers the solemn fact, that, in the sight of God, each one present must belong to one of two classes, either to the world or to the household of faith; and if the former, the blood of a greater than Abel—even of Jesus, Son of God—was that which marked them as guilty before God; and if the latter, washed in that blood whiter than snow; and I begged each one to remember that they were thus either cleansed by that blood, or guilty of that blood, as David prayed after his fearful sin in the death of Uriah, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God," and "wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."

I then said, "O that each one as they leave this building, as they pass out at the door, may ask themselves the question, as in the presence of God—Am I washed in the blood of Christ, or am I guilty of that blood in the sight of a holy God?"

Just at the close a dear little boy came up to me and said, "I can go through the doorway now." It was no mere passing thought with him, for he had often been deeply exercised about his sins, and doubtless had known before this something of the value of Christ's atoning death; but as he said it to me his face was beaming with delight, and the words seemed to be from his very heart; and I trust, indeed, it is the reality of God's own work in his young heart.

Reader, how is it with you? Is sin, Cain's sin, lying at your *door*? or are you inside the house, sheltered from the hand of the destroyer by the blood of the Lamb? (Exod. xii. 22.)

It was a solemn question asked by God of Cain, "What hast thou done?" And in a day like the present it is well to consider what, then, is the value of man's doings in the light of

Gen. iv., for we hear so much on every side of what man in his natural state is capable of doing for God.

"I am doing the best I can, or I'm striving hard;" and, indeed, "the way of Cain" (Jude ii.) is repeated in its ten thousand forms to-day even in the world's so-called worship and service, and poor souls are seeking to appease and propitiate a just and holy God, while *His way* of approach is entirely unknown or rejected, and the value of the blood that speaketh better things than that of Abel is lost sight of, and practically counted a common thing, and while the link with this poor world that has murdered God's Son is unbroken. Even when it was a question of Israel and the golden calf, there could be no such thing as neutrality. Jehovah's people had cast Him off and were worshipping an idol; and if then it was needful for Moses to ask "Who is on the Lord's side?" how much more now, when not only has the self-will of man been expressed in the breaking of the commands of his Creator times without number; but the hatred, the enmity of man, has been displayed in the rejection and murder of the Son of God's love. A dear young Christian whom I knew said on her death-bed, "Thank God, I am on the Conqueror's side."

Reader, on whose side are you—God's or Satan's? Satan is the god and prince of this present age, and when he is cast out, all those who are linked with him will be judged also.

One word more about that precious blood, and mark it well, for it is the word of God, who cannot lie; it is the way of escape, the way of life and salvation.

"Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth a mercy-seat through faith in His blood." Yes, dear reader, *it's through faith in His blood*, and by that, and that alone, can any sinner ever read his title clear to mansions in the skies.

"It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul." (Lev. xvii. 11.)

"The blood of Jesus Christ (God's Son) cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.)

A LIVING TESTIMONY TO THE
"BLOOD."

"HOW old are you?" I enquired at an aged, weather-beaten man, whom I met at a sea-coast town. "Just six months, sir," he replied. "Why, how is that?" I answered. "Well, sir, he said, "if you will just sit here awhile, and care to listen to an old man's story, I will gladly give you a bit of my history." After we were seated, my new found acquaintance gave me an interesting history of his life.

"Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?"

"It is now sixty-three years," said the old tar, "since I left my happy home. I will never, never forget that morning, sir;" and at the bitter remembrance, the tears chased each other down his furrowed cheeks. "I can never, till my dying day, forget the sad parting with my dear father and mother, and little brothers and sisters. My mother held my hands, and sobbed as if her heart would break; my father covered his face with his hands, and wept like a child; while my dear little brothers and sisters clung about me, and refused to let me go. "Willie, Willie," said my father, "ye're gaun to leave us, and ye're mither and me will gang down tae the grave sorrowing. O, Willie, may God tak' care o' ye; lippen tae the precious bluid o' Christ." "Oh Willie," said my mother, "will ye promise ye'r faither and me, tae trust the bluid o' Christ, it 'ill mak' ye whiter

than the very snaw, Willie. Mak' ye'r faither's God ye'r ain; He'll forgi'e a' ye'r sins, and tak' ye tae heaven when ye dee." "I promised again and again, and then tore myself from their embrace, and ran down to the sea shore to join the vessel, which was waiting for the sailors coming on board. Need I say that in a short time my father and mother's parting counsels were soon forgotten. The ship was like a hell upon earth. The very air seemed polluted with the frightful oaths, curses, and profane language that was used by almost all on board, while fighting, drinking, and obscene conduct of every sort made up such a scene as cannot well be described. I soon became a ring-leader in every species of sin and iniquity, and became a terror to my very shipmates. I sailed to almost all parts of the world, and had numerous hairbreadth escapes from all sorts of perils by sea and land; but my career of wickedness was drawing to a close. A hoary-headed sinner like me, sir, was picked up by God—snatched from the jaws of wickedness, and from the burning flame, to show forth God's abundant mercy, and the worth of His Son's most precious blood—for it has cleansed the biggest sinner, and saved the worst wretch out of hell. Yes, six months ago, I heard a man in the street preaching, and his words reached my stony heart and touched my guilty conscience." "What were the words?" I asked. "*The precious blood of Christ,*" replied my brother. "I'll tell you more," added my friend; "the blood of Jesus has left my conscience without stain or

spot. I am accepted in the Beloved, and stainless in Christ."

We parted, soon to meet in heaven, and share the glory of our risen coming Saviour, through the precious blood He shed upon the cross.

PADRE FORTUNATO;*

OR, FAITH HIDDEN IN A CONVENT.

WHAT human eloquence, what reasoning power, what religious zeal, what human righteousness could produce, Padre Fortunato had them all, in such degree as to exhibit the most accomplished man. He was eloquent in the pulpit, a stringent logician in the academy, indefatigable in doing good, and blameless even before his enemies. Too much study and too much work brought him to a premature grave. The vault of the church which encloses his body of humiliation bears this inscription from the Apocrypha.

Hic jacet ad. R. P. Fortunatus,

QUI BREVI VIVENS TEMPORE EXPLEVIT TEMPORA MULTA.

(Here lies the most Reverend Father Fortunato, *who being made perfect in a short time fulfilled a long time.*—Wisdom ii. 2.)

Reader, the last hours of the dying reverend are a flat denial of the divine inspiration of the Book of *Wisdom*. A short account of his last moments may teach some poor self-righteous sinner to turn his eyes from man's traditions as to salvation, and look only to God for grace *to be saved from the wrath to come*, by believing in the death of the Lord Jesus and in His atoning blood, which *alone is the propitiation* for every believing sinner, and the cleansing power from all sin and all iniquity.

Padre Fortunato was a great reader of God's Word; as professor in dogmatic theology, *His Holiness* the Pope granted him the license to read the prohibited books which are in the *Index*. Padre Fortunato had an old edition of *Diodatis'* translation, which was always open on his writing desk. I

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was one of his pupils and his bosom friend. The same spirit which worked in his soul worked in mine. How sweet to my memory is the blessed remembrance of those moments when our souls, as those of David and Jonathan, were open to each other, and at the light of the lamp of God's Word we began to discover *the only true way* to the eternal mansions of everlasting joy! How often we mourned together over the corruption of popish Christianity, weeping over the victims slaughtered by the Holy Inquisition, in the sacred names of *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost!* How often we looked on each other's face, anxiously expecting from each other a solution of the puzzle of the intercession and mediation of saints, of an *uncertain sanctity, and of a doubtful existence,** so profanely coupled with the priesthood and advocacy of our Lord Jesus

* I underline, *advisedly*, the two phrases, viz., *saints of uncertain sanctity* and *of doubtful existence*. I have no doubt that in the so-called *Martyrologium Romanum*, there are a good few of the blessed company whom we shall see in glory, not because the popes have given to them a diploma of sanctity, but because they died in faith, *i. e.*, confessing *the Lord Jesus as their only Saviour*. But alas! it is too true that many sinful men and women who have been canonized as *saints* by the popes, died without faith in Christ Jesus, and died stained with the blood of their fellow-creatures, as Louis the IX., king of France, the crusader; St. Dominique, of Callaroga, the founder of the Holy Inquisition; St. John, of Capistrano, who, by his bloody zeal against the Christians called Patherines, was called *exterminator hoereticorum* (the destructor of heretics). As to *saints of uncertain existence*, the following statement will explain my meaning:—In the catacombs of Rome there are tombs enclosing the bones of some who were buried there; but the tomb being without inscription, who knows who *was* and *what* the individual whose bones are buried in that tomb? Moreover, in some deep recesses of the catacombs there are heaps of bones and skulls called *ossaria*, and from the unknown tomb, or from those *ossaria*, UNKNOWN saints are created; and those saints of an *uncertain existence* are *christened saints*, that is to say, “bones or skeletons of *supposed saints* to whom the popes *give a name*, and order the people to pray to them, and worship them. These *saints* are called *Sancti Baptizati!!!* Besides, we have in the *Calendarium Romanum*, the death day of 19,700 martyrs of Sion; 16,000 ditto of Egypt; 5000 ditto of Abyssinia; 11,000 virgins, with St. Ursula at their head; and the famous seven sleeping youths who have slept 300 years, and with the rest of the company of saints of *doubtful existence* are sleeping still, never to awaken, as they were never born! I address the reader to “L'HISTOIRE DE L'ÉGLISE, par *Jaques Basnage*,” whose critical researches will enlighten the reader as to my statements regarding those supposed saints.

Christ, as set forth in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the fourth chapter, and in 1st Timothy, chapter ii. 5, 6.

How seldom we parted from each other without our hearts burning, inflamed with the sacred fire of the love of Jesus to poor sinners, and went to our cells with our own hearts light and glad, as we had heard from heaven, that *through the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, all our sins were cleansed and through HIS NAME were all, ALL forgiven!* Dearest Padre Fortunato! One Good Friday he was preaching in the cathedral; his silvery, sonorous, clear voice gave out the text of his sermon—

“Expedit ut unus moriatuz pro populo.”*

“The Son of God must die that sinful man should be saved: His blood must be shed that God's justice's claims should be appeased: He must die to bear the sins of many: He must be stricken by His righteous hand that His holiness should be vindicated. Isaiah saw Him on Calvary as the Lamb of God, who, in His own self bore our sins on His body on the tree! The royal poet penned the agonizing cry of the Holy One, ‘My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me!’ and the impious and apostate high priest, like Balaam, revealed, in spite of his unbelief, the salvation of God to man through the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. Hence, sinners—Look, look to the Man of Sorrows: look to Him

* “It is expedient for us that one man die.”—John xi. 50.

The reason why I quote the *Latin* vulgate; it is to see that the clergy have the *Word of God*, and the majority of priests are very well conversant with it. And it must be so, for the *Romanum Breviarium*, or the Book of Prayer for the priests, is composed of the greatest part of the Scriptures—from *Genesis* to *Revelation*—and in the course of the year *all* the Psalms are recited in private, or sung in public; for each ordained priest is bound to read the *officium* of the day, *every day sub pena penati mortalis* (under the penalty due to a mortal sin). Besides, in each seminary or convent, a chapter of the Bible is read every day at *dinner-time*, and so commanded by the *pontifical laws*, that the Bible is read in one year from *Genesis* to *Revelation*. This is the reason that a soul enlightened by the Spirit of God has in the *vulgate* the words of eternal life, which are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish.—(2nd Cor. ii. 15, 16.) More responsibility for the Romish Clergy if the sweet savour of Christ causes them to perish, instead of teaching them to save others from the errors of Popish superstition.

lifted up on the accursed tree ; look to Him for salvation, ye poor : look to Him for redemption, ye rich : look to Him for forgiveness of your sins, ye priests, as Aaron looked on the brazen serpent lifted up in the wilderness : look to Him, ye nobles of the realm : look to Him (respectfully, but boldly addressing Carlo Alberto, the late king of Italy, who was in his tribune listening to the Christian eloquence of the preacher), sacred and royal majesty, as the king of Israel looked at him prophetically when he cried, ‘ If thou should’st mark iniquity, who shall stand in thy presence ? But before thee there is fulness of redemption.’ ”

Memory fails to report faithfully this solemn and truly evangelical preaching on the pulpit of the popish metropolis of Torino. It was his last sermon ; a few weeks after he was pining away with galloping consumption.

When his last hour was rapidly losing its seconds, his strong frame was fighting as it were with death, unwilling to let go free the happy spirit in the hands of His Redeemer.

A confessor was called : Padre Fortunato was almost voiceless ; but, making an effort to speak, he smiled, and said, “ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness ” (1 John i. 9). “ *Si confiteamur peccata nostra fidelis est et justus ut remittat nobis peccata nostra et emundet nos ab omni iniquitate.* ” Then, with great emphasis, he cried, “ *Sanguis Jesu Christi filii Dei emundavit me ab omni peccato.* ” (1st Epistle of John.) “ The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin. ” The confessor was an ignorant man, both spiritually and humanly ; he could not read the soul of Padre Fortunato. A brass crucifix was placed by his confessor in his fleshless hands, and, in a fit of convulsion, with all the strength of a robust nervous system, he twisted the brazen cross, to the great horror of the superstitious confessor. When Padre Fortunato, who in spite of great suffering was conscious and alive to all that was going on, he exclaimed, “ *Salvator meus ! quem cum non videro diligo, in quem nunc quoque non videns credo, credo, credo* ” (1 Peter i. 8), and he expired ! “ My Saviour, whom having not seen I love, whom I see not, yet I believe, I believe, I believe. ”

Reader, Catholic or Protestant, both of your systems, through the great mercy of God, have some amount of truth as to the need of a Saviour. But the truth is prisoner of the system, "and the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (1 Romans i. 18). Priests, clergymen, ministers of Christendom, beware of a mixed Gospel! Your liturgies, your gorgeous garments, your ceremonies, your cathedrals may resound with the name of the Lord Jesus; and some bold preacher like Father Fortunato may boldly cry, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12). Where is, then, the value of the name of Virgin Mary? where is the value of the names of angels and saints? If the Scripture says that *there is NONE OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN GIVEN TO MEN* as the true *shibboleth* to be spared from the wrath to come, and to be introduced into the kingdom of God's dear Son, why do your churches, oh Catholics, resound with other names not *given to men*? why your cathedrals and chapels, oh Protestants, bear the names of St. Paul, of St. Andrew, &c., and thus you rob their Saviour of His title by giving a portion to Paul and Andrew—poor saved sinners, not through their love to Jesus, but through the love of Jesus to them!

May God open the eyes of many poor sinners, slaves of human traditions! May the light of God's word reveal to many a modern Nicodemus, *rulers in Israel* and *teachers in Israel*, how *to die*, to all that is born of the flesh, of the blood and of the will of men, that being born again by *the incorruptible seed*, BY THE WORD OF GOD, which liveth and abideth for ever, "You may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love: whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (1 Peter i. 8, 9).

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION.

NOTES OF A GOSPEL ADDRESS.

NO. IV.—ITS FEATURES.

LET us now for a few moments pass on to its *features*. You will remember that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. He is here not imputing their trespasses unto them, but beseeching them to be saved. *God is beseeching!* It is not you who are called upon to beseech Him; but He is beseeching you. This is a marked feature in this ministry. God is in the attitude of a beseecher. For what? To improve one's self?—Not at all. To turn over a new leaf?—No; but to be friends. Come and be reconciled to Me! I want to be friends. Why have you travelled so far away from Me? Why have you been so easily led by the enemy? Why have you received false opinions about Me? What have I done? Since the day you breathed I have been watching over you. You have breathed my air, and walked in my sunshine. I have clothed you, and fed you; but you don't believe that I love you; you don't believe that I am kind to you; you don't believe my salvation. Such is the language of God to you, my dear fellow-sinners. The heart of man is always prone to get away from God, and to mar the truth of Scripture, and so here you will find the heart often saying, I have been taught to believe that God loves a certain portion, and it is a certain portion who will be saved. But, my friends, you must always distinguish between the nature of God, which is *love*, and His counsels, and attributes, and decrees. The poor sinner has nothing to do with the counsels of God, but to accept His proffered salvation. The truth of God has been damaged by the dogmas of divinity and one-sided theology. They stumble the souls of God's children, and cripple the Gospel by trying to reduce it to their own tiny views. What the sinner wants is the truth of God complete, not to adopt a one-sided statement to the disparagement of the other; and by accepting the word of God he will be able to bask in the sunlight which beams from the face of Jesus Christ.

SOLEMN APPEALS—No. IV.

DEATH—AND *AFTER* THIS, THE JUDGMENT.

READER, if you continue a rejector of Christ, you must meet death. This is certain, unless indeed you be either the great chief of the Roman empire, or the Antichrist, the personal enemy of the Lord Jesus. Both these characters have a terrible ending before them, "cast *alive* into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone" (Rev. xix. 20). Thus Scripture distinctly intimates that only two of the wicked will not die—they are reserved for the second death; living men cast *alive* into a lake of fire! Most solemn! As these characters are not yet developed, as the Roman empire is not yet in its ten-kingdom form revived, nor the Jews brought back to their land, nor the apostacy of Christendom taken place, no one can say who these two men are, or when they may arise.

Death, then, you must face, sooner or later; suddenly or lingeringly, death is an enemy you cannot escape, you cannot buy off. Come he will. Are you prepared to die just now? Are you ready to pass from time into eternity? Quite sure? No misgiving? With you, would it be a leap in the dark—into hell? What is death? Is it the debt of nature? Nay, it is the wages of sin. Nature did not claim death from an innocent Adam, but sin demanded it from guilty, sinful man. It is God's demand upon fallen man. O, my reader,

think of it! Muse over this theme for a little while. Death will soon, very soon, trouble you. It will break in upon thy household joys; it will interrupt thy business; it will stay thy career of sin; it will usher thee into eternity; and as the tree falls so it will lie; as the wicked man dies so will he remain—yes, remain to all eternity! *Death will pass you out of time into eternity, and on to the judgment.* “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.” You will be there; you *must* be there; you *cannot* escape. It is not said you will stand before the “throne,” but before God. Every eye shall see the Judge, every ear will hear His voice. The great assize has come. The final judgment has arrived. The wickedness of man, for seven thousand years, has now to be accounted for. God will let nothing pass. Every deed, word, and thought, will be found entered in the books of works. The judgment will be *impartial* and *individual*. The book of life will be opened. O that “book of life,” telling of grace *now*; how it will remind the wicked *then* of abused grace, of a rejected Christ, of a neglected salvation, of warnings, beseechings, and entreaties, all spurned! Oh! my soul yearns over you, dear reader, while I think of all this—not a dream, not a fable, but a *reality*. God has written it down in His book. Read it for yourself. What is the result of this judgment? “And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire” (Rev. xx. 12-15).

God is writing many names in that book. Its pages are open, and there is a space for your name. There is a blank page for the names of the unsaved readers of *The Gospel Message*. God is waiting to be gracious. His Son has died, made atonement for the guilty on the cross. God's beloved Son bore the sins of all who believe. On the cross He laid the basis of peace, everlasting peace, in the presence of God. Now God is more than satisfied; yea, He is infinitely glorified in the death of His Son, for He raised Him up out of the dead, and seated Him, crowned and glorified, at His own right hand. What then? What is the result to all who believe? Why, *peace*. What the result to all who simply credit God's word—His written word about His Son? What, but *grace* and *glory*. Wilt thou, my reader, come to Jesus? He wants not thy love, nor thy faith, He wants thyself. The Saviour came to save the sinner. He came to show love, not to get it. He gave Himself for sinners, and that before ever He asks thee. Do not be troubled about the act of coming to Christ; the Holy Ghost will take care of *that*. Fix your thoughts, not upon your coming, or upon your sins, or into your heart, but upon Jesus Christ, the gift of God to a sinful world (John iii. 16).

THREE THIEVES.

JUDAS was "a thief," and had the bag, and bare that which was put therein. And with Jesus they crucified "two thieves," the one on His right hand and the other on His left. "And they that were crucified with Him *reviled* Him." Here are three characters, all thieves—one betrayer of the Holy One, and two revilers of Him. Yet one of these three is the very *first* person to enter Paradise with Jesus, borne home upon the Shepherd's shoulders, as it were, to rejoice, not only in his own rescue, but in the delight of Christ, who *came* to seek and save the lost, and who rejoices when He does it!

Is it *Judas*? See, he is not without conscience as to his sin. He knows himself a sinner, and is struck with *remorse* as he sees the result of what he has done. More than that, he makes what *restitution* he can, bringing back his ill-gotten gain. More still, he *confesses* his sin; and even more, he justifies the character of Him whose blood he has betrayed; for he says, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the *innocent* blood" (Mat. xxvii. 4). But he has nothing to say to Jesus; he goes out, hangs himself, and goes "to his own place"—to hell!

Another of the thieves, who not only has spoken no good of Jesus, but has been mocking and reviling Him, has now repented of His wickedness. With him it is not merely remorse, as Judas, who "repented *himself*"; this man's repentance is "towards God." He says to his fellow, "Dost not thou fear *God*?" Not, dost not thou fear *death* or *judgment*? He is in the presence of God about himself, and judges himself. Of his own punishment he says, "We indeed justly;" of Jesus he says, "This Man hath done nothing amiss." But Judas also condemned himself, and justified Jesus; does this man do no more than that? *He does*. He takes God's side against himself; and in the one by his side, in shame and agony, he discerns Him who is both Lord and King. As to himself, true *repentance* is there; as to Jesus, *faith* lifts the veil that shrouds the dying victim's glory, and he says, "*Lord*, remember me when Thou comest in Thy *kingdom*." Judas went away; this penitent sinner casts himself *upon* Jesus, and will fain be at His side for ever. And what an answer he gets! Judas got only mockery; he gets only mercy. "What is that to us? See

thou to that!" say his tempters and accomplices. But what will Jesus say to the man who was just now taunting Him? Remember you? You shall be "*with Me*"! *When* I come? You shall be with Me "*to-day*"! In My *kingdom*! You shall go with Me to "*Paradise*"! To-day, to-day with Me, with Me in Paradise—" *Verily* I say unto thee." What words of grace! But how *could* the Saviour take the sinner thus to Paradise? Is that a place for people too bad for earth? There is but one answer. *He* had come unto the "same condemnation;" He had a *right* to take him into the same Paradise. He could, and He would, and He did, and He *delighted* to do it!

Does my reader say, How could the man *help* turning to Jesus, believing in Jesus, confessing Jesus; so near eternity, and so near the Saviour? Look at that third cross. There hangs a man just as near to eternity, and to Jesus, as this saved sinner. They have been together since the third hour of the day; together in the darkness from the sixth to the ninth hour; yet ere the shades of evening have thrown their pall over this scene of shame and sin, one has gone to Paradise *with Jesus*, the other has gone to hell *without Him*!

And I tell you, dear reader, in the name of Him who died to save the lost, that *you* will be for ever, and ever, and ever, in the company of two of these persons. With *Judas* who *sold* his Friend, or with *Jesus* who *died* for His enemies. With the thief that reviled Him to the last, or with the one who was plucked as a brand from the burning, whose heart turned to Jesus, whose lips confessed Him, and who cast himself, not in vain, upon His grace.

Do you say you know you are a sinner? Judas did that, but it did not save him. And you do the best you can to make restitution, and *confess* your sin, and know and tell the truth about Jesus? Judas did all that, but it all availed him nothing. Have you not only learnt *about* Him, but come *to* Him by faith, confessing your sin *to Him*? That the "wrath of a sin-hating God" is but "the due reward" of your deeds? And have you owned, and accepted for yourself that wondrous "grace of God that *bringeth* salvation," having first *given* such a Saviour as the Lord Jesus for just such guilty and lost ones as yourself? Do not, I entreat you, put off this great matter. God *will* have Jesus honoured, and it is right He

should. Honour Him as Saviour now, and you will find that He still, and always gives exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think ; as He in grace exceeded *every way* what this poor penitent asked or thought. Nothing is more blessed than having thus to do with Him in *grace*, while He bestows the great salvation, the due reward of *His* work ; nothing so terrible as to meet Him in judgment presently, when He will give to each child of disobedience the due reward of *His own* works (Rom. ii. 3-5).

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THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION.

NOTES OF A GOSPEL ADDRESS.

NO. V.—ITS SPHERE.

LASTLY, let us look at the sphere where this glorious ministry is displayed.

I have before said that God is beseeching you to be reconciled to Himself. You may say, How do I know that He is beseeching *me*? Because He is beseeching every creature under heaven. And now let me tell you this, God will soon turn the tables, when you will be beseeching God, and God won't hear you! His proffered mercies extend to all His creatures : to every man, woman, and child in the world. Do you doubt whether this ministry applies to you? Do you talk about application and appropriation? If you are part of the world ; if you are one of the units which go to make up the whole, then this ministry applies to you, and before you can exclude yourself on that ground, you must make yourself not to be a part of the world.

This, then, is briefly a sketch of the *source, foundation, features,* and *sphere* of this "ministry of reconciliation." Tell me, my beloved hearers, What more do you want? I stand here in God's behalf. I say, what more do you want? I say, will you still continue to go on from this time in enmity? Will you still go on in your carelessness? Cease, my beloved friends, to be thus heedless about your soul's eternal welfare! We beseech you to be reconciled to God. As ambassadors for God, we beseech you to look at the heart of God, and see love there. Look at the source of this ministry. See the foundation on which it is based—even the cross of our Lord

Jesus Christ. Look at its charming features—God is even beseeching you to be reconciled to Himself. And now see the sphere—even every creature under heaven. “God commandeth all men everywhere to repent.”

Tell me, my beloved friends, will you dare to turn a deaf ear to it? God is beseeching! If you had to come and beseech God, you might shrink from it—you might shun it—but God is beseeching *you*. God, with open arms, in the person of His son, on the basis of the cross,—I say this upon the authority of the word—that with open arms He is standing here and beseeching you to be saved. There is not a single passage in the blessed word of God where you can say that you are excluded from this invitation, because it is pouring its beams over the whole world. There is not one, let them be where they may, or who they may, that has heard the sound of the Gospel, that need be lost; for if there was one, this Gospel would not be true. But mark this, this ministry will soon close. Mark this, I repeat it, this ministry will soon close. And this is a tremendously solemn thing for you who are not saved. The ambassadors will soon all be called home. Of this fact I am fully persuaded. The time is *short*. The Lord Jesus will *soon* come to receive us unto Himself. And then the refusers, the rejectors, those who have turned upon the heel and walked away, will have the tables turned upon them. And so it says in Proverbs i. 24, “Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. I also will laugh at your calamity: I will mock when your fear cometh.” And do you ask why? Because, when He called, you turned away.

I beseech you once more. I beseech you to come and be reconciled to God, that peace and joy may fill your soul. The whole question of sin has been met. There is no hindrance on the part of God: therefore we may say, come *now*. We want you to come *now*. Come now! there is everything for us: God is for us, Christ is for us, and everything in Christ. But on the other hand, hell and Satan are against us. May the Lord, by the power of His Spirit, bow your hearts to the Lord Jesus Christ! May He bless your souls, and fill your hearts with His blessed salvation! Amen.

"A NOBLER SACRIFICE."

THEY tell us strange stories about ancient Rome. Listen to this tale. Many years ago, on a bright sunny day, the people were buying, and selling, and making merry in the market place of that old town. It was a gay scene, soon to be overcast by a dark cloud. Suddenly, with a fearful crash, the earth opened, leaving a frightful gulf. The terrified women screamed, the children clung to their mothers, while, on the men's dark faces rose a gloom of horror and despair. They gazed at each other with consternation. What had come upon them? What had they done to bring down thus the anger of the gods? Silently they dispersed and sought the augurs, who were the wisest men they knew of. The augurs consulted their signs, and waited to know the will of the gods. At last the answer came. The gods would never be appeased till the noblest thing in Rome was delivered to them, and sacrificed to the dread gulf. Ah! what was the best thing? Some said gold; the mother said it was her lovely child, yet hugged it closer to her bosom; the scholar said his books; the soldier his sword—yet all in vain; the dark gulf still yawned in the market place, and men held their breath as they passed. Dread and gloom cast its shade over the city; but the gods must be appeased, and at last it seemed as if one had found the answer. There rode through the moving crowd a man—young and noble—right onward to the market place he came, and turned neither to the right hand nor to the left, till he stood by the brink of the gulf. Then he turned and said, "Citizens, the best thing in Rome is self-sacrifice." They looked, but he was gone! One leap and the dread gulf closed over him for ever.

Do you think it very noble? Do you think it very good? Ah! I can tell you of a "better sacrifice;" of One who left the bright heavens above to come and die (not a noble, honoured death) a *cruel, shameful* death—who was nailed to the awful cross of Calvary, to close the wide, wide gulf between God and the sinner. Have you believed in this glorious sacrifice? Have you trusted in Jesus? if not, to *you* there is still a deep, dark gulf between your soul and God, and you are trembling on the brink.

HOW TO BE SAVED.

“BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

“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.”

“To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth on Him shall receive remission of sins.”

HOW MAY I KNOW I AM SAVED?

I KNOW I am saved from a simple and careful reading of Acts xiii. 38, 39—“Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. And by Him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”

Thank God, I have no confidence in the flesh, it has deceived me so often; but I can trust the testimony of the Holy Spirit, and He assures me I am complete in Christ; further, that I am washed, sanctified, and justified!

CHRIST DELIVERED ME WHEN
BOUND.

Into the darksome grave
“The life” went down to save
Us from death’s reign;

The mighty work is done,
 God raised up His Son;
 And we with Him are one,
 And live again.

Heart-hymns in praises be
 Sung by Thy church to Thee,
 Thou Christ of God;
 When dead in sins we were,
 Press'd down in deep despair,
 Thou in the flesh didst bear
 Our sin's dread load.

From heaven we trace Thy course,
 Love's river from its source,
 Down to this earth;
 Our nature Thou did'st take,
 Atonement full to make;
 Our sorrows did'st partake
 Even from Thy birth.

TO YOUNG CONVERTS—No. II.

OUR BLESSINGS.

IS there a cloud or shadow over your heart? Is there a stain or soil upon your conscience? Are you in perfect peace before God? "Oh," you say, "I have my doubts and fears and clouds at times, and I cannot just say my conscience is without spot; and as to perfect peace with God, well, at times I enjoy His peace and presence, but not always." Is it so? my dear young fellow-believer. Ah; I fear the cause of your unhappiness is simply this, that you have not fully received God's written statements. Through the Lord's rich mercy you may read in plain English His thoughts about all who believe

in Christ and rest on His finished work ; and I would further say, that the character of your walk, the distinctness of your path, and your devotedness of heart, will be in proportion as the written thoughts of God are simply believed.

Now, read with me verses 3-7 of Ephesians i. : “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ,” ect.

Who is the blesser? God and Father. “God is *light*” and “God is *love* ;” thus I am blessed by God according to His nature—light and love ; but that is not all, for in blessing me—yes, even me, God takes the position of Father, thus putting me down before Him in holy, loving, happy relationship—that of a child. And then, He is “the God and Father of *our* Lord Jesus Christ.” The God of *my* Lord Jesus Christ ! How wondrously blessed to me ! As the saved of the Lord, I can rejoice in God who gave Jesus in love, and accepted Him on high in righteousness. “My God ! my God ! why hast Thou forsaken me ?” This was the dealing of God on account of my sin ; but then, as risen from the dead—the work of atonement accomplished, and peace brought to me as the fruit of Christ’s cross—the Blessed One reveals the Father to His brethren, as He said to Mary of Magdala, “I ascend unto my Father and your Father ; and to my God, and your God” (John xx. 17, compare with Psalm xxii. 22). *God* forsook Him on the cross (Psalm xx. 1). He was raised by the glory of the *Father* (Romans, vi. 4).

“Who *hath* blessed us.” Is there any doubt here? none. Is Thy blessing conditional upon happy feelings or good behaviour? Oh, no ; before ever He expects right feelings from you, or good behaviour, He hath blessed you to the full ; just you read the words again, they are the very words of God—“*hath* blessed us.” It is really so, and all is sure and certain, for God hath done it, and when He works, He does so according to the honour of His own great name. “*All* blessings ;” muse for a few moments over that little word “all.” Oh, how full the blessing ; *all* blessings for the heart, *all* blessings for the mind ; *all* blessings for the conscience ; *all* blessings for my walk and life—nothing kept back, absolutely *nothing* ! Precious Lord, how rich Thou art in the perfectness of Thy grace ! Then the character of your blessing is “spiritual,”

not temporal prosperity or wordly advancement. Surely you would not seek to "get on" in the scene of Christ's murder and rejection—would you? Are you striving to get on in the world? ah; that may explain why the shadow rests on the heart, and the stain upon the conscience. 'Moreover, the "heavenly places" is the sphere of our blessings, and Christ Himself their measure and security.

What exquisite grace shines out in all this! Again, I repeat, God has penned those precious verses for us; written them down in His word so plainly, that their meaning cannot possibly be mistaken. What a body of divinity is comprised in this one verse we have commented on—

The Blessor, - - - - -	God and Father.
The Fulness of the Blessing, - -	All Blessings.
The Character of the Blessing, -	Spiritual.
Their Sphere, - - - - -	Heavenly Places.
Their Measure and Security, - -	Christ.

May the Lord bless you, dear young saints, with a deepening knowledge of Christ!

SAVED AT LAST.

TO magnify the grace of our God and persuade some light-hearted, thoughtless lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, to consider their ways and turn to the Lord, are the objects in relating this touching narrative.

John M—— from early years was occupied as a billiard-marker in a saloon in the city; consequently the character of society he mingled with there only ministered to his evil heart, leading his feet into many a crooked path. Wayward and self-willed from childhood, he contracted an early marriage, against the entreaties of those who loved him, with a woman more obdurate than himself—a union which brought sorrow and misery, leading further off from the Lord, whose long-suffering is salvation, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But he was destined soon to leave the glare and excitement of the billiard-table for the quiet ward of an hospital, and ultimately to be removed to his

mother's house, where he was cut off by rapid decline. I say his mother's house, for although only his step-mother, she worthily and faithfully filled a mother's place. From his earliest years till death he was the subject of her prayers, for being herself a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus, she craved the like grace for him. Often have we kneeled together, and asked the Lord to save him and his sailor brother far away in a foreign clime—confident, by the blessed words of Jesus—"I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. xviii. 19).

Praying one, take courage. Twenty-nine long years that prayer ascended up to the Father, acceptable by Jesus Christ; but though delayed, like the answer to Daniel's petition, the answer came at last—a glorious reward, indeed, to long tried faith. It happened thus:—Once I visited John in the hospital, but as yet his conscience was unawakened; he was spiritually dead. It is the Spirit that quickeneth; in His own time He unbound the captive and loosed the silent tongue. He became worse, and was removed to where the parents' and sister's love could better alleviate his pain, and minister the words of eternal life as they had opportunity. One cold November night in 1872, I knocked at the door; it was opened by the mother, who whispered that John was there very ill. I did not care to go in, lest I should disturb the poor sufferer, but yielding to her entreaties, I entered. Ah! there he lay, bolstered up on a couch, death's pale signet stamped on his brow. The glassy eye and the pallid lip indicated the rapid ebb of life. Consumption was doing its deadly work, he was firmly in the devil's grip, firmer far than when he grasped a clay pipe, vainly endeavouring to smoke in spite of the straining cough which left him weak as an infant after each convulsive fit. He recognised me, but only with a look which signified he welcomed me, not because of the message he knew I carried. Never before did I so realize the utter powerlessness of the creature, on the threshold of eternity, and the excellency of the power to be of God alone. Others were by his side, and at the mother's request, we all knelt; and I prayed God, for Jesus' sake, to reveal Himself to the rebellious, dying one, even at the

eleventh hour. We rose with the assurance that the "mighty to save" would save.

Slowly passed the night, the poor sufferer becoming quiet, and the devoted ones, wearied with their vigils, were about to retire to rest, the mother saying, "We will not pray with John to-night; but, O Lord, reveal thyself with power to him;" when the dying man cried, rising from bed, "O mother, pray for me; oh, sister, pray for me!" Heedless of kindly remonstrance, he arose, and kneeling down, his sister by his side, pleaded aloud for forgiveness, confessing his sin and folly, and crying for mercy for Jesus' sake. Blessed be God, the true light had shone, the darkness of nature fled before it like the pall of night before the sun's resplendent beams. He arose a new creation, exclaiming "I see it all so plain." Blessed Father! O glorious change! the one Sacrifice seen, the Spirit's cry bestowed; the rebel in his right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus. His tongue was loosed, and the hymns in childhood, learned on his mother's knee, flashed back on his memory, "I lay my sins on Jesus," "There is a fountain," and "Immanuel's Land," expressed the happy state of his soul. An almost supernatural energy seemed his, as unweariedly he spoke through the midnight hours. The happy parent could scarce credit the wonderful answer to her heart's desire; yet again and again he assured her, "I'm all right now." "You don't doubt Christ, John?" she asked. "Oh no! I'm saved—He has done it all." As the grey dawn crept through the window, he fell into a sweet slumber, from which, it may be said, he scarcely awoke. As the morning advanced, he opened his eyes, and she, eager to know if he still rejoiced, said, "Are you happy, John?" Casting on her a half-grieved, half-surprised look, he replied, "Oh, mother, wha couldna be happy going to such a kingdom!" A few minutes after, as she moved toward the door, a faint "Mother!" escaped his lips, then the breathing gradually ceased—the silver cord was loosed; his ransomed spirit passed away to be with Christ—for ever.

Suppose, dear reader, this was your last noon on earth, and you to be called away without a moment's warning, where would your soul appear? In glory?—righteous through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ; or in the

depths of hell, because you earned sin's wages and despised God's proffered grace? Repent, and believe the Gospel of God concerning His Son Jesus Christ—the Saviour. Seek not rest or pleasure here; sin is all around and within; judgment rests upon all out of Christ. There is a portion for man under the sun, but if a man live many years and rejoice in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness, for *they shall be many*. The end of these things is death, the second death, the lake of fire. Ah! sinner, the grave is not thy goal; judgment awaiteth thee, and that by the very One who is set forth a propitiation *now* by faith in his blood. Believe then, *now*, on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

The friends of John M — could scarce realise that he was dead, but they had the consolation of knowing that he was asleep through Jesus. This brought resignation to the Father's will. His sister sat as one amazed, wondering why he had not been spared longer to testify to the grace given him, when her eyes fell upon a page of a Bible she had almost unconsciously opened, when, like a message from heaven, these words appeared (Mark vii. 37), as a sweet answer to the question of her heart, and was beyond measure astonished, saying, "He hath done all things well; he maketh both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak."

T. R. D.

ETERNITY.

AGES will have rolled on and on—ages of suffering to the wicked, but eternity is never shortened. Thousands of years and millions of ages will leave the wicked in "the lake of fire" still suffering everlasting punishment, and bearing God's eternal displeasure. Oh eternity! eternity! eternity! My reader, be warned in time; a moment hence, and you may be speeding on and through those endless days which know no shortening. Jesus bore sin's punishment for all who believe. The precious blood of Christ blots out sin from before the sight of God. Will eternal misery or eternal blessedness be yours? *Which?*

A FLIGHT IN THE LIGHT, AND A LEAP IN THE DARK.

HAS infidelity ever exhibited a solitary example of that high and heavenly consolation that filled the soul of that *cloud of witnesses who died in faith, with Christ in them the hope of glory*? History has not one single instance of the death-bed of an infidel passing from time to eternity with expressions of peace. *God is not mocked*, is not to be contradicted in His Word. "There is no peace for the wicked," and it must be so. They boast to be in darkness: they go, as Hobbes said, "*to take a leap in the dark*;" that means, they die as a fool. Voltaire reviled his companions while he was approaching the bar of God! Payne hoped to get comfort in death from his *Age of Reason*, and instead of crying, "Reason, help me," he cried "Jesus Christ, help me!" The Earl of Rochester, a scholar and a blasphemer, as deep in vice as in infidelity, gives a solemn warning to his friends, and says, "I warn you never to make a mock of sin, or to contemn the ever blessed Redeemer, through whose merits alone, I, one of the greatest sinners, do yet hope for mercy and forgiveness."

But with regard to Christians, it is a most impressive fact that such a thing has never been known, as any one being sorry, in the hour of death, that he had believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. Professors, it is true, are not unfrequently unhappy when they come to die, not because they professed Christianity, but because they see reason to fear they have not been real Christians. But to believers, their departure is *a flight in the light*: it is going to be *for ever with the Lord*: it is the sight of glory: the transition from conflict to peace, from death to life. Finley, in act of departing, used such language as this: "A Christian's death is the best part of his existence? Lord Jesus, into thy hands I commit my spirit! Blessed be Thy Name, eternal rest is at hand!" Reader, what do you choose? To have a leap in the dark? "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Do you desire to have a flight in the light with God? "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

DEATH BEHIND—GLORY BEFORE.

“DEATH is behind me, judgment is behind me, glory is before me,” was the triumphant assertion of one of the happiest old saints I ever knew—

“Death and judgment are behind me,
 Grace and glory are before;
 All the billows, rolled o’er Jesus,
 There exhausted all their power.”

Death is the wages of sin, which I, as a sinner, justly deserved, and after death the judgment, and after the great white throne the eternal lake of fire. But Jesus, Son of the living God, the only begotten in the bosom of the Father, the brightness of glory, and the express image of God—God over all, blessed for ever—becomes a man to take up the cause of sinners, to seek worshippers for the Father; lives in this world, from the cradle to the cross, a life of perfect, unerring, and spotless obedience, His delight to do the Father’s will; puts Himself voluntarily in grace under ruined man’s responsibility, goes to the accursed tree, and there, as the divine Substitute, dies, the just for the unjust: all the waves of God’s wrath against sin rolled over Him. He learns there (Himself all pure) what sin is, and feels it too, as He alone could, in the hiding of the face of His God. He is buried, and God raises Him from the dead—proof of His eternal satisfaction—and places Him in the glory

at His own right hand, and crowns Him with glory and honour. *He is mine; my sins* He bore, and they are gone for ever; and now *His place is mine* in righteousness on high. Grace and glory are before me.

“Christ died.”

“Yea, rather, is risen again.”

“At God’s right hand.”

“Who also maketh intercession.”

God is glorified; I am saved;

His glory is my salvation.

“I have a glorious Saviour, who died upon the tree; My sins he bore and suffered there the wrath of God for me.

And my salvation now is sure, since Christ the work has done;

For God declares in righteousness, He owes it to His Son.

Believe, and God’s salvation sure is free to every one:

In manifested righteousness He honours thus His Son.”

W. R. H.

STUMBLING-BLOCKS REMOVED—No. I.

MISS B— sought an interview with me. We spent an hour together. Poor thing! she never once smiled; but in calm, measured tones, slowly said, “I am damned; there is no mercy for me. God has forsaken me. Some time ago I might have been saved, but I would not. I resisted God and His Spirit. I have committed the unpardonable sin; God has cast me off; I am damned.” She was calm, and perfectly

self-possessed. There was no excitement in the way she said it. I slowly repeated the latter part of the 7th verse of 1 John, chap. i., "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from *all* sin," and briefly commented on the eternal efficacy of the blood of God's Son, and called her attention to the words *all* sin." Again she replied, "I have committed the unpardonable sin; there is no pardon for me." "Oh," I replied, "is that it? Pray, tell me (handing her my Bible), where I may learn from God's blessed book about sin which the blood of God's Son cannot blot out, or God cannot pardon." "Oh," she answered, "it's the sin against the Holy Ghost; you will see it in 12th chapter of Matthew." "Indeed; you are mistaken," I answered. "I read in that chapter of the '*blasphemy* against the Holy Ghost'; *that* is unpardonable, I admit, because the Lord says so. Every soul in Christendom has sinned against the Holy Ghost, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, *that* is a very different matter. Before that dreadful act of human depravity can be committed, you must find yourself in *same circumstances* as those detailed in Matt. xii. The Lord Jesus cured one who was brought to Him, demon possessed, and blind, and dumb. The cure was so perfect, the miracle so patent, that '*all* the people were amazed.' The self-righteous Pharisees would not have righteousness by John, nor grace by Christ, and so they steeled their hearts. Christ and grace they would not have, the miracle they could not deny."

They would not have righteousness.

They would not have grace.

They must have pure judgment.

They sealed their doom in the awful words, "This fellow doth not cast out devils (or rather '*demons*') but by Beelzebub, the prince of devils" (or "*demons*"). They ascribed to the power of Satan what was clearly effected by the power of the Holy Ghost. The age of miracles is over for the present, therefore you cannot have the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. The Lord Jesus is no longer on earth, therefore you cannot be chargeable with this most awful thing; not that our hearts are not equal to it. Alas! our desperately wicked hearts are fit for anything you like, or rather anything Satan likes.

But this solemn Scripture need not perplex any anxious, seeking soul. The words were not addressed to the multitude who owned the truth of the miracle, but to those who, in their hatred to Christ, sought to fasten it upon Beelzebub, the prince of devils.

The Colossians had the forgiveness of their sins (chap. i. 14)—so may you; the Ephesians had redemption and forgiveness (chap. i. 7)—so may you; some of the Corinthians were fornicators, idolators, adulterers, thieves, drunkards, &c. (1 Cor. vi. 9-11), but they got washed, sanctified, and justified—so may you.

O, my dear, unsaved friend, dismiss from your mind the foolish thought that there is unpardonable sin on this side of the grave. Would you deny the words of the living God, so clearly penned, so emphatically expressed in the volume of inspiration, "The blood of Jesus Christ"—What? "CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN."

May the Lord, in His own love and grace, remove this stumbling-block out of your way!

"THE LOVE OF THE TRUTH."

(2 THESS. i. 10.)

"THE fool hath said in his heart, no God," and "as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." "They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *and* they were in great fear, for God is in the generation of the righteous."

The thought of God is a restraint upon the self-will of the sinner, bent on satisfying the lust of his own corrupt heart. He says in his heart what he would fain believe to be the fact, "no God;" yet his guilty conscience makes him a coward, and the dread of the wrath of the God who is with the righteous takes hold upon him, and is to him an evident token of perdition.

"Who has hardened himself against Him and prospered?" There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked; they are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest.

Yet man would be ever seeking rest, and because his breast

is a chaos of all contradiction, and wearied with his own lusts, thinking that God is altogether such an one as himself—puts on a form of godliness, clothes himself with sackcloth in the midst of the misery his own sins have entailed upon him, in order to appease God and satisfy a condemning conscience, but all in vain, and worse than vain. Thus their way is their folly, yet their posterity approve their sayings.

Condemn self and justify God. This is the way of peace; and if this way be not trodden, the day is hastening on when, *speechless*, the soul will be condemned and cast into outer darkness, there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

Of the Gentiles it is written, that "even as they *did not like to retain God in their knowledge*, God gave them over to a reprobate mind" (Rom. i. 28). Of the Jews, who had the *form of knowledge* and the truth in the law, making his boast in the law, and through *breaking the law* dishonoured God, and by whom the name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles, it was commanded, "Make the heart of this people fat, make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and be healed."

But of professing Christians who have the *form of godliness*, and who *deny the power*, it is written that, "because they received not the *love of the truth*, that they might be saved, God shall send them a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but *had pleasure in unrighteousness*" (2 Thess. i).

Yes, sinner, whether Jew, Gentile, or professing Christian, to you be it known that, if loving unrighteousness, if holding the truth in unrighteousness, then the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all such, and the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. But in the meantime grace reigns, and unto eternal life through Him who sits at God's right hand. That grace is *towards all*, Jew or Gentile, religious or profane; it proclaims a full, free, present, and eternal salvation through the sacrifice once made on Calvary; and this

salvation is the portion of him who truly accepts it. Then this same grace teaches the one to whom it brings salvation, to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

W. R. H.

THE BRIGANDS AND THEIR ENGLISH CAPTIVE.

THE remembrance of an English victim who fell captive into the hands of a band of Italian brigands, some few years since, is still fresh in the memory of my readers.

A gentleman, whose name is Mr. Moens, was captured by the pitiless and murderous band of those lawless and powerful scelerats, who infested the Neapolitan kingdom before the stronger power of the present King Victor Emanuel had put down, with a strong hand, the band of assassins who, for centuries, were the terror not only of Italy, but of all Europe. Poor Mr. Moens, while he was amusing himself to his heart's delight in rambling about the charming neighbourhood of Naples, and quite unconcerned about the horrible tales of the brigands, past and present, was suddenly seized by some of them, with the object to set on him a price, and to keep him, or eventually to murder him if the ransom had not been paid. Happily for Mr. Moens, that his anxious relatives, appreciating his life more than the gold of this world, bowed to the cruel condition and paid the enormous price for the redemption of their friend, who accordingly was set free, and, from the bondage of the brigands' power, was translated into the arms of parental love. Reader, if you know what happened to your countryman in that foreign country, so fair, so sunny, so charming, but so dangerous *then*, because of such power of lawless men, without fear of human and divine law—Do you know that, born of a woman as you are, at your very conception, you were captured by the power of darkness, and are the slave of sin and death, and your immortal soul, yea, your spirit and body, the victim of Satan? You may enjoy this fair creation, so beautiful, yet so

sinful! You may be treading with delight the hills and valleys without thinking of the curse with which God has cursed it *for man's sake*. You may admire the wonderful display of human skill in beautifying the crust of this globe, doomed to destruction *when the earth and all the works that are therein shall be burned up* (2 Peter iii. 10). You may be a builder of cities, like Cain; you may be the possessor of herds and cattle, like Jabal; you may charm the inhabitants of this groaning creation, and change its sad sighs into merry laughing, with the sweet notes of the harp and organ, as the antediluvian Jubal; you may be a skilful explorer of God's works, and with your scientific researches acquire the name of a skilful *artificer* in *brass* and *iron*, as the famous Tubal-cain (Gen. iv. 16-22); you may be a giant of this earth, *a mighty man*, LIKE THOSE OF OLD, *a man of renown* (Gen. vi. 4). But you are the slave of the power of darkness, and this power will allow you to *live*, only to *lead* you to DIE, and from the first *death* to pass into the power of the SECOND DEATH, which is the *lake of fire* (Rev. xx. 14), *to be tormented day and night for ever and ever* (Rev. xx. 10).

Reader, believe my statement or not, yet my testimony is true, for it is not a cunningly devised fable, but it is God's own word which in grace and mercy reveals to you *now*, TO-DAY, that you are the unconscious, or conscious captive of the prince of the power of the air (the devil), the spirit that *now* worketh in you disobedience to your God, Creator, and Lord, and keeps you in the bonds of Adam's nature as a child of wrath! You may be conscious of your state as a lost sinner; you may feel so miserable as to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom. vii. 24). Yet your consciousness, your feelings, your experience of sin and death, cannot deliver you from the captivity of the law of sin which is in your members (Rom. vii. 23). A ransom has been put on your life; you, an immortal creature, are an eternal captive, either of the *second death*, or of CHRIST, who is eternal life! Like Moens, whose bravery in the cavern with the brigands, or his resignation to his doom; or his groans, or prayers to be set free, or his threatenings (acts of despair,) had no influence to hasten his deliverance, so it is with you, poor sinner; your groans, your prayers, your

promises to lead a better life, your moral and religious behaviour while you are in the power of darkness, have no virtue to deliver you one single moment sooner, "for it is by grace you are saved, through faith, and that not of yourself; it is the gift of God." It was not Moens' doing that saved him from the brigands' hands, but it was HE WHO PAID THE RANSOM that brought him out of the pit of his would-be assassins. Had not the ransom been paid? So it is with your eternal salvation, poor sinner; it is God who has the *ransom*; it is God who GIVES THE RANSOM; it is God who says, "Deliver him from going down to the pit, I HAVE FOUND A RANSOM!" (Job. xxxiii. 24). And what a *ransom*! It is His own well-beloved Son! It is the Lamb of God that gave Himself a *ransom* for all, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John iii). Yes, dear reader, your ransom is not an earthly relative, who redeemed Mr. Moens for a short period of days, because the ransom was corruptible, as silver and gold, which are perishing with the use; but your ransom is the PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST, which has power to *deliver you from the power of darkness and to translate you into the kingdom of the Son of His love*, and from the brink of the SECOND DEATH (*of the lake of fire*), take you up to Himself, *to become partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light*" (Col. i. 12-13). Dear reader, may you thank God for your deliverance through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. vii. 25).

GIOVANNI FERRERO.

GOSPEL FRAGMENTS.

I AM not told in the New Testament to love God or Jesus; as a sinner I have tried, but can't; what, then? why, God loved me in my sins and guilt (John iii. 16). I am not told in the New Testament to give my heart to Jesus; I tried often, but could not. When I discovered that God gave me Jesus in love, and accepted His work on the cross for my sins, then I gave *myself* to Jesus.

SOLEMN APPEALS—No. V.

THE SIMPLICITY OF FAITH.

DEATH, judgment, and the lake of fire; life, justification, and the paradise of God, are truths and realities of present and eternal importance. To be plain with you, my reader, if you die in your sins, judgment and the lake of fire will be your everlasting portion. I speak thus plainly, because the word of God settles that matter beyond dispute. After death the judgment; then, "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Are you afraid? Do you tremble at the thought of coming judgment, and of present danger? Would you escape the wrath to come? "Ah!" you say, "I have been struggling long enough, but I don't feel safe yet; I would be afraid to meet God now; besides I have been *trying* to believe—trying to come to Jesus, but somehow I can't manage it. Oh that I could only believe!" But believe what? I ask. Will you tell me that you *cannot* believe the testimony of God to His risen Son? Then I will fully own *that*, for you are "*dead* in trespasses and sins." But it is not you "*cannot* believe," but you *will* not believe! You are powerless for good, I know, but the blessed God commands you to repent and believe the Gospel. Will you? Will you believe men or the Lord Jesus Christ? It is altogether a question of your *will*. You dare not throw the responsibility of not believing on any but yourself; the truth is, God holds you responsible whether you will or not. What, then, is faith? Is

it what I feel or experience? is it simply assenting to what I am told? No, my beloved reader, it is more than that, and yet withall it is simplicity itself.

Faith is the confidence of a sinner in God. Faith is the looking to a Saviour—Jesus. It is the laying hold of Him as a refuge from the storm, as a covert from the tempest. It is not merely assenting to what God has written about His Son. But it is a personal appropriation of Christ, and His work by the sinner. O, how simple! Will you refuse this Christ of God? Can you—will you—reject God's blessed testimony to the person and work of His blessed Son? Is he not worthy of your heart's confidence? He is. He proved Himself worthy of your confidence—in death he did it. God has raised from the dead His beloved Son, and glorified Him *above*. Then I can confide in God, seeing He has acted so for His own glory and my salvation. Now, that is faith.

Solemnly do I tell you, that if you will not confide in the Man Christ Jesus, you will be damned. You must, you shall own the risen Man as Lord and Master; to do so in grace now is salvation, present and eternal. To refuse His claims will be everlasting misery. O, beloved reader, be warned! It may be too late to sound another note of danger *again*.

Faith is a very simple thing,
 Though little understood;
 It frees the soul from death's dread sting,
 By resting on the blood.

FAITH—NOT FEELINGS.

“WELL, Sir! I do believe every word you say, in fact I believe every word in the Bible, but I don't *feel* I'm saved, and I'm not going to say I'm saved until I'm sure I am saved.”

“Neither do I *feel* that I'm saved, and I have been saved for nearly five years and never yet *felt* that I was saved, and if you continue to wait until you *feel* saved, you will never be saved at all, for the word of God never says *feel saved*.”

“But, Sir! the Scriptures say we must be born again, and surely I must *feel* that great change come over me; you don't mean to say that I could be saved and still continue as I am, miserable, and afraid to meet God?”

“No I don't mean to say any such thing! for the moment you are saved there will be change enough, for you will be changed from being a child of Satan to a child of God; but Satan is deceiving you by getting you to wait until you *feel* a change, and all the while you are shutting your ears to the word of God, which brings the change, for we are saved by grace through faith (Eph. ii. 8), and faith cometh by *hearing*, and hearing by the *Word of God* (Rom. x. 17). You see if you could feel nice and happy just now, you would conclude you were saved because you *felt* it, and then to-morrow you might not feel happy, so you would have to come to the conclusion you were not saved then: thus you would make a Saviour of your feelings, and one day you would have a Saviour, and another day you would have none. Instead of *believing* the testimony which God has given of His Son, and *knowing* that you have passed from death unto life (1 John iii. 14), you are waiting for a change and remaining in misery. Now look here, my friend, suppose now that your husband is at sea and you are left with the little ones, that your stock of money runs out and you have no bread, and the children are hungry and nothing to give them; you are sitting over the fire miserable enough at such a state of things, and want a change, but your misery does not bring the change, no thoughts of yours fill the children's hungry stomachs, and put the glad smile where there are looks of sorrow. No! But you are startled by a loud knock at the door, and you open it, when

the postman puts a letter into your hand; you look at it, you know the writing—it's your husband's—you quickly break it open, and there is an order for some money. What effect has it on you? Do you sit down and brood over your misery, and wait for a change, thinking there never was such a poor creature in the world as you are? Never! You put on your things, and off to the post-office to secure the money, make your calls at the shops, and come back loaded with all you need, to the great joy of the children. What a change! How has it come about? Why, just through the letter; you read it, you believed it, the change came, your sorrow was gone, your heart was light, even before you got the order cashed—the letter did it all. Why, now, will you not listen to God's letter and be saved? You are a sinner, but God's letter says, 'Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners' (1 Timothy i. 15). And Jesus says Himself, 'He that *heareth* My word and *believeth* on Him that sent me *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (judgment), but *is* passed from death unto life' (John v. 24). Moreover the letter says, 'These things have I written unto you that *believe* on the name of the Son of God, that ye may *know*—not *feel*, but *know*—that ye have eternal life' (1 John v. 13). You see, you did not *feel* the money, it was in the post-office, and you could not feel it; but the letter said it was there, and there for you; you believed it, and that made you happy; but you were happy because you *knew* it was yours—the money was not yours because you felt happy. Well, you did not feel Christ die for your sins, neither did I; but I *know* He died for my sins, and the same letter which tells me He died for me, tells me I'm saved. I believe God's blessed letter, and I feel very happy because I *know* I'm saved."

Reader! are you like the woman, putting feelings in the place of faith? Perhaps you too say you believe all the Bible, but can't feel you are saved. Oh don't be occupied any longer with these things, look away from yourself to Jesus. God has set Him on the throne in heaven, the proof that the work is finished to the satisfaction of God; and if God is satisfied, why should you not? Salvation is to him that worketh not, but *believeth*. "He that *believeth* on the Son *hath* everlasting life" (John iii. 36). Before you lay down this paper believe God's

letter which He in His love has sent to you, declaring what has been done by Jesus Christ for sinners; and the moment you take God at His word, you are saved—it is not feelings but faith. “By grace are ye saved through faith” (Eph. ii. 8).
 W. E.

THE DYING SAILOR.

(Extract from a Letter.)

I HAVE just left a dying sailor nearing the haven. Last week I called, and he said in reply to the question, “What do you think of Christ?” “Oh! He suffered a good deal”; and “what do you think of yourself?” “Well! I have also followed my church, and done the thing that’s right,” &c. To-day he told a different tale altogether. I found him very much weaker, and said, “The poor clay tenement is giving way fast”; and he looked up and said, “Never mind, I’m going *there*.” I said, “Who’s *there* in the glory?” “Jesus is,” he said. And I said, “What has He done?” “He died for me.” “Because you were a good fellow?” I asked. “No; because I was a sinner.”

“EVERY ONE, ANY MAN, WHOSOEVER.”

“Look unto me and be ye *saved*.”

“Come unto me, hear, and your soul shall *live*.”

“Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive *remission of sins*.”

SALVATION, life, and forgiveness of sins—the free gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, to *whosoever* looketh, cometh to, hears and believes in Him. This is God’s way. Man’s way is to try, strive, work, feel, pray, experience, and hope. The Lord said unto Moses, “Make thee a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole; and it *shall come to pass* that *every one* that is bitten, when he *looketh* upon it *shall live*. And Moses made a serpent of brass and put it upon a pole, and *it came to pass* that if a serpent had bitten *any man*, when he *beheld* the serpent of brass, *he lived*.” Jesus said, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness; even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that *whosoever believeth* in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” “Every one,” “any man,” and “whosoever,”

"looketh," "believeth," "liveth," simple words, but the words of the living God who cannot lie, to every bitten one, to every soul who has felt the rankling wound—the bite of the old serpent—the plague of his own heart; *to you* is the word of this salvation sent. The serpent of brass, the picture of the thing that had bitten them, was God's remedy for the people in Numbers ~~xxi~~.

The lifted up Son of Man, He who knew no sin, was made sin on the cross; God made His soul an offering for sin, and there on that cross He bore the sins of those who believe in Him; and there on that cross God, too, condemned sin in the flesh. This is God's remedy for to-day. And now if the eye of faith rests on Him, the ear *listens* to the sacred accents of grace, and the soul *believes* God is as good as His word, receives what He says about Jesus as true, it *has* everlasting life—"shall not come into judgment, but *is* passed from death unto life."

Mark, dear reader, God's order—"heareth," "believeth," "hath," "shall not," "is"—this blessed golden chain of five precious links, which reaches to the sinner in the lowest depths of his degradation and woe, and has the power to lift him into a region of peace, and light, and eternal bliss.

The children of Israel asked Moses to pray for them, but God commanded them to *look* and live.

Two men stand side by side—the one a believer, the other unsaved but *bitten*. "What is God's way to be saved?" said one. "Pray to God and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," was the reply. "Reverse it and you have it," said the believer. "Thank God for that," said the bitten one, "then I'm saved. I felt that word go down deep into my soul."

W. R. H.

A CONTRAST.

Law shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

Grace shewing mercy unto them that hate me and despise my commandments.

Shall we then continue in sin that grace may abound? "God *forbid*"—Romans vi. 2.

YESTERDAY, TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER.

“Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace (favour) wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God”—Rom. v. 1-2.

THIS peace is a state or condition into which the sinner is introduced when he believes in Jesus, not something within his breast which may pass away again. The sun at noon has not gone down when I cease to feel its rays, though clouds obscure it from my sight. This peace is rather the condition of favour with the blessed God, the result of the *knowledge* and the *reception* by faith of the *fact* that my iniquities are forgiven; my sin covered, and that the Lord will not impute iniquity, *because* my Saviour—my Substitute—has Himself been delivered for my offences, and raised again for my justification. Therefore, I stand *now*, as a *believer*, *henceforth* and *for ever* in the positive favour of God.

All the claims of His throne have been met by the infinite and eternal value of the “one offering.” “Justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne, mercy and truth go before His face,” as heralds, to announce Him in His goings forth. Through grace, I, as a lost sinner, have heard the glad tidings of mercy and truth, have believed them and know them; therefore I am blessed, and walk in His favour, in the light of His countenance. Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

My *past* history as a sinner, as a responsible child of Adam, has been cancelled by the blood. “This month shall be to you the beginning of months” (Exodus xii.). My *present* is the light of His countenance.

My *yesterday* is the cross, my *to-day* the favour of God, my *to-morrow* glory.

W. R. H.

GOSPEL FRAGMENTS.

The sinner is *ready* to perish; God is *ready* to pardon.

It is Christ and *not* self however advanced, that forms our meetness for heaven.

You'll lose one thing if you come to Christ—you'll lose your sins.

There is less sand in your glass than there was last night.

THE FATHER SENT THE SON.

The Father sent the Son
 A ruined world to save ;
 Man meted to the Sinless One
 The cross ; the grave :
 Blest Substitutue from God,
 Wrath's awful cup he drained ;
 Laid down His life, and e'en the tomb's
 Reproach sustained.

Earth shuddered as He died—
 God's well beloved Son :
 The darkness sought His woes to hide :
 His work is DONE.
 He lives! to die no more:
 Joy dwells upon His brow ;
 His agonies untold are o'er ;
 He triumphs now !

The new and living Way
 Stands open now to heaven ;
 Thence, where the blood is seen alway,
 God's Gift is given,
 The river of His grace,
 Through righteousness supplied,
 Is flowing o'er the barren place
 Where Jesus died !

The Lord shall come again ;
 The conqueror must reign !
 No tongue but shall confess Him then,
 The lamb once slain :
 JESUS is worthy *now*
 All homage to receive,
 O! Sinner to the Saviour bow,
 The Truth believe !

STUMBLING-BLOCKS REMOVED—No. 2.

“ I AM working out my own salvation.” This is a common remark indeed, and I have nothing to object to it. The apostle does say, “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His own good pleasure*” (Phil. ii. 12, 13). But I strongly insist upon the fact that sinners are *not* told to work out their salvation. Can I save myself from hell? Can I recover myself out of the pit of moral corruption in which I am? Can I quench the flames of the lake of fire? Nay, that were impossible. God says, “Deliver him from going down to the pit, *I have found a ransom.*” Yes, blessed for ever be His name! He has found a ransom, even in His well-beloved Son. From first to last it is God’s salvation: “I, even I, am the Lord; and beside Me there is no Saviour.”

“What, then,” some anxious one may say, “does the verse mean?” My answer is simply this; it means exactly what it says. But then it is not addressed to *you*. It is an exhortation to the “saints in Christ Jesus,” as the first chapter and first verse clearly show. Are you one? Are you saved from wrath to come? Are you an heir of God—a joint-heir with Christ? Because if you are, it’s an exhortation to you to work out your

own deliverance from the dangers and difficulties attending the path of the saint;—God being looked to both for “will” and “power.” Thus the word “salvation” is used in various ways in Scripture—

1. As a present and progressive work in Phil. ii. 12.
2. As a present and complete thing in Eph. ii. 5.
3. As a future thing referring to the body in Romans xiii. 11.

Need this stumbling-block, then, stand in your way any longer? Do not, I beseech you, occupy yourself with truths which have no application to you. God brings to you His salvation. He is entreating you to accept it without money and without price. You have no right to children’s bread, or in other words you have nothing whatever to do with the duties and responsibilities of the child of God. You cannot work yourself into being a saint of God; neither can you work out the salvation of your immortal soul. Work as directed by God’s word *after* you are saved; but now the work of God for you is, “That ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.” God grant it for His name’s sake!

LIBERTY TO THE CAPTIVES.

IN the ways of God with Israel we have many sweet fore-shadowings of the “good things to come,” when the Day-spring from on high, Immanuel, God with us, should come upon the scene, the Bearer of blessings a thousandfold, and the Dispenser of them far and near. . “Liberty to the captives” is prominent among them.

In Egypt's land, and under Pharaoh's sway, see the band of Israelites, their lives made bitter with hard bondage—the task-masters set over them to afflict them with their burdens—all their service with rigour—the Egyptian treasure-cities claiming the fruit of their toil—an afflicted, sorrowing people (Exod. i. 9-14). Touching picture of the reader's state, if yet an unbeliever. Led captive by the devil at his will; sold under sin and the servant of it; brought even into captivity to the law of sin; a wretched man passing on in the way of transgressors, which is hard; and, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the world's Pharaoh (Prov. xiii., Rom. vii., John viii., Eph. ii., 2 Tim. ii.).

But a bright day dawns upon Israel's captive host. The message goes forth from the throne of Jehovah to Egypt's proud, exacting monarch, "Let my people go" (Exod. vii. 16); and, "when He makes bare His arm, who shall His work withstand?" The chain must be broken; the burdens must cease; the heavy heart of the toil-worn captive must be lightened; the cry of distress must give place to the song of praise, and the oppressed one find his happy home in the land flowing with milk and honey. Liberty comes for the captives, and the Red Sea rolls between them and the brick-kilns of Egypt, while their ruthless foe and his mighty host find their place in the depths of the sea. Happy Israel! "Well may they sing, with triumph sing, their great Redeemer's praise." So may the reader, though still in the slavehold of Satan, sin, and self, if he but accept the precious freedom held out by God's own hand of love, of which this is a type. Liberty to the captives is sounded forth now, as then, and "the soul that hears shall live."

The same sweet story meets us a little further on in Israel's history (Leviticus xxv.). There we find the trumpet blast of liberty throughout all the land in the joyful year of jubilee; and the poor wanderer from his own possession and his home, once more returns to share the fruits of the land and the joys of the family circle to which, for many years, he had been a stranger. The levelling hand of poverty had crossed his path, and his belongings were parted with; or, if poorer still, he has himself been sold, and now he toils to another.

But for this captive too there dawns a morning bright ; the trumpet call is heard throughout the land :—

Return, return, ye captives,
Return unto your home ;
The silver trumpet's sounding—
“The jubilee is come.”

The bondsman is free ! and comes forth as a bird from the cage of its captivity, and, as the ransomed one, he returns with songs and joy upon his head ; he has obtained joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing have fled away.

A lovely picture this of the “good things to come,” with the Anointed of Jehovah—the mighty Liberator—the stronger than the strong man, who came to preach the Gospel to the poor, liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound (Isa. lxi. 1). As of old He had heard their cry ; so now when, manifest in flesh, there breaks upon His ear from a groaning world (but more particularly Israel) the prisoner's groan, He is “moved with compassion,” and life, light, and liberty, go forth from Him as the sun's meridian beams. A day of visitation it was ; though, alas ! many knew it not, and abode in darkness : did not come to Him that they might have life, and perished in their sins.

But faith hears the welcome jubilee note, while victory marks the deliverer's path. Heaven's light streams in the darkness, life reaches the dead, the slave is liberated, and the binder bound by a stronger than he ! (Comp. Matt. xii. 29, and Luke xiii. 16).

The chains of man, his victim,
Were loosened by Christ's hand ;
No evils that afflict him
Before Thy power could stand.

And this Blessed One passes on thereafter to effect further deliverance, even to destroy him that had the power of death, and *deliver* them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage (Heb. ii. 14, 15) ; to abolish death (2 Tim. i. 10) ; and rise again, leading captivity captive (Eph. iv. 8) ; bearing with Him the keys of death and hades (Rev. i. 18). And thus, on resurrection ground, the key-note of another trumpet call, wide as the world, is struck. A band of ambassadors, who are to give no uncertain sound, have the tidings committed to

them for every creature (Mark xvi. 15), the glad tidings of the atoning Lamb of God's completed work—He who gave the commission meantime ascending to the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens, and sending forth the Holy Ghost, the divine, yet unseen agent of it all (1 Pet. i. 12).

For 1800 years this blessed Gospel trumpet has been sounded, and still, through the long-suffering of God, is continued. Tens of thousands have heard its joyous notes, and escaped as the bird out of the snare of the fowler, and now have it as their happy privilege to stand fast in the *liberty* wherewith Christ has made them free (Gal. v. 1). Still His watchmen call upon the captive hosts lying in wickedness (1 John v. 19). "When He bloweth a trumpet, hear ye (Isaiah xviii. 3); and be not as the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of the charmers, charming never so wisely" (Psalm lviii.). As though God did beseech by them, they pray in Christ's stead, "Be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. v. 20); they "persuade men," knowing that the sword of judgment will shortly fall on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. i. 8).

May each unsaved reader, whether asleep in a Christless profession or openly careless of these things, awake to a sense of their state, and take warning ere the blast of the Gospel trumpet is for them hushed for ever, and incline the ear now and come to Jesus—hear, that their souls may live (Isa. lv. 3), and be found amid the waiting multitude of blood-washed ones, on whose ear another welcome trumpet sound shall shortly break, reaching even where lies the dust of the mighty host who have died in faith, setting them free from the captivity of the grave—changing the tabernacle wherein the living ones groan, being burdened (2 Cor. v.), and calling the collected throng to meet the Lord in the air, to be for ever with Him (1 Thess. iv.).

Hark to the trump! behold it breaks
 The sleep of ages now!
 And lo! the light of glory shines
 On many an aching brow.
 Changed in a moment, raised to life,
 The quick, the dead arise,
 Responsive to the angel's voice
 That calls them to the skies.

THE BLOOD UPON THE MERCY SEAT.

“And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.”—LEVITICUS xvi. 14.

WE have a grand and glorious Gospel told out in this impressive atonement chapter.

God established His throne in midst of guilty Israel. In the holiest of all—the innermost part of the tabernacle—stood the Ark of shittim wood, overlaid within and without with pure gold, and encircled with its golden crown. The lid of the Ark, too, was of pure gold, while on either end was a golden cherub with outstretched wings and looking inwards. Above the mercy seat, or the lid of the Ark, and between the cherubim, rested the cloud, the well-known symbol of Jehovah’s presence. Nothing could meet the eye but gold—*pure* gold—DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS.

But man is a sinner—not merely has sinned, but is *a sinner*. Most solemn fact! Oh my beloved reader, as your eye scans these lines, I want your conscience to grasp the reality of your state before God, not as you feel it, or realize it, but as He has revealed it in His Word. Can *you*, a sinner, stand in presence of that pure gold—Divine Righteousness? Can *you* answer the claims of Divine Holiness? Can *you* meet the demands of the Divine Glory? Impossible. Listen, “Enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall *no man living* be justified” (Ps. cxliii. 2). “If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?” (Ps. cxxx. 3). “*Who?*” “*WHO?*” It is the unanswered question of creation. Who shall stand, should God mark iniquities? The Holy Ghost solemnly answers, “*No man living.*”

What mean those golden cherubim? And why do they look towards the mercy seat? Those cherubim with outstretched wings tell of judgment, but they look *within* upon the blood-stained mercy seat; had they looked *without*, it would have been, it must have been unsparing judgment upon the sinner. They are the moral supports of the throne of God. Once they stood with the emblem of their power—the flaming sword—to bar the way to the tree of life *against* the sinner (Gen. iii. 24). Now

they look upon the sprinkled blood and are satisfied. Sin cannot be slurred over, for God is *holy*. The divine claims cannot be compromised, for God is *righteous*. If I look at the unbroken tables of the Law—the measure of creature righteousness—I can only say, “I have sinned.” If I look at the glory of God, I can only say, “I am undone.” If I look at the judgment-executing cherubim, I can only say, “I am lost.” Must judgment therefore clear the scene?

Oh, what a magnificent tale I have to unfold! Slowly the High Priest enters the most holy place—the presence of God. Parting the veil, he approaches the throne of God, and seven times sprinkles BLOOD *upon* and *before* the mercy seat. Without that blood the mercy seat had been a throne of judgment, for “without shedding of blood is no remission.” Now, God has found a ground on which His love can flow out freely to every creature under heaven. It is a righteous basis, and most holy too. The witness of death—the *blood*—is ever before the eye of God. That unspeakably precious blood is also the blessed memorial of sin judged and put away from before the face of God; now, God’s eye rests for ever, not upon my sin, but upon the infinite sacrifice of His own beloved Son. Oh, that perfect Sacrifice has satisfied, nay glorified God to all eternity! May I not then be satisfied with that which has infinitely glorified *Him*? Surely I may draw near with boldness too, for by the blood of Jesus I can stand before God and court the bright beams of His glory. His presence, which before was my terror, is now my *home*, for the blood which cleanseth from *all* sin is *there*.

The blood of Israel’s bulls and goats secured a twelve months’ redemption; but such is the wondrous efficacy of the blood of Christ, that, “He entered in *once* into the holy place, having obtained *eternal* redemption for us.” In the power of His “OWN BLOOD” He passed into the heavens; and as the Ark was encircled with its crown of pure gold, so He is seated, *crowned* and glorified, because His work is *finished*—not finishing. Blessed Lord Jesus, it’s Thy rightful place!

My dear reader, are you looking within or around for a ground of peace in presence of a holy and righteous God? I implore you to turn from every false confidence and rest on the

written word of God—"I have found a ransom;" God Himself has laid the ground of peace in the shed and sprinkled blood of His Beloved One. That blood is ever before His eye: as He says, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." Oh, that your poor, tried heart might rest there! your struggling conscience find peace in that precious blood! You are not called upon to weigh the worth, or estimate the value, or even look upon the precious blood of Jesus. God has done all this; and the poor sinner who simply credits divine testimony about Jesus and His blood gets salvation upon the spot.

Come then, my reader, and meet God at this divine meeting-place. The blood shed on the cross, and sprinkled *on* and *before* the throne, is the blessed and everlasting foundation of the redemption-glory of God. Come, then; fear not. In the Gospel God is not speaking to the sinner about his sin and guilt, but about the blood which blots it out.

"How bright, there above, is the mercy of God!—
And void of all guilt, and clear of all sin,
Is my conscience and heart, thro' my Saviour's blood,—
Not a cloud above—not a spot within."

ONE SIN! MANY SINS!

SIR JAMES SIMPSON, lately gone to rest, said, "When I was a boy I saw a sight I can never forget—a man flogged in the street. Did any one take his place and say, 'I will suffer?' No, he bore it all alone. For many sins? No, for one. He broke the law and he suffered all alone.

"In Edinburgh I saw a sight I never shall forget—a man hanged. For many sins? No, for one. He stole a parcel from a stage-coach, and he was led out to die before the crowd. Did any friend come and loose the rope and say, 'Put it around my neck, I will die instead?' No, none. At one point he broke the law, and died for it.

"I saw another sight—it matters not when—I saw myself undone, deserving hell, a lost sinner for many, many sins—to suffer stripes for ever; but I looked up and saw my substitute, Jesus, hanging on the cross. I looked and was forgiven; and I saw it my duty to come out here to tell you of that Saviour, of that Friend, and to see if you will look to Him and be saved."

STMUBLING-BLOCKS REMOVED—No. 3.

I HAVE met with many exercised persons who shelter themselves under the plea, "I cannot believe of myself; I need the Spirit's power to make me believe." Now, I quite admit the truth of what is said. I go further, and hold distinctly and firmly, as a truth of vital importance, that man is not perishing, but is perished; not sinking, but sunk. He is totally and irrecoverably ruined, and "cannot believe without the Spirit's power." But in God there is both *power* and *will* for the sinner, and let me tell you that God holds you responsible to believe on His Son, and if you don't do it, you will be damned.

O look this matter carefully in the face. You may not be able to reconcile the utter helplessness of the sinner with his responsibility; never mind, you are not asked to do so. Put aside all reasonings, and accept facts as they are. First, you are a sinner, and if you die in your sins you will go to hell. Second, God has provided a means of escape, His beloved Son meeting in death and judgment the doom due to the sinner. Third, God, having raised from the dead His Son, commands all men everywhere to repent and believe the Gospel. Now, these points are proved and established; nay, they are facts. But you recur to your difficulty, "I cannot believe of myself." Granted fully, but you must act upon your responsibility. God will give all the needed power *when*

you act. Jesus said to a man with a withered right hand, "Stretch forth thy hand; and he did so; and his hand was restored whole as the other." The man was responsible to obey, to do what he was told—to stretch forth his hand. Had he replied, "I cannot stretch forth my hand, it is withered, I need power," it would have been true. But there was power in the Lord, and that power was put forth when the man acted on *his* responsibility.

Let this stumbling-block then go to one side. As a poor sinner cast yourself upon the grace of a Saviour-God. Jesus died, and God raised Him from the dead, and has made this same Jesus both Lord and Christ. Give Him your heart's confidence; rest on His finished work. Come to Him, because He bids you. Believe on Him, because God commands you. Dear, anxious friend and enquirer, let not Satan effect your eternal ruin by putting before you the stumbling-block you have named. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." This is your solemn responsibility.

GOSPEL FRAGMENTS.

THE *Word* of God is the *ground* of faith; the Lord Jesus Christ is the *object* of faith; God Himself is the *source* of faith; "seeing Him who is invisible" is faith in *exercise*; holiness is the *fruit* of faith; "it is written" is the *language* of faith.

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

“WHAT avails the blood of Christ?”

“It avails what mountains of good works heaped up by us, what columns of the incense of prayer curling up from our lips towards heaven, and what streams of tears of penitence gushing from our eyelids could never avail. ‘The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.’”

“Helps us to cleanse ourselves, perhaps?”

“No, cleanseth us.”

“Furnishes the motive and the obligation for us to cleanse ourselves?”

“No, it cleanseth us.”

“Cleanseth us from the desire to sin?”

“No, cleanseth us from sin itself.”

“Cleanseth us from the sin of inactivity in the work of personal improvement?”

“No, from all sin.”

“But did you say the blood does this?”

“Yes, the blood.”

“The doctrine of Christ, you must mean?”

“No, His blood.”

“His example, is it?”

“No, His blood, His blood.”

Oh, what hostility the world still betrays towards this essential element of Christianity!

Can anything be stated more plainly in language, than the entire Word of God declares, that our redemption from sin is by the blood of Christ?

And yet what strenuous efforts are constantly made to set aside this plain, essential, wonderful, and most glorious truth, that the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.—*Dr. Krummacher.*

THE DEVIL'S GOSPEL.

A SKELETON SERMON.

Text.—"Ye shall not surely die."—GEN. iii. 4.

Doctrine.—God will not punish sin in the way He says He will.

I. WHAT THE DEVIL'S GOSPEL IS.

1. He has a Gospel.
2. It is an ancient Gospel.
3. It is a plausible Gospel.
4. It is a lying Gospel.

II.—WHAT IT DOES.

1. It comforts the wicked.
2. It encourages men in their sins.
3. It hinders men from repentance.

III.—WHAT IT LEADS TO.

1. Suspicion of God's character.
2. Transgression of God's law.
3. Dislike of God's presence.

IV.—WHAT IT ENDS IN.

1. Separation from God.
2. Shameful nakedness.
3. Irremediable woe.

BELIEVE IT NOT !!!

WHEN I come before GOD with His dear Name,
I weep for my sin, but He bears the blame ;
I'm forgiven, for justice accepts the plea
That JESUS was punished INSTEAD OF me.

O Saviour ! all words are too weak to show
How much to thy marvellous love I owe ;
But my full heart sends up its thanks to Thee,
Because THOU wast punished INSTEAD OF me.

THE GOSPEL OF GOD.

A SKELETON SERMON.

Text.—"The gift of God is eternal life."—ROM. vi. 23.

Doctrine.—God, even our God, is a giving God.

I.—WHAT THE GOSPEL OF GOD IS.

1. He has a Gospel for sinners.
2. It is an ancient Gospel.
3. It is a simple Gospel.
4. It is a true Gospel.

II.—WHAT IT DOES.

1. It saves the lost.
2. It delivers men from sin.
3. It leads men to repentance.

III.—WHAT IT LEADS TO.

1. Joying in God.
2. Obeying as Christ obeyed.
3. Dwelling in God's presence for ever.

IV.—WHAT IT ENDS IN.

1. Everlasting glory.
2. Everlasting life.
3. Everlasting blessedness.

SINNER ! BELIEVE IT !!!

ON His guileless head the wrath was poured,
 He bared his breast to Jehovah's sword ;
 Because He consented MY SURETY to be,
 HE was taken and punished INSTEAD OF me.

But, glorious thought for a case like mine !
 GOD'S OWN HOLY SON—so great—so Divine—
 Was able from all condemnation to free,
 And GOD sent HIM to suffer INSTEAD OF me.

AM I TOO BAD TO BE SAVED?

“I AM too bad to be saved,” is oftentimes the language of an awakened soul. We have frequently met with persons in this state, and have, *as a rule*, found that they *did not* believe it; the real hindrance being that they did not believe they were as bad as God declares them to be. I believe a soul that has accepted God’s judgment as to his state will shrink from anything like a *public* confession of sin; hence I have no sympathy with public confessions of sin, believing that they are in most part wanting, either in depth or reality, or perhaps both.

Now, I know very well that many deeply exercised persons have the thought that somehow the Lord is pleased with these exercises; hence they are encouraged, instead of at once resting on the finished work of Jesus. But does God need my convictions and anxieties to add to the value of the blood of Christ? Does He save the poor sinner *because* he is troubled about his sin? God is *waiting* to be gracious; He saves, having respect to His Son and His accomplished work. You may be feeling or not feeling; realising or not realising. God is a Saviour, irrespective of what you feel, think, and realise. I have known people who have been converted, and have *felt* their sins after; others, again, get a judgment upon their state *before* getting peace.

Some put faith as an object before the soul; others their badness; but it really matters little what is before the soul; if it is not Christ, there is no salvation. If I am occupied with my sins, I may make up my mind *to be unsaved*. I must break with every hindrance and receive Christ simply as a sinner; not as a sinner too bad to be saved, for then that is a qualification. You cannot be worse than *lost*; can you? Well, “The Son of Man is come to save that which was *lost*” (Matt. xviii. 11). “Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out” (John vi. 37). Now you may tell me about your sins being numerous as the sand on the sea shore; you may tell me you are the worst sinner *out* of the lake of fire, and I will not question its truth; still, it remains true at this moment of time, “Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out.” Now I am warranted in saying that the reason you are not saved is because you will not

come to Jesus Christ; it is not because of your sins, and badness, and vileness, but simply this, you will not come to Jesus. "But," you may say, "are there none excluded?" Yes, there is a class who will not be saved, and a numerous one too. Do you say, "I know who they are—they are sinners like me, too bad to be saved"? There, friend, you are mistaken. The unsaved and unsaveable persons are those who *will not come to Jesus*. None are excluded from salvation; they exclude themselves.

"But, if I come to Him, will He receive me?" You had better try Him, if you are not inclined to believe His word, "I will in nowise cast out;" test Him on that very point. I know His heart and His love better than you, for He received me *in* my sins. I have been told by anxious enquirers that they have *tried* to come to Jesus and could not; I dare say that the mistake is, that people overlook the little word of two letters, ME. Suppose a friend said, "Come to me;" I make no difficulty about coming. What would my friend think, were I to say, "I can't come, for my clothes are bad, I am in rags"? Would he not say, "I saw you were in rags when I called you, I want you to come to me as you are"? Am I to put my rags before me, when my friend puts himself before me? Now, anxious one, Jesus calls you; He sees your rags, your badness, but He bids you come! Never mind *how* you come, only see to it that it is to Him you come.

But is He changed since He was on earth? No, He then bore the title, "Friend of publicans and sinners," and He bears it still. The circumstances are changed; the anguish of the cross having been exchanged for the glory of the right hand of God—but His heart is unchanged and unchanging, amidst the brightest glories of heaven.

Art thou a despairing sinner? despairing of help and salvation because thou art *so* bad? Oh, I have news that will make thy poor, wretched heart happy; but the news *must* be received. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of *all* acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. i. 15). The distinct object of Christ's coming into the world was to save sinners; the Holy Ghost would *fix* your thoughts upon the *why* Jesus came from heaven to earth. Believe and accept this saying—"Christ Jesus came

into the world to save sinners." He came for the express purpose of saving *bad* people—there were neither good nor righteous to be saved (Rom. iii. 10, 12). Do you say, "I am too bad?" He makes no qualifications. Are you a sinner? is the question; did He not come on purpose to save *such*.

I have no doubt you are very bad, but you cannot lay claim to the title "chief of sinners," for he has been with the Lord for 1800 years. Jesus met His bitterest enemy on the road to Damascus. Light, love, grace, and glory triumphed on that memorable noon when the Saviour met the sinner. Jesus, the *persecuted*, poured His grace into the heart of His *persecutor*. Saul, the "chief of sinners," is in heaven, the richest trophy divine grace ever produced. Jesus came down from the glory and met Satan's master-piece—met him and saved him. Can'st thou take encouragement from this? You cannot feel yourself bad enough, but, most blessed it is to know that the chief of all sinners has been met by the risen Saviour, and *saved*.

Now, my friend, will you come to Jesus just as you are? I assure you it won't in the very least improve your position, or increase your prospects of being saved, by thinking of your good self, or bad self. May the Lord lead you to break every snare with which Satan would hinder you from getting to Christ!

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