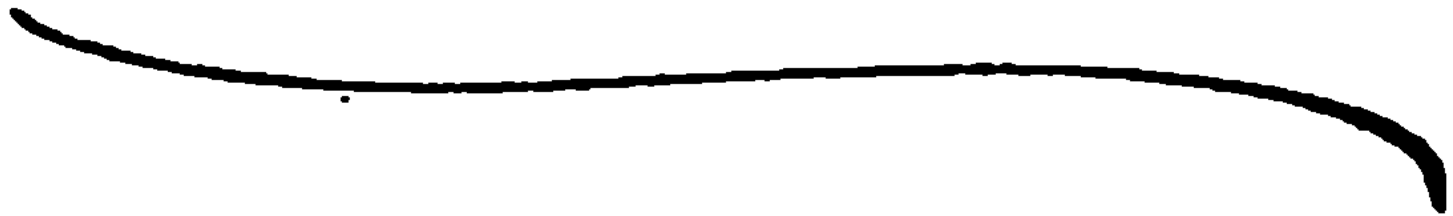


# WORDS OF SALVATION

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R. Buckley

1909



# Words of Salvation:

CONTAINING

## ACCEPTABLE WORDS.

“(He) shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.”—Acts xi. 14.

“Salvation is of the Lord.”—Jonah ii. 9.

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# Words of Salvation.

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## A FALSE HOPE.

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“**S**HE is dying, sir, slowly dying.” The speaker was a city merchant upon whom I was calling in the ordinary course of business.

I noted that he looked unusually careworn and anxious, and I inquired for himself and his household.

He replied that he was well and so also was his family, but his wife was lying critically ill, so ill, indeed, that he described her state in the words I have already mentioned.

I expressed my sympathy with him in his trial, when he went on to tell me that his wife had passed through a serious illness, but had so far recovered that he had taken her to the seaside. Here, it appears, she rallied for a time, but had a relapse and was brought home, apparently to die.

“It is sad,” said my friend; “she is a good woman, a kind, good woman, has always attended her church, and I have

a niece who is a worthless drunkard, who has ruined her husband and made his home miserable; she has been down at death's door and is getting better. And here is my poor wife, one of the best of women, and she is being taken away."

I paused a moment, then I said, "I think I can see the mercy of God in what you have related to me. Perhaps your wife is ready to go and your niece unready, and God in His mercy is allowing her to recover in order that she may have an opportunity to find the Saviour."

"Oh, my wife is ready," replied my friend, "I am sure she is ready, she has taken the sacrament whenever she could, and now, since she has been so ill, the clergyman came one afternoon, and I went home early, and we took the sacrament together. Oh, yes, I am sure she is ready."

"But," said I, "there is no hope for any one save in the atoning work of the Saviour on the cross; and if we rest in HIS FINISHED WORK for us, all will be well." My friend changed the subject, and spoke of his own health and of an illness which he had some while before.

I was saddened as I thought of this poor soul going out into eternity, resting upon a false hope, for false hope it is. Reader, believe me, there is no salvation

in going to church, or anywhere else for the matter of that; nor is there salvation in taking the sacrament. No, salvation is to be found by resting only upon the finished work and shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Rest there and you are eternally safe.

It is "TO HIM THAT WORKETH NOT, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 5.) When the Lord Jesus came into the world to save us He lifted up His eyes to God and said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Heb. x. 9), and before He died on the cross, having borne the judgment which our sins deserved, He said, "It is finished."

Bowing His head He died, but after three days He rose again and ascended up on high, taking His seat at the right hand of God. Thus there is a finished work and a seated Saviour in which to trust; and those who believe in Him receive forgiveness of sins. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Do not rest upon anything which you have done or intend to do, for the scripture plainly says, "Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. ii. 9.)

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## THE SUSPENSION BRIDGE.

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**I**N a large city in the west of England, two great rocks tower high above the river which flows towards the sea many feet below.

It was proposed years ago to join these rocks by a suspension bridge; the work was carried out by the skill of men, and it stands there to-day an object of usefulness and beauty.

Two solid "rocks" have stood through all the ages of eternity, they can never crumble nor decay—

"God is light" and "God is love."

Man has sinned, and the great problem which only God could solve was: How could *He* connect these rocks and establish a link between them, and thus construct "a new and living way" by which men "born in sin and shapen in iniquity" might yet approach a holy God, and know and enjoy His love.

God's eye penetrates every crevice of men's hearts. What sins does He see, what corruption! How can a being defiled by sin within and without become fit for the glory of a holy God? How can God gratify His love for His creature and make him, sinner as he is, "meet for the in-

heritance of the saints in light"? How can He bridge the deep, dark chasm that separates the creature whom He loves from Himself?

The gospel is the answer to these questions.

My reader, does it interest you? Would you like to know the seven strong chains that support this suspension bridge, seven links in the chain of salvation? Then read on—

(1.) "LO, I COME."

This short statement is the first of seven short sentences spoken by our Lord, which we may call supporting chains of this heavenly bridge.

God calls our earnest attention thus, "Lo." Depend upon it, when *He* says "lo," or "behold," there is something worth looking at. God, in the person of His Son, comes forth to take up man's cause and to effect his salvation. What a wondrous fact!

He says, "Behold me." Precious Saviour! Thou didst come from that realm of light and glory to save me, a defiled worm of the earth. What unspeakable love!

(2.) "I AM HE."

In the dark shades of sad Gethsemane the Son of God had bowed before His

Father to receive the cup of sorrow and woe He must drink if He would take upon Himself our sins and stand in the sinner's place.

No one but God could put that cup into His holy hands, and He would receive it from none other. Listen to His words :

“O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.” And now the hour has come.

Jesus, God *our* Saviour, thus yields Himself to do and suffer the holy will of His Father, and having loved us, “gave himself for us.”

On the cross He bore *our* sins, and there He, the holy One, was made “sin *for us*, who knew no sin.”

“The judgment fell on Jesus' head,  
And by *His* blood sin's debt was paid.”

(3.) “IT IS FINISHED.”

The Son of God had undertaken, as we have seen, the Father's will, which included the eternal redemption and salvation of man.

But sin stood in the way, and the “wages of sin is death.” Nothing but the death of the Son of God could thus remove the penalty. Thus He “became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,” and from that cross proceeded the shout

of triumph, the triumph of everlasting love. "It is finished." Blessed Saviour!

(4.) "PEACE UNTO YOU."

This is the blessed result, for He hath "made peace through the blood of his cross." On the first day of resurrection He comes to His disciples and speaks this consoling word of peace.

No less answer could possibly be made when the perfection of His Person and the completeness of His work were presented to God His Father—

"God is satisfied with Jesus,  
I am satisfied as well,"

and the result is present and abiding peace.

"Therefore being justified by faith, *we have peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ."

But we must now cross over to the other side of the bridge. If we are to get the benefit of all this work of love, in the coming forth of the Son of God to do the Father's will, another divine Person must accomplish His blessed operations in our souls.

(5.) "LOVEST THOU ME?"

It is the Holy Spirit who sheds abroad God's love in our hearts, and this produces response from us. The Holy Spirit reminds us of the perfection of His Person,

the full accomplishment and acceptance of His work, His exaltation by the glory of the Father, and assures our hearts that it is all the expression of the heart of God *toward us*.

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that *he loved us*, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

Pause one moment and let your heart ascend in secret to that risen Saviour who asks you this question to-day. Oh, may it be as with Peter (remember he had denied his Lord), “Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.”

(6.) “FOLLOW THOU ME.”

But what about your life from to-day? If your attention has been gained, if His love has won your heart, you will be drawn after Him.

He as our Forerunner has reached the goal, and as the Captain of our salvation is conducting us thither.

(7.) “TILL I COME.”

Yes, beloved christian reader, we are awaiting His return. How joyous will be our first gaze on the face of our Saviour; “whom having not seen we love.”

“Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our body of humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto his body of glory, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.”

“The Spirit and the bride say, Come.”  
Can you say, “Amen, Even so, come, Lord Jesus”? J. V.

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## “NOTHING TO DO.”

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**S**OME years ago there lived in one of the towns of Northern Germany a young man who had been brought up a Roman Catholic.

He believed, however, neither in that nor in anything else, but had long cast off all thoughts of God, and lived in sin so open and so terrible that he was remarkable for his excess even among his ungodly companions.

But it pleased God to work in his soul by His Spirit, creating a sense of his sin, so that he became alarmed and thought: I am worse than any other. If ever a man is eternally lost I must be that man!

Night and day his thoughts haunted

him. If only, thought he, it were possible to be saved. He resolved to become a monk, but he wished to discover which monastery made the hardest rules and strictest penances. He was told in answer to his inquiries that the place under the strictest rule was one about one thousand five hundred miles from his home.

He could not afford to pay the expenses of his journey so he resolved to walk, begging as he went. It was a long and weary journey, and he was scarcely alive when he reached the old building where he hoped to gain rest for his soul.

Having rung at the gate, he waited till it was slowly opened by an aged monk, so feeble and infirm that he seemed hardly able to walk.

“What is it you want?” asked the old man.

“I want to be saved,” replied the German, “and I thought I might find salvation here.”

The old monk invited him to come in and led him into a room where they were alone together.

“Tell me now what you mean,” said the old man.

“I am a lost sinner,” began the German, “I have lived a life more wicked than I can tell you. It seems to me impossible

that I can be saved, but all that *can* be done I am ready to do.”

The old monk replied, “ If you are ready to do what I tell you, you will go straight home again ; for the whole work has been done, done for you before you came, and there is nothing left for you to do. Another has been here and has done the work instead, and it is finished.”

“ It is finished ? ”

“ Yes, it is finished. Do you not know that God sent down His own Son to be the Saviour of the world ? Did He not come ? Did He not finish the work the Father gave Him to do ? Did He not say on the cross, ‘ It is finished ’ ?

“ And do you know this—where is Jesus now ? ”

“ He is in heaven.”

“ He *is* in heaven. But why is He there ? Why is Jesus in the glory ? Because He has finished the work. He would not be there otherwise. He is there because God is satisfied with His work. And oh, dear friend, why should you and I try to do the work which the Son of God alone could do, and which He *has* done ?

“ If God had left it for us to do, we could never do it ; were we to perform all the penances that ever have been, or could be performed, they would be utterly use-



less to us. And as it is, they are more than useless, they are fearful sins in the sight of God. It is as much as to say, Christ has not done enough ; it is casting contempt on the blessed, perfect work of the Son of God to dare to attempt to add to that which He has finished.

“ Yes, in this Christ is insulted, and God is made a liar ; and were it not that I am so old that I can scarcely walk to the gate, my escape should testify against this place : I would not remain here another day. As it is, I must wait until the Lord comes to fetch me ; but you can go, and I beseech you to go, thanking God that His Son has done all this for you, and that punishment of your sins is for ever past.

“ And remember always *that Christ is in heaven.*”

What wonderful tidings for a poor sinner to hear ! Did he believe them ? He did, and after a short time of rest, during which he learnt more of the gospel from the old monk, he went back to his own land to make known the wonderful news which he had heard.

This blessed message comes to you also ; may it become the joy and rejoicing of your heart.

F. B.

## LOOK AND LIVE.

---

**D**URING the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness, on their way from Egypt to the promised land, they became very much discouraged on account of the difficulties with which they met. They spake against God and against Moses, a serious offence when it is remembered what God had done for them. And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit them, and many of them died. In their distress they turned to Moses and said,

We have sinned,

for we have spoken against the Lord and against thee, and they besought Moses to pray that the Lord would take away the serpents from among them.

In response to their prayer the Lord commanded Moses to make a serpent of brass and to set it upon a pole in the sight of all the people, and to let every one know that if those who had been bitten by the fiery serpents would look at the serpent of brass

they should live.

Now it came to pass that when those who had been bitten by the fiery serpents were obedient to the word of the Lord and looked at the serpent of brass, behold, they lived.

Some of these poor suffering people might have thought that the sickness with which they were afflicted was too serious to be cured by such simple means, while others might have argued that unless they could have a hand in the work they would not avail themselves of the offer which the Lord had made through His servant Moses.

But it would appear from the narrative that for the most part the people hearkened to the voice of Moses and looked at the serpent of brass, for we read that, if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived.

It must not be forgotten that in addition to the look of the dying person to the serpent of brass, unseen by human eyes, all the power of God was at work for His people, and the healing was wrought, not by the look of faith, but by the power of God put forth for their salvation, although the look of faith was necessary before any one could benefit by the work of God.

God had commanded that they should

look at the serpent of brass, and to that word they had to pay heed, this being all *they* were responsible to do.

The children of Israel were not alone in their sin of speaking against God and rebelling against Him, for we also have done the same.

Our sin may not have taken the same form as theirs, but nevertheless we have sinned against God, and our natural hearts are as rebellious as theirs.

And solemn is the fact that the wages of sin is death—the terrible penalty which all must pay sooner or later.

We are dying, dying in our sins. Can nothing save us? Is there no one to pity, no hand outstretched for our salvation?

Blessed news, which the Saviour our Lord Jesus Christ brought to us when He came among men.

“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.”

He has been lifted up upon the cross, where He died the Just for the unjust, and even as in the days of old when the

smitten Israelite looked at the serpent of brass and lived, so all who look in faith to Him are healed by the power of God put forth on their behalf.

If my reader is one who feels the burden of his sins and desires to be free from the load of them, let him look to Christ, just as simply as the poor, bitten Israelite looked to the serpent of brass in days gone by. Only a simple look and he was instantly healed. That was true for him. And for you and me as lost and guilty sinners only a look to Christ and we are instantly forgiven and cleansed. We can add nothing to the work which Christ accomplished; those hours of pain and suffering which He endured; the *sin-bearing* and the *blood-shedding*. But God knows it all, and in virtue of it He forgives and He cleanses us immediately we turn to Him through Christ. Look unto Him, He who has been hanged on the tree, and you shall prove the truth of the words, "that whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

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## HAVE YOU HAD TO DO WITH GOD?

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**I**T has been said, "We and God have business with each other, and in opening ourselves to His influence, our deepest destiny is fulfilled."

If you have had to do with God, you will know it!

Perhaps you have, but it was only for a moment; it may have been in sorrow, a great peril, a suffering, but that moment was enough to make plain to you God's actuality, and your ability to have to do with Him.

Have to do with Him you must: "As I live . . . every tongue shall confess to God." (Rom. xiv. 11.)

How does God present Himself to man to-day?

### As a Saviour God.

He can be known as such, and only as such.

The first effect of having to do with God is the sense that there is something wrong with me.

The second, that that something wrong has been removed by God's action.

The third, that in Christ I can be at home with God.

“ Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace : thereby good shall come unto thee.” (Job xxii. 21.)

God is holy ; the sense of something wrong is your sinful state. “ Where art thou ? ” was the utterance of God at the loss of His creature, the result of the distance sin had brought about. Try as you will, you cannot remove the distance, for you cannot remove the sin, the cause of the distance.

The something wrong has been removed from God’s side. Christ has died ; the blood has been shed ; it has been sprinkled on and before the mercy seat (Lev. xvi. 14) ; the wrong has been removed by death.

“ It is God that justifieth.” (Rom. viii. 33.)

Oh, the rest, and peace, and joy of knowing God !

It is a cold, hard world, the best of friends cannot be absolutely relied upon ; but God has, by His Son, made known all the throbbing love of His great heart. The cross of Christ has fully revealed it, nothing else could, but *revealed* it is.

“ God was in Christ *reconciling the world* unto himself. (2 Cor. v. 19.)

Christ was God’s speech (*logos*) to men

If refused, terrible consequences must follow.

Enduring happiness, lasting and unchanging, you have never known if you do not know God! Your pot of ointment has always had a dead fly in it.

Clever, scientific, polished, looked up to, revered, you may be; but if ignorant of God, you know not that which is supremely worth knowing.

Speak to Him then, for He is not far from any one of us; speak to Him now.

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Rom. x. 13.) Know Him you must, or perish everlastingly.

E. C—P.

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## THE COMPASSION OF GOD'S LOVE.

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“And the Lord said, I have surely SEEN the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have HEARD their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I KNOW their sorrows.” (Exo. iii. 7.)

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**H**AS it ever occurred to you, dear reader, that the blessed Creator, God, has always had a very deep interest in His creature? If it has not, we would



ask you to pause and consider the above scripture. It is true it was said of a people in days gone by, but the deep pity therein expressed is as real to-day as it was when these precious words were uttered, for the heart of God has never altered.

There are three points to which I would draw your attention, the first, "I have surely SEEN;" God's eye has ever been, and *is*, upon man, and that in spite of all that he has proved himself to be; it is upon him, first, because God desires that he may be for Himself, secondly, because God longs to bless him, and thirdly because man is in captivity to the will and power of the devil and God is working to the end that there might be deliverance.

The second point we draw your attention to is: "and have HEARD;" God's ear is ever opened to the cry of His creature. If He allows the enemy to oppress, it is in order that it might produce a sense of deep need and distress, so that man may turn to God for deliverance, and when he does so, he finds the ear of God open to his cry.

And lastly, "for I KNOW their sorrows;" what deep and blessed pathos there is in these words, and what an immense comfort to a distressed soul who cries to God to find that they have not turned to One

who is a stranger to their sorrow, although they may be strangers in their souls to Him, for He knows all about them.

Reader, if you are feeling the pressure of your deep need as a sinner, and also the power of the enemy, we would direct your heart to the blessed God, who sees, hears and knows your sorrow, and can and will meet all your need, in and through His beloved Son, who took man's place at the cross, met all the claims of a holy God, and, having glorified Him, is now on the throne of God as the great Administrator for God of all these wonderful blessings which He has secured in His death. May your heart be directed by His Spirit into His great love wherewith He has loved us.

H. D.

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“BOW THE KNEE.”

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**S**UCH was the proclamation made in Egypt nearly four thousand years ago as Joseph drove in his glory through the crowded streets. Who is he? who is he? inquired the admiring multitude: Let us, too, ask the question and trace in his earthly history the story of God's beloved Son, for a greater than Joseph is here.

(1.) Joseph was the beloved son of his father.

(2.) He had been sent on a message of love to his brethren.

(3.) He was hated and rejected by them.

(4.) They plotted to kill him and he was sold into slavery.

(5.) He was falsely accused and spent two years in prison, unjustly punished.

(6.) He knew the ways of God and became a prophet both of good and evil.

(7.) He was set at liberty by the king and exalted to the highest place of dignity and power.

And all were commanded to bow the knee to the "man whom the king delighted to honour."

Very similar things are stated in scripture about God's beloved Son, and, my friend, *you* are commanded by God to bow to Him. Have you done so? Solemn and important inquiry! Now or in eternity you *must* bow and own Him Lord, for the oath of God Himself has been taken to this effect—"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself . . . that unto me every knee shall bow." (Isa. xlv. 22, 23.)

The scriptures have spoken thus concerning God's Son:—

(1.) “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matt. iii. 17.)

(2.) “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John iii. 16.)

(3.) “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” (Isa. liii. 3.)

(4.) “Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life.” (Acts. iii. 14, 15.)

(5.) “He was wounded for *our* transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of *our* peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath *laid on him the iniquity of us all.*”

(6.) “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and THE PLEASURE OF THE LORD SHALL PROSPER IN HIS HANDS.” (Isa. liii. 5, 6-10.)

(7.) “God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and every

tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil. ii. 9–11.)

Beloved reader, God has exalted at His own right hand in heaven the Man who died on the cross of Calvary, and “if thou shalt confess with thy mouth *the Lord Jesus*, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, THOU SHALT BE SAVED.” (Rom. x. 9.)

J. V.

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## LOVE'S ANSWER.

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Hark, the glorious proclamation,  
 Sounding from the throne above!  
 Rich, eternal, free salvation,  
 Fruit of God's unbounded love.  
 'Tis to sinners, rebels, traitors  
 God His banner has unfurl'd  
 To opposers, foes, and haters  
 To the lost throughout the world.

---

Who can tell the priceless treasure  
 God possessed in Christ His Son?  
 Yet He gave, with love's full measure,  
 Him for us, His holy One.  
 Sinless He, for sin He suffer'd  
 All its awful judgment bore;  
 As the willing Victim, offer'd  
 Up Himself. Could love do more?

**“ A CERTAIN SAMARITAN . . . .  
CAME WHERE HE WAS.”**

(LUKE X. 33.)

---

**S**UCH was the description which the Lord gave of Himself and His wonderful journey into the earth for the recovery of that which was lost.

“ A certain Samaritan ” ! Why a Samaritan ? The Lord knew that the place He had among men, for whose blessing He had come, was that of a stranger. Unknown among the creatures His own hand had made ; the great God, the Son, come in flesh, moving in and out among men, and yet, disowned. That name carried the stigma of reproach and hatred.

The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, they regarded them as dogs, persons not only beneath them altogether, but to whom there was attached all that was offensive. And the Lord of glory knew that the leaders of that day, whether religious or political, looked upon Him with contempt and hatred, and He described Himself as a Samaritan. Wondrous grace ! Hated by those for whom He had come to die, looked upon with contempt by those whom He was ready to enrich with a glory which should never

fade away. Such was the grace of the Person who came from the throne of God to win the heart of fallen man.

“He came where he was,” and where was that? A runaway, robbed and ruined and ready to die. Figure of the sinner who has turned his back upon his God and who has fallen into Satan’s hands, by whom he has been robbed and wounded, and left at the roadside in a dying state.

Lying on the world’s highway deprived of all that God had given him, naked and wounded and dying, was God’s creature, and the Lord Jesus in the guise of a certain Samaritan “came where he was.”

Reader, has it ever occurred to you that a divine Person has become man, has come in all the greatness of the grace of God to identify Himself with ruined sinners; passing into that awful distance where sin had placed us, even to knowing what it was as man to be abandoned of God, in order that men might know the goodness of God and realise that instead of being One from whom the sinner should flee in fear He “so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”? Perhaps you have never looked at things quite in this way. I pray you to think it over, and as

you do so may your eyes be opened to see how near God has come to you in order that you may be eternally blessed.

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“WHERE IS HE?”

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“Man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?” (Job xiv. 10.)

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**A**LL must admit the assertion of the text; in this day of negations, death is the one thing which cannot be denied. Death knocks at every door; he intrudes his unwelcome presence into every household. Young and old, rich and poor, black man and white man, nobleman and commoner are all alike subject to his power. Night and day, late and early, in village and city, in church and chapel, he preaches incessantly, and so forcibly that no conscience on earth has not at some time quailed before him. No creature, no riches, no science can avail to dismiss him or to prevent his approach.

And it is equally true that man “wasteth away.” Man is born with the seed of dissolution within him. Every grey hair, every aching head, every dimmed eye, every shrunken muscle, every weary limb tells the same tale. The weakened in-



telleet and the shortened memory join in repeating, "man wasteth away."

Then, perhaps suddenly, a public engagement is broken, or some enjoyment is foregone. And then the news reaches us that some one, whom we lately saw in comparative health, has passed away to *that undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns.*

"Man giveth up the ghost." And then comes the important question:

*"Where is he?"*

Is the question unanswerable? Can no one know whither death takes the spirit? The same book, which puts the question, gives the answer.

"If a man die, shall he live again?" asks Job.

Let us turn to a verse in Luke xxiii.

"*To day,*" says the Lord of life and glory to a thief crucified with Him, "*shalt thou be with me in paradise.*" The words were spoken to a man, whom the rulers of his country judged unfit to live. He said of himself as he hung on the cross, that he "received the due reward of his deeds."

In Luke's gospel alone the Lord's prayer for His murderers, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," is recorded. The thief is represented as turning to the Saviour, and he read, no doubt,

the inscription, “ This is the King of the Jews.” Hearing the wonderful prayer from the lips of the dying Christ, he turned, in faith, to Him whose kingly dignity he owned, and asked that he might be remembered when the kingdom was set up. But Christ’s reign of righteousness is still in abeyance, and the thief would be still outside the blessing if he had to wait for that reign to begin ; and God, who delights in giving exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, answers the cry of faith with : “ *To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*”

What then, in this case, is the answer to Job’s question : “ Where is he ? ” The answer is, “ With Christ.” And those words are true for each believer who departs this life ; he is “ absent from the body, present with the Lord ” ; he has been called “ to depart, and to be with Christ ; which is far better.” There is no uncertainty—no speculation—about the matter, but the trumpet-tongued “ *We know* ” of the Apostle Paul.

In another scripture (Luke xvi.) we have recorded the life and death of another man. Of him, no evil deeds are related, no acts of violence or rebellion against the authorities. His table was liberally supplied, he was clothed in purple and fine

lineu, he had his "portion in this life." (Psa. xvii. 14.) This rich man died and was buried. No doubt the funeral was an imposing one; all was done to impress on the assembled throng the riches, the position and the importance of the departed.

But when the crucial question "Where is he?" is asked, scripture again gives no uncertain answer; scattering the illusion of pomp and splendour, it sums up the future of the rich man in two words—"In hell."

How solemn are the two answers to the one question! In the one case the answer is "*In paradise with Christ*"; in the other it is "*In hell.*"

Now, I wish especially to draw your attention to that which determined the future for each of these two men individually. In the first case there was not any goodness to be taken into account; neither in character, nor in deeds, was there anything of which to boast; on the contrary, evil had characterised the man's life, just as violence and ignominy marked his death. The cross was so shameful a method of execution that the very word was not allowed to be used by the Romans. And we are met by the fact that a man, whose life and whose death had not one redeeming feature, was the first man to enter paradise. What, then, gained him

the blessing? What marked him off from the rich man of whom we have spoken? Simply this: *He put his trust in the Saviour.* And here we find the line which divides my readers; either they trust, or they reject Christ; and on this matter *alone* depends their eternity.

The thief needed a Saviour, and finding one at his side, God-provided, and all-sufficient, he boldly confessed Him. In all God's universe the thief was the only man who had one good word to speak for the Christ of God as He hung upon the cross.

The rich man of the parable had not, so far as we know, offended against the laws of his country, or the ethics of his time; no gross sins are recorded against him. That which decided his doom was his neglect of God. He enjoyed the good things which came to him so liberally from God, but he utterly forgot from whose hand he received them; and he qualified for hell, not by his wicked conduct, but by his indifference to salvation, and the Saviour. Indifference is filling the sad place, prepared not for men, but for the devil and his angels. No man need go there because of his sins; for there is a Saviour for sinners, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. If we die in our sins, the weight of

them will be upon us, not because there was no remedy, but because *we never sought to avail ourselves of the remedy* provided by the love of God. The poet presents to us the wretchedness of the man who lives and dies without God:—

Life has become to me an empty theatre,  
 Its lights extinguished, its music silenced,  
 And all its actors gone. And I alone sit musing  
 Over the scenes that once have been; [here  
 I am so old, that death oft plucks me  
 By the cloak to come with him.

And some day, like this lamp, shall I fall down  
 And my last spark of life will be extinguished.

Ah me! Ah me! what darkness of despair!

So near to death, and yet so far from God!

Think the matter over, dear reader. You may be moral and upright; there may be no flaw to find in your character; your life may be good, kind and beneficent but, if you have not made acquaintance with the Christ of God, you are poor indeed. See to it that when at the last, the question of questions "Where is he?" is put, the answer may not be "In hell."

May your eyes, like the eyes of the dying thief, be opened to see your need of a Saviour, and then may they rest in faith upon the One provided by eternal love before the world was—the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Then you can sing with a thankful heart:—

I have a friend whose faithful love  
 Is more than all the world to me,

'Tis higher than the heights above,  
 And deeper than the soundless sea.  
     So old, so new,  
     So strong, so true,  
 Before the world received its frame,  
 He loved me—blessed be His name !

He held the highest place above,  
 Adored by all the sons of flame,  
 Yet, such His self-denying love,  
 He laid aside His crown and came  
     To seek the lost ;  
     And, at the cost  
 Of heavenly rank and earthly fame,  
 He sought me—blessed be His name !

It was a lonely path He trod,  
 From every human joy apart ;  
 Known only to Himself and God  
 Was all the grief that filled His heart.

    Yet from this track  
     He turned not back  
 Till, where I lay, in want and shame,  
 He found me—blessed be His name !

Our Lord Himself once put a question,  
 in the answer to which is hidden a truth,  
 momentous and precious for all humanity.  
 Depend upon it that your truest happiness  
 in this world, and your hope for the world  
 beyond, lies in the answer to the question :  
 “ What think ye of Christ ? ”      E. C—P.

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## WHICH WAY ?

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**M**ANY ways are presented to us in the  
 scriptures but all may be summed

up in two main thoroughfares : the broad way, leading to destruction, and the narrow way, leading to life.

The former is so wide that it accommodates every class of mankind and it has been divided into numerous paths. As the prophet of old said : “ All we like sheep have gone astray ; we have turned every one to *his own way*.” (Isa. liii. 6.)

“ Like sheep,” for in doing our own will and turning to our own way we are just like silly sheep : we are only going in the same way as thousands before us.

In Genesis iii. we find Eve and Adam breaking through the boundaries which God had mercifully set up to preserve them in a path of happiness in innocence before Him. They believed the lie of Satan : “ Ye shall not surely die . . . . ye shall be as gods ” ; they disobeyed God, and in so doing they gained knowledge with the accompanying conscience which condemned them, and then they hid away from God. They took their “ own way ” ; with what result ? Hard labour, sorrow and death.

And the same result is seen to-day : the sorrow and death around us—in our very midst—are proofs of it.

But some would object to the thought of direct disobedience to God’s commands

and would loudly protest their abhorrence of such a course. They would say that a man must do his best and make his peace with God.

Yet this is no new way either, for God's word speaks of the "way of Cain." In Cain's history we see the first attempt of man to be religious. He appears to have been perfectly aware of the fall: doubtless he had heard of it from his parents, and he proposed to approach God. Notice the way he took. "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord" (Gen. iv. 3), he approached God with the fruit of his tillage—his own labour.

Are you going in the way of Cain, dear reader? If so, beware, for there is a terrible "Woe unto them" pronounced against such in Jude 11.

You may ask why and say you see no harm in it. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. xiv. 12), and God says, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways." (Isa. lv. 8.) Cain's offering spoke only of himself and his own works, and God could not righteously accept him or his offering, being under the curse.

And is there no other way? Thank God, there is. He, who in mercy to His



creatures, immediately after the fall, closed up the "way of the tree of life" with a flaming sword lest they should eat and perpetuate their existence at a distance from Him, has come down into this world in human form.

He has trodden the way that all were treading—not in selfwill but in perfect obedience to the will of God the Father; not in his own way but God's; not what seemed right to Him but what God had revealed in the scriptures (Luke iv. 4, 8, 12)—but He trod that way right down to death itself by the way of the cross.

Now He is risen from the dead and has opened up a "new and living way," in virtue of His shed blood, through death to God, in His own blessed person. And for all who ask: "How can we know the way?" His wondrous answer is recorded, "*I am the way.*" (John xiv. 6.)

Whither? To the Father, to life, light, eternal joy, rest, peace and happiness—to all that God can give and all that man can receive—all is bound up and set forth in the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Consider your ways," heed God's gracious call "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.)

Q.

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## “GOOD TIDINGS.”

(LUKE II. 10.)

**T**HERE is nothing more wonderful than the gospel. Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, is full of it. In the Old Testament, in type, figure and shadow, and in the New, in the wonderful revelation of God in mercy, righteousness, grace and love in the Person of Him who was so truly God that He could say, “Before Abraham was, I am” (John viii. 58), and so truly man that He could die. And yet how few seem to know the gospel in all its greatness! In the scripture at the head of this paper we find a heavenly messenger saying to some poor shepherds, in the dark hours of the night, “Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy.” And it was indeed the dark hour of the night for man, and every hope seemed gone. But just at that moment the most glorious tidings that were ever heard came from heaven to earth, telling that God Himself was opening the door through which He could recover for His own heart’s joy men who were lost, lost because in the garden of Eden Adam

had listened to the voice of the enemy, and so brought ruin and death on God's fair creation.

And of whom did these glorious tidings speak? Not of an emperor or king in his palace or on his throne, but of a little babe "wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." (Ver. 12.)

Oh, it is very wonderful, is it not, to know that that babe was "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii. 16), and that in that babe all the love of the heart of God was to be told out to the poor lost sinner in his sins, in the very world in which man had been an enemy and a rebel, and in which he shewed his hatred of God by slaying God's beloved Son?

Notice, that the message from heaven through the angel was not only one of "good tidings," but of "great joy"; that is, of great joy to the heart of God, as well as to the poor sinner. We can understand, in measure at least, that it would be great joy to the heart of God to know that that Babe was to grow up to be a man in this world, of whom it is written that "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke ii. 52), and of whom God could say, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. iii. 17.) God could not find any

pleasure in the man who had spoiled His beautiful creation by bringing sin and death into it. But now He would have under His eye a Man in whose life every thought and word and act would be bright for His glory; who would not only be the expression of what man should have been for Him, but of what He, the blessed God, was for man. And, more than this, who would give Himself up, in that sinless body which had been prepared for Him, to the death and judgment of Calvary, that He might remove every trace of sin and death from under the eye of God for ever, and bring in “a new heaven and a new earth” (Rev. xxi. 1) in place of the earth which the sin of man had defiled.

But the joy which that heavenly message brought was to be joy to the poor sinner too. It was to bring to him, through faith in the precious blood shed at Calvary, the *knowledge* of sins forgiven and peace with God. It was to bring him to the God against whom he had sinned, in all the acceptance of the One who had taken his place on the cross, and had borne his sins there, all of them; for He died, “the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” (1 Pet. iii. 18.)

Dear reader, have *you* trusted in that precious blood, and in that alone, for your

soul's salvation? Have you tasted that joy yourself? or are you an "anxious soul" who allows the doubts and fears of unbelief to come as a cloud over your heart, because you are occupied with yourself, and what you find *there*, instead of with Christ, and what *God has found in Him*.

Let me illustrate what I mean by an incident that occurred some years ago when I was staying in W——. I was asked to go and see a poor woman who was troubled about her sins, and I found her really an "anxious soul." She said she had often asked God to forgive her sins, but though she was really trusting in Christ, she could not feel that her sins were forgiven, and she was very unhappy.

Her tea things were on the table, and she had just had her tea, so I said to her, "Tell me, did you thank God for that tea and bread and butter?" "Indeed I did," she replied; "and I never sit down to a meal without thanking Him." "So," I said, "when you had that tea and bread and butter on the table, you did not *ask Him to give it you*, but thanked Him because He *had* given it." "Yes," she said, "I did." "Now tell me," I said, "have you ever thanked Him for giving His blessed Son to die for you, and to bear your sins on the cross?" She looked hard

at me, and after a moment's pause she said, “No, I never have.” “What,” I said, “you have thanked Him for giving you that tea and bread and butter which cost Him *nothing*, and have never thanked Him for giving you that priceless gift which cost Him *everything*, His own beloved Son, to die for a poor sinner like you?” The tears began to run down her cheeks, as she said earnestly, “No, I never have, but *it is not too late, is it?*” “No,” I said, “it is not too late, let us thank Him together.” So we knelt down and thanked God for giving His Son to die for the two poor sinners bowed before Him, and we thanked His dear Son for dying in our place, and bearing all that was due to us on the cross. And when we got up from our knees, though the tears were still there, there was a bright smile as well, and she thanked God for having sent her such a blessed message that day.

How many there are who keep on asking God to do what He has already done, but have never thanked Him for what He *has* done, and so have not peace, and whose joy, if they have any, ebbs and flows with the tide of their unbelief! Are you such an one, dear reader?

Before I close I want to say a little about the “good tidings” that went up

*from earth to heaven*, and which told even more glorious news than those which came from heaven to earth. When the Son of God came out of the sepulchre in resurrection life, having settled for ever that great question of sin, when He who knew no sin was made sin and having broken the power of death for ever, for He bowed to its claims over the sinner, though it had none over Him, the sinless One, the sight for all heaven was glorious indeed. What blessed tidings for heaven were those—that Jesus was risen again—and what joy there was there! And if only one sinner who reads this paper turns in true repentance to God, there will again be “joy in heaven” (Luke xv. 7), “joy in the presence of the angels of God” (ver. 10), the joy of the blessed God Himself—the joy of the Father (vers. 22, 23) over His returning prodigal, clothed and fitted for His presence, a joy to be known by the returning one even as the prodigal shared with the father the fatted calf, a joy told in the father’s words, “Let us eat, and be merry”; for the joy is “over one sinner that repenteth.” (Ver. 10.)

A word in conclusion to any who are unconcerned about their soul’s salvation, indifferent to the question of the death which may come upon them at any mo-

ment, forgetful of the fact that after death comes judgment (Heb. ix. 27), and who would willingly dismiss if they could the thought of the eternity that lies before them. *There is no half-way house in the things of God.* As you read this, if you are not "in Christ" you are "in your sins." Which is it? Ask yourself this question honestly, *and answer it to God.*

A. P. G.

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## SOUL THIRST AND HOW IT IS MET.

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**T**HESE healing waters have flowed from time undated, to this day. Their virtue unimpaired, their volume unabated, their heat undiminished. They explain the origin, account for the progress and demand the gratitude of the city of Bath. 507,600 gallons flow daily at 120 degrees Farenheit."

Such are the words engraved on a stone tablet outside one of the pump-rooms in the ancient city of Bath. From time undated thousands of weary seekers for health, suffering from varied diseases, have repaired thither to drink these waters. Some, after having drunk, have with grateful hearts returned to their homes as with



new life. Others, after weary weeks and months both in drinking these renowned waters and bathing in them, having failed to get the benefit they desired, have returned home bitterly disappointed. What a tale of joy and sorrow these Bath springs could tell! It is remarkable that 507,600 gallons of water have flowed from the heart of the earth daily for the comfort and healing of the sick. How good God is!

As I write I am reminded of another spring of healing water which has flowed from time undated, as it were from the bosom of the blessed God. Unlike the Bath springs, there is no bound to their volume, for they flow for every creature under heaven. No limit to their healing virtue, for they bring healing to every one who will drink them. Well may the prophet cry, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." (Isa. lv. 1.) No one who comes to drink of these living waters will ever be obliged to turn away unhealed, unblessed. Perfect healing is found there, for Jesus said: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst for ever." Thank God for such a fountain! It is unnecessary for me to say that soul thirst is satisfied here, in the knowledge of God's great love to men. Have you soul thirst? Is there

an unsatisfied longing in your heart, a longing which everything this world can offer has not satisfied?

I was preaching some years ago in a little town on the Christiania fjord in Norway. The following day I was sent for to visit a young woman who was at the preaching the night before. As I entered the house, I was met by the one who sent for me.

“I believe you have requested to see me, Miss ——!”

“Yes,” she replied.

“What is it you want?”

“Oh, sir,” she said, “my soul thirsteth after the living God.”

It was my joy to reply, “And a living God thirsts for you, thirsts to make Himself known to you and make you eternally happy.” You may ask: Where are these living waters to be found? God is the source of them, and in grace Christ stooped down to this world of thirst and moral woe; trod His solitary way to Gethsemane and Golgotha, so that a way might be opened for them to flow. On the cross, alone, where the powers of darkness closed in upon Him, He offered Himself without spot to God; was made sin, atoned for it, and in His death a way was opened in which the needy may draw near to God,

may freely drink of the fountain of life. Here then is the healing spring. It is Christ Himself, Christ only. Not Christ *and me or you*, but *Christ only*. Again I press my question: Does your soul thirst? Do you long to be healed, to have peace and joy? Christ said, "If any man thirst, let him *come unto me*, and drink." (John vii. 37.) What you need you will most certainly find in Him. No one who ever came to Him has been denied. Some one may ask: What are the terms upon which I may come? In Revelation xxi. 6 we read: "*I will give* unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Mark the words, "*I will give*." Not sell. "*I will give*." No, dear friend, He gives, and *gives freely*.

You ask, what am I to do to obtain this blessing? Read Revelation xxii. 17 for an answer. "And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, *let him take* the water of life *freely*." Note, *let him take*. Put these words together, *I give freely*, and *let him take . . . freely*, and you have the answer. How simple it is, in the goodness of God, for a thirsty, needy soul!

It is not all who can avail themselves of the healing waters at Bath, but *all* may come to Christ. How it reveals the greatness of God's grace: He gives, He is the

*giving* God! It is God-like to give. Let me urge you, my reader, to turn to God now. Put out your empty hand and take what is in the full hand of the giving God, and be for ever satisfied.

J. H. L.

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## “WITHOUT EXCUSE.”

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**I**T is one thing to make an excuse for convenience sake, but it is another to have a reason for being excused. The people that were invited to the wedding feast began to make excuses, but none of them had a good reason for their refusal of the king's invitation. But the man that went in without the wedding garment was equally guilty, because he failed to comply with the conditions upon which the invitation was issued, and when asked by the king why he was there without the wedding garment, he was speechless, having no excuse for his presumption. (Matt. xxii. 1-13.) It is very plain that there is no excuse for sinners who reject God's love and light, whether they have been born in heathen or christian lands. The heathen have had such clear revelation of God's existence that “they are without excuse.” (Rom. i. 20.) They have despised the riches of His goodness, which

should have led them to repentance. (Rom. ii. 1-4.) His testimony concerning His Son has gone forth unto all the world. (Rom. x. 16-18; Col. i. 6, 23.)

There is no excuse for sin. Adam blamed his wife, and she in turn blamed the serpent, but the righteous God did not accept their excuses. Reader, do not blame your surroundings for your continuance in sin, you alone are to blame. Saul, the first king of Israel, tried to lay his wilful act of disobedience at the door of the people, but Samuel pressed home upon him the fact of his personal responsibility to God. The excuse of the man that hid the pound was not accepted by his lord. (Luke xix. 20-23.) It is the work of Satan to suggest that God is to blame for all the wrong that is in the world, and that He is unjust in punishing a man who has sinned against Him. But God has proved His love in the gift of His only begotten Son. (John iii. 16.) "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world." (1 John iv. 9, 10.) God has provided a way of deliverance through which the sinner may be blessed in a way far beyond anything that Adam enjoyed before his act of disobedience.

## “GOD WITH US.”

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**I**N the Gospel of Matthew (chap. i.), the stupendous fact is stated that God had visited the scene His hands had once formed.

Dwelling in innocence, and surrounded by every mark of God's goodness, man was happy. Such was his beginning.

What filled up the interval between that moment and the scene presented in the chapter, can be summed up in two words, each weighted with a load of sorrow :

**sin and death.**

It was into such a scene stamped with ruin that God came.

Need we be surprised that when the news reached Herod “he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him”? Consciously unfit to meet God, their consciences were awakened by a sense of their guilt, and fear filled their hearts.

Let us in all honesty put ourselves in thought where they found themselves. How is it with you, reader? If the startling news should reach you that God had visited the town where you live, would you not be troubled? Ah, there was one question of all importance for Herod and

for us. The fact that He had come was beyond dispute, but the question was, in what character had He come. In regard to the question as to where He should be born, the scripture presented Christ as governor. (Isa. ix. 6, 7.)

They knew they could not stand before Him. Well might Herod the usurper tremble, well might the leaders of that day tremble also. The One who would maintain what was due to God had come.

And well may you, dear friend, be afraid if like them you have not learned the true answer to our question: in what character has God come?

Let us turn again to our chapter and see the blessed answer to it. It is seen in the name given to Him at His birth.

“Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for  
                                  **he shall save**  
his people from their sins.”

That which can soothe our troubled conscience, that which can wrest our helpless souls from the enemy's grasp, that which is the unfolding of God's heart, the blessed tale of delivering power and grace, is all wrapped up in that precious name,  
                                  **JESUS!**

What infinite love, bridging the whole distance between God and man, between the throne and the manger! God has come

near to me when I could not, and would not, come near to Him! Oh, let this mighty grace sweep aside both fear and opposition alike, that He who was denied His throne when here, may be enthroned in the affections of your heart.

E. L. M.

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## THE BEGINNING.

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“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” (Gen. i. 1.)

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**W**ITH these simple words the grand old Bible commences. No human being can deny their simplicity, no one can impugn their truth.

When was this beginning? God alone knows, but *He does* know. Where were you then? Can you measure yourself with the Infinite? It was before time began to be reckoned, in the vast eternity, but God was there. God alone was there. Have you ever been alone with God? God *worked* then, He *created* the heaven and the earth. Who assisted Him? He needed no assistance for He is omnipotent. “Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no



searching of his understanding.” “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” (John i. 1, 3.) Can you comprehend this? Who is the Word? One who *is* God. He who *created* all things and yet was *with* God. Do you understand this? No! Does any man understand this? No! Why not? “There is no searching of his understanding.” “Canst *thou* by *searching* find out God?” “Canst *thou* find out the Almighty unto perfection?”

“Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.” And yet creation, life, *His* footsteps (for man cannot give life) are printed by the waters themselves on the various stratified rocks placed by His own hand one above another in the earth’s crust. There we find to-day the fossil remains of the denizens of the land and sea of that immeasurable period indicated between the first and second verses of our chapter. Nature itself speaks loudly and eloquently of its Creator, God.

How man shrinks into insignificance in the presence of this Almighty God! How solemn the silence of that past period

when God was alone, was working alone, but working in view of man!

One little glimpse, however, He gives us of this scene, or we must have been in total darkness.

“Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and MY DELIGHTS WERE WITH THE SONS OF MEN.” (Prov. viii. 30, 31.) These are Wisdom’s words. Do you understand them? No! It is all contradictory, a mystery, unless you know God. Do *you* know God? “Some have not the knowledge of God.”

But all this is true. Before the world was fitted for man, in the long ages revealed by *true science*, God was there, thinking of man, of you. Then He planned to send His Son for your redemption, for Himself. He planned the character of body He would give His Son. He planned the universe over which He would set His Son as Man, when He would place all things under His feet. He is working now for this end “after the counsel of his own will,” for His own glory and for the eternal blessing of men.

This will be displayed one day when that Man shall be revealed with His redeemed and glorified companions. This

same Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, is now crowned with glory and honour, having by the grace of God tasted death for every thing.

Then will be manifested God's new "beginning," now seen and owned by faith in the resurrection of Christ. A Man in resurrection, He lives in a region where death can never, never enter.

Dear reader, do you know Him there? "A Prince and a Saviour!" Yes. A SAVIOUR FOR YOU, CHRIST JESUS THE LORD.  
J. V.

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## A MESSAGE TO YOUNG MEN.

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**I**N the front room of a small tenement in a London suburb a young man, nearly twenty years of age, lay dying. He was suffering from consumption in one of its worst forms. Unable to lie down he reclined on his bed, seeking to get any possible ease, as the hæmorrhage and consequent suffering were continuous. The case reached the ears of one who felt the seriousness of a soul passing into eternity unsaved, and he sent on to the dying youth a copy of "WORDS OF SALVATION."

Through the mercy of God some word

in it was received, and the Saviour was immediately known. What a change! a soul brought from darkness to light, the power of Satan broken. The Saviour and He alone now filled the vision of the dying man. He wanted to depart and be with Christ, and though he lived only a short time, yet he testified to parents and any others who called to see him of the worthiness of the Saviour.

I saw him about two days before he fell asleep. He only wished he had known the Saviour before. His trust in the Saviour was very simple. I called again on the evening before he passed away. He was very weak, only able to whisper. I repeated, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." I pressed several times the comfort of "*Thou art with me.*" He fully understood and assented. I asked if he had any message for some young men nearly his own age. In response he raised himself to a sitting posture, and in a scarcely audible voice said, "Tell them to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and they shall be saved."

Having said this he sank forward completely exhausted. Seeing how ill he was I did not stay to say more and I learned

afterwards that he passed peacefully away in about twelve hours.

Souls are perishing all around us, but God is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish. Perhaps my reader may have never realised how near he may be to eternity.

The same Lord, who saved the dying man of whom I have spoken, is rich unto all that call upon Him. Reader, I beg you to turn to Him and trust in Him alone for salvation. W. S.

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## INDIFFERENCE.

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**I**T is a simple matter to be deceived concerning the glad tidings of the gospel. Frequently one meets people who are under a misapprehension about the things of God, but scripture is very clear on all points.

It may be, dear reader, that you think that it is necessary to commit some great sin to incur God's displeasure, and that you do not recollect any great sin you have committed and that by seeking to do your best, you hope matters are all right with you!

But wait a moment, see what scripture says as to what God's thoughts are on this

subject. In Matthew xxii. we read that a certain king made a marriage feast for his son, and having provided everything, sent forth his servants with the invitation, for all things were ready. But instead of heartily responding, those who were bidden *would not* come.

Again he sent forth other servants, saying, "Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage."

Even then, when again pressed to come to the feast, some *made light of the invitation*, in other words, treated it with indifference; the rest took the king's servants and, after spitefully entreating them, slew them. This was their answer to the king's invitation.

Now, taking up this parable, let me ask, dear reader, how *you* have treated *God's* invitation. Even now He is sending forth the message, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isa. lv. 1.) And as this world has been proved to be a thirsty and barren land, which cannot yield anything for the true satisfaction of man's heart, God sends you this invitation to partake of His goodness.

You may not be one who openly opposes God's offers. It may be you have never once thought about these things and yet you know you need the blessing that is offered. Then, dear reader, you must be classed with the company who "*made light of it,*" and thus in God's reckoning you are no better than those who have taken His servants and slain them, and, solemn to say, the judgment which falls on the one class is the same as for the other. May it be granted to you to accept God's offer and be blessed by Him through Christ Jesus our Lord!

Q.

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## LOST OR SAVED, WHICH?

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**E**VERY person on the earth is either **LOST OR SAVED.** To which class do you belong, dear reader? You may say, "What do you mean by being lost? I have never been lost, either in town or country. I have always been able to find my way about." Well, that may be true, but the meaning of being *lost* implies a state of distance from God—being out of touch with Him—away from the place of nearness to Himself in which He has intended we should be. In Luke xv.

the sheep that had wandered from the fold, the piece of silver, and the son that went into a far country, are all said to be lost. In Isaiah liii. 6 it is said that "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way." Every child of Adam has followed in the footsteps of his father: that is—"*his own way*," and until he returns to God's way he is *lost*, not merely *going to be lost*, but already lost.

Now as the shepherd sought for the sheep, and the woman searched for the piece of silver, and as the father looked out for the son's return, so God sought for the lost and opened a way for their return when He gave His only begotten Son to die on Calvary, and now by the Holy Spirit He convicts the sinner of his lost and ruined condition, and also offers pardon and peace to every one. The Lord Jesus came Himself "to seek and to save that which was *lost*." (Luke xix. 10.) The sinner is not lost like the sheep in the sense that the owner has no knowledge of his whereabouts, because God knows, not only where the sinner is, but also what he is doing and thinking; but the sinner is lost in the sense of being out of touch with God, he is pursuing "his own way" instead of God's. A



religious man may be as far away as an irreligious one, because any religion that is not according to God's way is his own way—*man's way*. As long as a sinner trusts in his *own works* for salvation, so long he sets aside the work of the Lord Jesus at Calvary. He is "the way." No man can go to God but through Him. (John xiv. 6.) God calls upon the wicked to forsake his *way*, and the unrighteous to forsake his *thoughts*, and to return unto the Lord. (Isa. lv. 7.) Outward righteousness may cover a multitude of evil thoughts for men, but not for God. He knows every thought. (Psa. cxxxix. 1-12.) Being SAVED means being brought to God through the work of redemption which Christ has wrought. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only One that did God's will and on Him was laid the iniquity of us all. The innocent, sinless Son of God bore the penalty due to the rebellious children of Adam. Now, dear reader, the moment you are convicted by the Holy Spirit and are willing to turn from your own way, and believe God's statement concerning your need, and God's own provision for it, you will be saved. You are lost whether you know it or not, but you may be SAVED. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" TO-DAY.

F. J. A.

## AFTER MANY DAYS.

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**J**OHN FLAVEL, of Dartmouth, preached on one occasion from the words: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha." (1 Cor. xvi. 22.) The discourse was unusually solemn, particularly the explanation of what the curse was, for the expression Anathema Maran-atha means, accursed. At the conclusion of his preaching Mr. Flavel was about to invoke God's blessing upon the people when he paused and said: "How shall I bless this whole assembly when every person in it who loves not the Lord Jesus Christ is Anathema Maran-atha?"

The solemnity of the occasion deeply affected the audience. In the congregation was a lad named L—— S——, about fifteen years of age, a native of Dartmouth. Shortly after this he went to sea, landed in America, where he remained all his life. He lived to be a great age. When a hundred he was still able to work on his farm, and his mind was quite clear. All these many years he lived in sin and carelessness, quite forgetful of God. One day, however, as he sat in his field he began re-

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flecting upon his past life. He thought of the days of his youth. His thoughts went back to Mr. Flavel's preaching which he had heard so many years before. A considerable part of it he could remember, the earnestness of the preacher, the solemn truths preached, the effect on the audience, all came fresh to his mind. He felt he had not learned to love the Lord Jesus Christ, he feared he would come under the dreadful Anathema, he was deeply convicted of sin, he turned to the Lord in great brokenness and sorrow, owning himself to be an ungodly and good for nothing sinner. He put his simple trust in the precious blood of Christ and found joy and peace in believing. In the mercy of God he was spared to live until his one hundred and sixteenth year, giving every evidence of having been born again and brought to the Lord through the word spoken so many years before. What an example this is of the longsuffering grace of God, and also of the way in which the seed of God's word is brought to fruit by the Holy Ghost after many days. May it be a cheer to those who seek to sow the precious seed of the glad tidings and an encouragement to any who, having long continued in carelessness of God, desire to turn to Him, but little know how great is His mercy.

## MAN'S INVENTIONS, GOD'S INTERVENTION.

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“**L**O, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.” (Eccles. vii. 29.) Thus wrote Solomon—the wisest man of his day. And that he was right is evident, for men soon began to plan and scheme after they were placed on earth. This is clear from what is written in holy scripture according to the book of Genesis. In the early chapters we read how this was done and we know men have continued ever since.

“Let us build us a city,” they said, “and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven.” How ambitious and full of pride men were, and how forgetful of their Maker! Having begun to do this, God said of them, “Nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.” (Gen. xi. 4–6.) Evil ideas prompted the heart of man, the heart which is only evil continually. Such is the comment of scripture; and well may we say, as it is written in another place, “Let God be true.” Certainly what He has said of fallen man is true. Man evidently does not like to retain God in his thoughts.

To-day, in spite of the education and culture that in his fancied wisdom he boasts in, he is without hope and without God in the world. But God has intervened, blessed be His name, He has devised "means, that his banished be not expelled from him." (2 Sam. xiv. 14.) Wondrous fact that God could set One at His right hand, the delight of His heart, who is a "mercy-seat," and through faith in His blood remission of sins is proclaimed to all. Thus God's righteousness is declared. Wonderful declaration! All through the ages down to the present time we see how God's mercy has borne with man. Is not man an object of interest to God? But the day of grace will not always be present with you, for God has "appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world . . . 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. 31.) What will be your portion in that day if you are careless and indifferent? You will pass out of His presence unblest and you will assuredly come under His just judgment. You will then have missed your last opportunity for ever. Awful thought! See to it, and that right early, that you accept God's offer of forgiveness.

“There is no pardon in the tomb,  
And brief is mercy's day.”

Not long ago I went with a friend of mine to visit a man in one of the States of America. He was evidently dying, but did not appear to be conscious of it. When asked how he was, he said in a boastful way, “I shall soon be able to go to work.” But before a week had passed he was dead. How solemn it is that man desires to leave God out of his thoughts. He plans and schemes, as Jacob did, until God comes in that He may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from him. How great is His mercy to His creature, who ever lived and desired to live for his own will and lust. God will make you feel your need of Him. He may take you by a way similar to that of Jacob, or Job, but the end He desires is your blessing. Happy is that man who accepts the blessing from His hands.

E. J. E.

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## CHAOS.

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“**A**ND the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”  
(Gen. i. 2.)

It is very remarkable that the first description which God gives of the earth should present it as being in a chaotic state, a world suffering from the effects of destructive forces which had resulted in the extinction of life, light and order.

It had not always been so, for in Isaiah xlv. 18 we read, "God himself, that formed the earth. . . . He hath established it, he created it not *in vain*." The Hebrew word here translated "in vain" is the same as that rendered "void" in the verse quoted above. Hence God at first created the heavens and the earth perfect, and in order; but at some subsequent time, we know not how many ages after, or how often, the earth fell into a state of disorder as described in our verse. This gives ample time for all the physical convulsions demanded by scientists and shews that true science is always in agreement with divine revelation.

But why is this singular statement made on the very threshold of God's communications to man? May it not be to intimate that the whole of scripture is but a record of how God can recover a morally lost and ruined world and a race of responsible though fallen creatures from destruction, and bring them again into favour and

complete reconciliation with Himself in a new creation, if He chooses?

The writer was awakened one morning, some years ago, by an impression as if some one was slowly reciting to him Genesis i.

A feeling of deep solemnity stole over his spirit and he realised that he was alone in spirit with God.

Have *you* ever been alone with God, dear reader? As verse after verse passed before his mind: "And God said," "and God saw," "and God called," "and God made," so often repeated throughout the chapter, he realised something of what it is to be in the sphere of God's communications and God's activities.

In those days of which the Scripture speaks the Creator was alone bringing out of darkness, disorder and death a scene of beauty, order and life, for no one else was there. How infinitely small I felt in the holy presence of God, and yet my attention was arrested by the fact that the Creator was intensely interested in the welfare and blessing of man, and was preparing a beautiful world for his habitation and delight.

\* \* \* \* \*

Four thousand years have passed, and again we are face to face with a scene of



darkness and death, but it is moral rather than physical.

The awful events of Calvary have been enacted, man has crucified his Creator in the person of Jesus and the precious body of the Son of God lies silent in the borrowed tomb. What an awful sabbath for God to look down upon, closing the history of Adam's race in judgment. "Now is the judgment of this world." (John xii. 31.)

Death brooded over the whole scene. In love God had sent His Son to be our Saviour and man had consummated his guilt by the murder of the only One who could deliver from its power. The whole human race was under God's eye dead in trespasses and sins and the body of God's blessed Son was buried in the tomb dead *for* trespasses and sins. Man had closed in that sepulchre with a great stone and who could roll it away?

Righteousness, life, hope and joy had left this world and a pall of deep moral darkness covered the whole scene. Was there any hope for man now? None in himself, that was clearly evident, for no one could bring life toward God out of this awful state of things. Hope was alone in the *living* God. Man had destroyed himself, but the Creator of the universe, the God of resurrection, could and would bring

in a new creation on the basis of the perfection of the sacrifice of His Son.

Outside this moral chaos of spiritual death God would create a new world of heavenly and eternal glory of which His Son should be the centre, and thus He stepped in and by His almighty power

RAISED HIS SON FROM THE DEAD.

All your hopes, dear reader, and mine are centred in Christ Jesus, the risen Man at God’s right hand.

“ 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.” (Acts xiii. 38, 39.)

J. V.

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“ I’M GOING TO TAKE IT.”

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**A** FEW days ago, whilst I was distributing a few gospel books in W——, a poorly clad little fellow, not more than about four years of age, came running up and asked for one. I asked him what he was going to do with it, and his reply was so simple, that it touched my

heart; as I handed him a book, he said, "I am going to take it." What a lesson for those of us who are older. Can we not learn something from the simplicity of a little child? Indeed we can, if we are willing. Is not God Himself offering a full and free salvation to all who will just simply take it? The question is, what are we going to do with it? We have only, as it were, to put out our hand and accept what God offers.

Salvation is a very great thing. (Heb. ii. 3.) Great because of the greatness of Him from whom it comes, even God Himself. I am speaking of the salvation of the soul. I have a perishing soul, which needs saving. It needs saving because it is in danger of being lost for ever. But why this danger? Well! I have sinned against God, and apart from His salvation my sins would shut me out of His presence. No sin can ever come where God is. My soul will live when my flesh decays. But where is it going to live? In that place where Christ is, if my sins are forgiven. But if not, where then? Where Christ is not, "in outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. xxv. 30.) In "everlasting punishment." (Matt. xxv. 46.) But how can my sins be forgiven? how am I to be saved

by this great salvation? Christ has borne the judgment due to my sins. He has taken my place before God, and there He was forsaken. He died and was buried, but He has been raised again and has gone up on high, where He lives a Prince and a Saviour.

Now if I turn to God through Him, God will not visit me in judgment for my sins, when Christ has already died for sinners. He cannot, He will not do so. He will grant forgiveness fully and freely to all who turn to Him through the Lord Jesus Christ.

What wondrous love and grace on God’s part to have provided such a Saviour!

If the reader’s heart has never been touched by the love and grace of God, may it be so as he reads these simple lines.

To receive God’s offer of forgiveness is as simple as the little child’s receiving the book I offered to give him, and may the response of your heart be “ I’m going to take it.” It is God’s pleasure that you should be saved, for He has given His beloved Son to meet every claim of His throne, which neither you nor I could ever meet. That blessed Person died in the sinner’s stead and in the great grace of His heart He has proclaimed forgiveness.

to all. Are you going to take it? Take it now, for now is the day of salvation.

A. H. C.

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## NOAH'S CARPENTERS.

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THEY worked for Noah morn and night,  
 They built the ark to save from sin,  
 They lived in darkness, not in light,  
 And they refused to enter in.

'Twas by their help the ark was reared,  
 By which their master life might win,  
 Yet no alarm in them appeared,  
 No need *they* felt to enter in.

Warned by his God and moved with fear,  
 He laboured mid the hammer's din;  
 He shewed them how from wrath to steer,  
 Yet they refused to enter in.

They helped him well—the ark complete  
 Noah embarked with all his kin,  
 The creatures came with willing feet,  
 Still they refused to enter in.

The last day came; all was secure,  
 The work was done to the last pin,  
 The door was closed—salvation sure;  
 It was TOO LATE to enter in.

J. V.

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## “WHAT THINK YE?”

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**I**T was an angry crowd that gathered round the judgment hall of the Roman governor. They thirsted for blood. It was not the blood of some base creature who had stormed their houses and stolen their goods, nor was it a mere man who had set himself up in opposition to their laws and customs. No, it was One of whom men marvelled, wondering at “the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth,” He of whom His enemy was forced to say, “truly this was a righteous man.” It was Jesus the Son of God. It was but a little time before that He had stood among them and asked the question that has pierced thousands of hearts, “What think ye of Christ?”

No man was able to answer Him a word.

They were unable to answer that question then, but now another asked it in different words. It was Pilate. He had judged Him but could find no fault in Him. Going out to the people he asked, “What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?” With one voice they cried, “Let

him be crucified." They thirsted for His blood and in their hatred of Him they demanded His death. But why all this stir and hatred against THIS man? He was no less a Person than the Son of God. He had come down into this world to shew forth what God was and to reveal to man, ruined and away from God as he was, the deep love of God's heart. He came here with one object, to do the will of God. He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." But He uncovered man's sin, and it was because of this that they went about to kill Him.

He came to die. God had said that "it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul," and therefore the blood of Christ had to be shed before God could shew fully the depths of His love.

Jesus was taken and crucified. There on the cross again that question demanded an answer. Two thieves were crucified with Him and each had to give an answer. One despised Him, while the other owned Him as supreme, confessing his sin and thereby obtained the blessing Christ had come to bestow. Jesus died. His precious blood was shed and by this alone can your sins be removed. "The BLOOD of Jesus Christ his [God's] Son cleanseth us from

*all* sin.” He is now raised from among the dead and seated at the right hand of God, and He waits to bless with eternal blessing every one that trusts Him.

Let me ask you earnestly, “What think *ye* of Christ?” Are you living without Him while He waits on high to be gracious to you and to pardon your many sins?

Then live without Him no longer for you are losing all that will make you truly happy. Turn to Him in true repentance, in real acknowledgment of your many sins, and “He will abundantly pardon.”

May you be able to say, He is MY Saviour and MY Lord. H. C. S.

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## “NO PLACE FOR REPENTANCE.”

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**H**OW solemn is the Holy Spirit's record of Esau. First in the book of Genesis and again in Hebrews. It is said of him that he was a cunning hunter and a man of the field. There are many men in the world to-day like Esau, men who hunt for pleasure, but despise the grace and goodness of God. These are men



who are spending their days in revelry and self-pleasing. But alas, sooner or later they will find that "all is vanity and vexation of spirit." It is said that Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. He afterwards desired to inherit the blessing, but was "rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." (Heb. xii. 17.) Let me affectionately appeal to you. Has this been your experience, my reader? Have you desired blessing from God. He is greatly interested in you, He has unlimited blessing for you, which can be yours through the Lord Jesus Christ, who came forth to undertake the work of redemption, shedding His precious blood to put away sin. He, who knew no sin, was made sin for us. God can now, upon a righteous basis, offer forgiveness to all and deliver you from the guilt of sin in which you have stood before His eye. Nothing but the death and blood-shedding of Christ would put away sin. Having died and shed His blood He has put it away by the sacrifice of Himself, so that no question can be raised against the believer. Without doubt we are guilty, but our guilt need not hinder our coming to God. Christ Jesus has opened the way for "whosoever will." How great a person He is to have

done this ! Oh, will you not be persuaded to receive Him, and “ taste and see that the Lord is good ” ? Esau found no place of repentance, although he sought the blessing carefully with tears ! He sought it when it was too late. How earnest he was ! How deeply moved, even to tears ! Ah, Esau, thine opportunity is past ! And if for the reader such a moment should arrive, what then ? It has been said that “ salvation finally missed, is damnation eternally reached.” To-day there is a place for repentance. To-day you may have the blessing. Oh, that you may seek it earnestly, with true contrition of soul. Thus it is written, “ To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.” (Isa. lxvi. 2.) In hell there will be found no place for repentance, but remorse and anguish of soul. May Esau’s testimony be a warning voice to you ; and may you be persuaded to turn to Christ now in the day of grace and through Him receive the blessing God is so ready to give.

E. J. E.

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## LIGHT.

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“**A**ND God said, Let there be light : and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good : and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.” (Gen. i. 3-5.)

God is light, He loves the light and His children are “children of light and of the day.” All besides are darkness and are in darkness and “darkness has blinded their eyes.”

How solemn is this ! How is it with you, dear reader ? “Some have not the knowledge of God.” Have you ?

The first word spoken by God when He broke the silence of eternity was, “Light.” God said, “Light be,” and light was.

The first need of man and of the earth is light. “Shew me *myself*,” and “shew me *Thyself*” may well be the cry of each heart to God. We know neither ourselves nor Himself aright except in the light which He gives.

The Word (Christ) came into this world as life and light from God. "In him was life and the life was *the light of men.*" "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power [authority] to become the children of God." Thus by receiving Him we become children of God and of light and our home is the home of God who dwells in light. Blessed assurance! What a bright hope and prospect! Is it yours, dear reader? Have you thus received Jesus, God's Son, into your heart as light from God?

"God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 6.) Only thus can we know anything of God. "God is love," but we can only know this love in Jesus Christ. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, *Christ died for us.*" (Rom. v. 8.)

"God saw the light that it was good." He has raised His beloved Son from the dead, and all the light of God's glory shines now in His face, the accepted One (both as to His person and His work) on the right hand of God. Here is assurance! Here is perfect rest for the soul! We

find our rest where God has found His, in Christ.

The scriptures were written to convey to us *God's* thoughts, but wherever scientific things are referred to, their statements are distinctly ahead of the discoveries of men. A child believing the statements of Genesis i. one hundred years ago would have been in advance of all the scientific men of his day for he would have known, what all now admit, that light could exist apart from the sun which is not *mentioned* until the fourth day, though of course *created* ages before.

There is a realm of moral light and also one of darkness. To which does the reader belong?

The Colossians were "giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of *the inheritance of the saints in light*: who hath 'delivered us from the power [authority] of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love.'" (Col. i. 12, 13.)

Jesus is the light of God. Without Him all is darkness. The earth does not give itself light. How dark then must be that soul in whom God's light has never shined. Judas "went out" to betray the Son of God and "*it was night.*" What an eternal night of woe began for him at that

solemn and awful moment, when he deliberately turned his back on the Saviour whom he had seen, and with whom he had walked, but whom he betrayed to relentless foes.

“A night of speechless woe” is coming,  
“the blackness of darkness for ever.”

Oh, may reader and writer live ever in the bright light of the presence of the Lord, groping no longer in dark uncertainties, until the bright dawn of the perfect day, when darkness shall be dispelled for ever, for “there shall be no night there.”

J. V.

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## ARE YOU SATISFIED ?

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“As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.” (Prov. xxv. 25.)

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**H**EARTS which do not long for and appreciate sympathy, or that do not experience, more or less, a void which this world cannot fill, are surely rare! The god of this world ever seeks to hinder souls from enjoying true sympathy where only such can be found, and to fill up the aching void with the lust of the flesh, the

lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. (1 John ii. 16.)

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.) Should you as yet be unsatisfied, having experimentally proved the truth of the preacher’s words, “Vanity of vanities . . . all is vanity” (Eccles. xii. 8), hearken to the blessed words of One whose love passeth knowledge, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. xi. 28.)

It is more than probable that you have heard something about the love of God as displayed in Christ, and yet have not proved its reality. What is the hindrance? It may be that you are not simple enough, it is so with thousands, see Luke xviii. 17. You may possibly be occupied with your feelings, experience, or endeavours to do something. Can you add to a FINISHED WORK? Did God’s Lamb suffer for well-meaning, honest and respectable people? Scripture does not say so. On the contrary, He suffered “the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” (1 Pet. iii. 18.) He came “not to call the right-

eous, but sinners to repentance," "to seek and save the lost." Have you taken your right place?

"God NOW COMMANDETH ALL MEN EVERYWHERE to repent."

Think of these three words, namely, NOW, ALL, EVERYWHERE. (Acts xvii. 30, 31.)

The blessing may be missed through not PERSONALLY realising God's verdict, "ALL have sinned." All have thus earned sin's wages, namely death, and, after this the judgment, for "there is no difference."

What then is the remedy?

"To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 5.)

"Herein is our love [love with us] made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." (1 John iv. 17.)

Again, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John iii. 14, 15.)

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." (Heb. ix. 14.)



Accept, then, the pleadings of grace, and “let your soul delight itself in fatness.”

True humility is to believe God. (1 John v. 10–13.)

If you do so, you will have a FRIEND who can and will sympathise, and you will no longer have an aching void in your heart, but, on the contrary, will be enabled to “rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your soul.” (1 Pet. i. 8, 9.)

Oh, leave it all with Jesus,  
                                 Drooping soul,  
 Tell not half thy story,  
                                 But the whole,  
 Worlds on worlds are hanging  
                                 On His hands,  
 Life and death are waiting  
                                 His commands,  
 Yet His tender bosom  
                                 Makes thee room:  
 Oh, come home!  
                                 Come home!

E. F. M.

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# “WHAT WILL IT BE TO BE THERE?”

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**I**T is not difficult to realise that the change which Lazarus experienced (and of which we read in Luke xvi.) from wretchedness, suffering and want, to happiness, ease and comfort, in Abraham's bosom, was indeed most blessed. But the object of these few lines is to shew that a joy unspeakable can be known to faith by the power of the Spirit, which can lift the heart far above all which the world *at its best* has to offer. “In thy presence,” says the psalmist, “there is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

In a room of one of England's beautiful homes, encircled by a park of exquisite loveliness, a wealthy man of title lies on a sick bed, surrounded by wife and children, each devoted to the others, and between whom there has never been a jar or discord. It is Whit-Sunday (so-called); the air is balmy with the fragrance of flowering shrubs; the heavens are vocal with bird music; the cuckoo's note is

heard; and brilliant sunshine illumines as fair a scene as nature can furnish anywhere.

The sufferer is gently, lovingly told that he is dying; he has not been ill long and does not know how serious is his condition.

All that can gratify the senses must be left for ever. How will he receive the information? Has he anything outside and beyond the region of sight? How would you yourself accept such news, dear reader?

The sick man said, "Read me the collect for the day." The request was complied with, and there fell on dying ears the prayer that "we may evermore rejoice in the holy comfort" of the Spirit of God. Then he asked that his favourite hymns might be repeated, and his younger son repeated softly "Rock of Ages, cleft for *me*," "Abide with me," and "Jesus, lover of my soul."

Now, loving and tender last words—ah, so loving and so tender!—are lavished upon devoted wife and children; and afterwards comes the request: "Leave me alone with my God."

From the moment when he next spoke until his departure, which took place just as the evening bells rang out for service, the burden of all that the dying man thought and said was—

“What will it be to be there?”

There was no repining, no hard thoughts of God, no request for further time to enjoy the creature comforts which the bountiful hand of God had bestowed, but a sense of coming glory and joy, exceeding and eclipsing all that the world has to offer.

Reader, there is, in very truth, a home which Jesus fills, which the Holy Ghost can make living to the soul, and which faith can apprehend even in this life, which puts in its right place all that is found here below.

“ 'Tis Jesus fills that holy place  
Where glory dwells, and Thy deep love  
In its own fulness (known thro' grace)  
Rests where He lives, in heaven above.”

The Son will give an entrance into that same home which the Father's love gives to all who receive Him.

Have *you* given Him *your* trust? Oh, may you and I know something of the rapturous joy of the dear departed one, and be able to join in the longing cry—

“What will it be to be there?”

## THE EXPANSE.

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“And God said, Let there be a firmament [expanse] . . . . And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven.” (Gen. i. 6–8.)

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” (Psa. xix. 1.)

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**S**URROUNDING the earth is an envelope of air which we call the atmosphere, but which is here named the firmament. In it there always exists a vast quantity of watery vapour, evaporated by the sun from the sea, and often visible in the form of clouds, “the waters above the firmament.”

It would also appear from the above quotation, that under the term firmament is included the vast space in which the planets revolve, filled, as recent discoveries have attested, with an intensely rarified fluid called ether, of which God speaks in Isaiah xl. 22, “[He] stretcheth out the heavens as *thinness*.”

Man has never been able to cross this vast space, so that it remains uncorrupted by his sin, and still declares the glory of God. In the heavens order exists because

God controls everything, and man cannot interfere with God's appointments. "He *appointeth* the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down." (Psa. civ. 19.)

There is another thing God has appointed, and this too man can neither avert nor shun: "*It is appointed* unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27), and "God *has appointed a day*, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." (Acts xvii. 31.)

The heavens are entirely God's domain, and man would be an intruder even if he could ascend into that sphere. "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men." (Psa. cxv. 16.) When man essayed to build a tower "whose top might reach unto heaven" (Gen. xi. 4), and thus make himself a name, God came down and by judgment confounded his project. Now he is trying by another means (aerial navigation), but he will only cause God again to interfere and say, "You are a trespasser here, depart." Man will never succeed in entering God's domains except in the way God has provided. The Lord is coming quickly; this the scripture plainly declares, and though man cannot hasten the appointed day, yet

his thoughtless but daring attempts to trespass are but some among many intimations that judgment will not long be delayed.

We have forfeited our life on earth by sin. "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Is it possible to obtain life and access to heaven, and if so, how? Does this important question interest you, dear reader?

"Man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and WHERE IS HE?" Only God can open heaven, but has He done so? How vital the answer to this question! "The heavens were opened unto *him*." (Matt. iii. 16.) Who is this? Hear the Father's announcement, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Ver. 17.)

The mighty expanse separates heaven from earth and no man can bridge or navigate this vast region. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth *in him* should not perish, but have eternal life." (John iii. 14, 15.) God's Son has come from God to us to make Him known in the plenitude

of His love. He *could* have returned by the way He came, but it must have been alone. This He *would* not do. He gave Himself to undergo the judgment we deserved, and to die, to remove every hindrance and to open the way for us.

He has been raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and having by Himself purged our sins has seated Himself at the right hand of the Majesty on high. There, having been exalted by God, as Man, the announcement is made from the throne of God, "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through THIS MAN is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."

Stephen "looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." (Acts vii. 55.)

Through the perfection of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the heavens were opened upon a man like ourselves, and when killed by his foes, he passed at once into the presence of the Lord. There is only one way from earth to heaven. Dear reader, do you know it? Jesus has said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh *unto the Father*, but by me." (John xiv. 6.)



## THE TWO WAYS.

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“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” (Matt. vii. 13, 14.)

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**I**T is a solemn, but undeniable fact that God, who at the beginning, when taking a review of His creation on this earth, pronounced it very good, had to command the man, into whose hands He had given the control of everything, to go out from before Him. The reason for this was that he had sinned and thus everything was spoilt here for God, and the man who had opened the door to sin had to go out from the garden, for he had come under the dominating power of Satan, and so become *sinful*. “So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword *which turned every way*, to keep the way of the tree of life.” (Gen. iii. 24.)

The right to that way was lost to the man of the earth for ever, and this earth which should have been beautiful in life, became a scene of death. **DEATH REIGNS.**

Now, lest the man should attempt to re-enter the place he had forfeited and eat of the tree of life and live for ever, the Cherubim and the flaming sword were placed there to keep the way.

Man's endeavour ever since has been to escape death, under which all flesh is lying, but from whatever point he approaches—whether from the direction of “doing his best,” “good works,” “religiousness,” or any other way he is met by the “sword which turns *every* way.” And it must be repeated, “death reigns over him.” The truth of this is borne witness to by the passing away of generation after generation. “Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Rom. v. 12.) Solemn words!

If then man is not able to continue here by reason of death, it may be reasonably asked, where does he go when he leaves this scene? (for in death he does not cease to exist; the death of the body is in reality but one stage of the journey upon which he has set out). The answer is, “*he goes to the end of the path HE HAS CHOSEN.*”

We say “chosen,” because, while righteousness pronounced judgment and holiness expelled the sinful man, mercy has provided a way of deliverance. The choice between two ways is given to us *here* and

*now*, but the choice must be made *here*, for everything the other side of death is fixed, and we know not how soon death may come to any one of us.

In the scripture quoted at the head of this paper, men are exhorted to enter in at the *strait* gate to the *narrow* way which leads to life.

All men naturally are on the broad way to destruction, and this must be so because of the sentence divine justice has pronounced upon the race, root and branch (for all partake of the character and nature of the fallen head—Adam); but divine love, not willing that any should perish, calls men's attention to the strait gate and the narrow way.

It is the earnest desire of the writer that these few lines may be used to draw attention to the voice that is calling to all that are treading the broad way to retrace their steps ere it is too late.

The strait gate is found by the cross of Calvary, where the Lord Jesus Christ in tender love gave up His life, being made sin for us sinners, Himself the spotless, the holy One, that we might be saved. He tasted death that we might enjoy eternal life with Him who loved us, even unto death.

The narrow way begins at the cross,

where He died, and ends in life, eternal life. May every reader of this paper find it without delay and flee from the wrath which is surely and swiftly coming on all those who are disobedient. E. D. S.

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## HEARER OR MURMURER, WHICH?

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**T**HERE are two classes of people in the world in the present day, those who are ready to hear, and those who are ever ready to murmur, to grumble, and find fault. It was so when the Lord Jesus was here, as is clearly indicated in Luke xv. 1, 2.

In the last verse of the previous chapter He exhorted the people to hear, saying, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." You will notice it is a very individual thing, each one is to hear for himself; and immediately following this exhortation we read, "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him."

It is well for us to take heed to what the Lord says. He is the only Person worth listening to.

But they had to draw near in order to hear Him. Why? A great deal depends upon *drawing near* to Jesus, dear reader.

Have you ever drawn near to Him? In order to hear there must of necessity be a drawing near on our part.

At the time of which I write it was the sinners who drew near for to hear Him: they were the very ones He came to seek and to save.

But then there were those who murmured. "The Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." There was no blessing for the Pharisees. They were self-righteous, they boasted in what *they* were, and despised others. (See Luke xviii. 9-14.) The Pharisee prayed with himself! No wonder he did not go away justified as the poor publican did, who owned himself a sinner in the sight of God. If he is to be justified he must take the same ground as the poor publican, who went down to his house justified. Jesus said: "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Luke v. 32.) And He did receive sinners and ate with them.

May your ears be opened to hear His voice and may you draw near to Him, and instead of murmuring put your trust in Him.

## NOTHING TO PAY, BUT FREELY FORGIVEN.

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**T**O be heavily in debt, to have nothing to pay and yet to be freely forgiven is a thing so remarkable that many would be glad to hear of it. Let me explain how it came about.

When Christ entered the Pharisee's house in response to an invitation to take a meal with him, and having taken His place at the table, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, came behind Him bringing an alabaster box of ointment. Here she stood weeping, washing His feet with her tears, kissing them, and anointing Him with the ointment. Simon, the Pharisee, seeing her behaviour, spake within himself thus: "This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him, for she is a sinner." But Jesus turned to Simon and said, "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee."

Simon replied, "Master, say on."

Then Jesus answered and said, "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence,

and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most.”

Simon replied, “I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most.” Of course, how could it be otherwise? But in so saying the Pharisee had condemned himself.

Jesus turned to him and said, “Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.”

“And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.”

Among the many readers of this paper there are those who answer to the description both of the fifty pence debtor and the five hundred pence debtor. Some, doubtless, are people who have never done any serious wrong, as people speak, they have always “paid their way,” and have

been held in high esteem by neighbours and friends. Possibly, also, they have regularly attended religious service and have not neglected either to pray or read the holy scriptures. But **NEVERTHELESS THEY ARE DEBTORS.** "Fifty pence debtors" you may say, and perhaps it is so; but they have "nothing to pay." And on this wise. They have "sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and "the wages of sin is death."

Is there any one, high born or of humble rank among men, who can look up into God's face, and say, "I have not sinned." No! There is none who can do that.

Are you, my reader, a person of blameless life, such as I have described? If so, let me point you to the solemn fact that you have *nothing to pay*. Your good works have not *altered your nature*, nor can it be said that your good life is **SINLESS**. That you are not so guilty as many others no doubt is true, but you have sinned. This, I am sure, you will admit; and you have nothing to pay; you cannot put away your sins, nor can you change your nature, which is sinful instead of sinless. Look at the case how you will, your need is great, for you **HAVE NOTHING TO PAY.**

But then there are the "five hundred



pence debtors.” They have nothing to pay, and know it. The trouble in their case is not to convince them of their need but to convince them that they are freely forgiven, if they own their sin in brokenness of spirit, as the poor woman of the city, who was a sinner, did.

Yet it is so, and more, for both the fifty pence debtor and the five hundred pence debtor are frankly forgiven if there is repentance in their hearts toward God.

How wonderful this is. That God has made known His thoughts of goodness and grace, and in virtue of the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross forgiveness is proclaimed to all in His name.

May readers of either class of whom I have spoken be awakened to see that **THEY HAVE NOTHING TO PAY**, and at the same time be brought to see also, that, as in the parable, “he frankly forgave them both,” so God has proclaimed in the gospel forgiveness of sins to all in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord.

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## WISDOM AND FOLLY.

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**FOLLY** desires the pursuit of passing pleasure; wisdom looks forward to future, lasting happiness.

The dictionary meaning of the word "fool" is "a person of weak intellect." If this definition be exact, there must, we fear, be a great number of such persons in the world.

Scripture tells us of many fools, and we propose to say a few words upon some of them.

In Psalm xiv. we read of the *infidel* as "a fool." God does not stop to reason with him, but rather shews where the folly lies—namely, *in his heart*. In his heart, too, many an infidel knows that Christianity is a force on which he himself is sometimes glad to reckon. Let me illustrate my meaning by a short story. Two men had to convey a large sum of money through a remote and sparsely populated district. One night they received accommodation at a rough hut, and it was agreed that the men should take turns in watching and sleeping. On putting out the light in a room assigned to them, they saw through a crack between rough boards the owner of the shanty reach down an old book, read attentively for a time, and then kneel down at his bedside. The man who was to take the first watch spoke to his friend, and soon the two men were sleeping peacefully. Wherein lay their assurance? In the fact that they were in

a place where God was known and owned. A blatant infidel in Australia announced publicly that, on a certain day, he would call upon God to strike him dead, if any God existed. If death did not follow, then, according to the infidel, there was no God at all. The day came, and many were present when with uplifted hand the man called upon God to strike him dead upon the spot. Apparently nothing happened, and the infidel was loud in his reiterations of utter disbelief. He did not remark that a fly settled on his raised hand and stung it; within three weeks the scoffer was dead. The God of all grace gave him three weeks in which to repent and turn to Him. God came down—as indeed we read of Him later in this psalm—not to destroy or punish, but “to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.”

It does not much matter what foolishness men ascribe to us; it might even be a compliment to be called a fool, in certain society; but when God says, “Fool,” the matter is one of serious moment. For the man who brings forward flippantly stock phraseology picked up from literature of the day against the existence of a God we have no word to say. Be very sure that reverent and even eager thought into

the profoundest mysteries of God is never discouraged by the eternal God.

Shall we read what is the end of him who persistently says in his heart, "There is no God"? In 2 Thessalonians i. 7, 8 are the words, "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."

In Luke xii. another fool comes before us. This is a hard-working, prosperous farmer; everything flourishes with him; prices are good, and there is no matter for dissatisfaction, except the fact that his barns will not hold all the produce of his fruitful fields. We seem to see him stepping out the measure of the large and new buildings which he purposes to erect, but while he is thus occupied a voice calls to him, "Thou fool!" He turns to note the speaker, but as he does so a faintness comes over him, and, falling to the ground, he soon expires. He has lost both worlds, for he toiled and slaved and hoarded down here, looking on to a time of happiness and enjoyment *which never came*. And though, possibly, crowds attended his funeral, and a costly tomb was erected over his ashes, God said of him, "Thou fool!" Satan is spoken of in Luke iv. as

the dispenser of this world's glory. Do you not prefer the true riches, which God is ever ready to bestow?

Next, we will speak of the *argumentative* fool of 1 Corinthians xv. He asks, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" The reply is, "Thou fool!" Man, a creature, tries to put himself on a level with his Creator, and he is profuse in argument when he is not asked to understand, but only to believe. Do you desire a God so small, so like yourself, that you can reach, with your puny mind, up to the heights of the unsearchable wisdom, and can answer boldly in the affirmative Job's question, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" Can your intellect grasp the idea of infinite space? Does the vast distance between star and star convey any tangible thought to your mind? Can you understand a being who existed from all eternity and will exist through all the coming ages? Do you say, "I will not believe anything that I cannot understand." Then you are reducing the almighty God to the level of your own insignificance.

"I will not receive the word unless you can tell me why God allowed sin to come into the world," a man once said to Brownlow North. "Because He chose!"

was the reply. "And take care, man, that He does not thrust you into hell, although He gave His Son to die, in order that you might never go there, if you put your trust in Him." Friend, your thoughts concerning God are not worth trusting in; but God's thoughts to you are good, and not evil.

Our *heart* is no more worthy of implicit trust than our *head*. "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." (Prov. xxviii. 26.) "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. xvii. 9.) "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man." Would you put your money in a certain bank if you knew that the senior partner was a rogue? And are you trusting in your heart, from which proceed all the evils of which we have just heard? No. Turn away from self—that self of head and heart. Be no longer a fool, but cry, "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise."

Perhaps the most despicable of the fools spoken of in scripture is the *hypocrite*, described in Luke xi. 40. Outwardly he is irreproachable, but he may be likened

to an egg, of which the shell is turned over, after the contents have been extracted. The shell may be offered for food, but all the meat has gone; only in appearance is the egg an article for consumption. So the hypocrite may deceive those around him. But does not God know him? Is there knowledge in the Almighty? Directly the ailing woman touched the hem of the great Healer's garment, Christ knew all about the contact. And think you that the All-seeing can be deceived, or that a mean sham can pass muster before the eye of a holy God? The outside of the cup and platter may be clean, but God looks at the heart. God's verdict is, "ye fools." May He grant that any sham Christian who reads these lines may cease to be a mere professor, and never rest till he becomes a possessor knowing God's great Gift.

Another kind of fool is described in Psalm cvii. There we read, "Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted . . . then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses. He sent his word, and healed them." Happy fools! In the affliction and trouble, caused by their folly and sin, they turn to the Lord, and seek their help from

Him. Instantly the help comes. "He sent his word, and healed them." Sick sufferer, have you turned to the great Physician? If not, delay no longer to test His healing power; and then you, too, may join in the jubilation of the psalm: "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

Let us think now of other fools—so called by the Lord Himself. "O fools," said the risen Christ to the disciples of Emmaus, "and slow of heart to believe *all* that the prophets have spoken." A well-known verse states: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Let me ask you, "Do you trust wholly on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation?" "Yes," you say, "I do." "Are you saved?" I ask further, and you reply, "I hope so," or "I cannot tell." You are, surely, proclaiming yourself foolish. If you take part of God's word, and rely on the Saviour therein presented, why not take the whole, and accept the emphatic declaration of God, that in believing you are saved? At the end of the verse which we have quoted there is a promise which embraces not only you, but yours. Have you claimed it? Are you one with God in His thought for the salvation of your



house? While you pray for its early accomplishment, and while you do your best, by precept and example, to bring it about, "not a hoof," which is yours, "shall be left behind." Reader, may you, as well as the writer, hasten to believe ALL that the Lord has spoken.

In 1 Corinthians x. 10 the expression occurs, "*Fools for Christ's sake.*" The writer of the words was a highly educated, cultivated man, who was accustomed to speak with authority, and whose opinion carried weight in the world. But now he had an object outside the world, he had come into living contact with God's Son in glory, and all that he had to do with the world was to testify against it that its deeds were evil. Consequently he was regarded as a fool by the world. He was then a "fool for Christ's sake." But when values are rightly appraised, then that which the worldling esteems as folly will be found worthy of the award of a crown of glory which fadeth not away.

Better be a fool for Christ's sake than a fool stricken down in the judgment of God.

E. C—P.

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"TROUBLED."—The Editor has received your letter, but does not altogether agree. You ought to confess all to the person you have wronged. (See James v. 16, Matt. v. 23, 24.)

# THE FAR COUNTRY; OR, THE FATHER'S HOUSE.

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**I**N the parable which the Lord related to those who drew near to Him, as recorded in Luke xv., we have a vivid picture of the ingratitude of man to God.

The "younger son," having received the portion of property which his father allotted to him, took his journey into a "far country," and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

In our case we have taken all that God has given us—and what a wonderful endowment it is! Intelligence, strength, sight, smell, speech, hearing—life itself; all these we have taken from God, and alas, many are still wasting them in the "far country," at a distance from God. And with riotous living! Yes, and what is that? A riot is the refusal to obey law. Is the sinner obeying the laws of God, does he even acknowledge God at all? Do you, my reader?

No, it must be confessed that in his unconverted state man is wasting his substance with riotous living. And what

will the end be, when the sinner begins to be in want; when that which God has so richly given begins to fail? If our health is impaired, if we lose our sight or hearing, or become crippled, does that which the far country can furnish satisfy us? Ah, no! It is *then* we find that no *man* can give us *what we really need*. The citizen of the "far country" may send us into his fields to feed swine—this is *his* best; but how sad is the lonely sinner; what a sense of shame fills his heart as he thinks of the "father's house," or to interpret the parable—God, upon whom he has turned his back!

Reader, have you reached that point; have you thought of some whom you have known in years gone by—people upon whom you looked down as inferior to yourself, but who knew a joy and satisfaction to which you are a stranger?

As you think upon it, and upon your own wayward path, does a sense of your sin fill your soul; do you say, "I have sinned against heaven and before thee"?

If so, let me tell you the rest of the Lord's teaching. It is this: God has seen you when you were a *great way* off, nay more, He has "run to meet you." In the person of Jesus God has drawn near to every man, and has given expression to

His great love. In the parable we read, "when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." Wonderful picture of what God has done!

"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

This is the way in which God has responded to man's sin—the God whose gifts we have taken and wasted on ourselves; the God whom we have slighted, and against whom we have sinned, has given His Son to die in our stead. And the curse under which we lay, as sinners, that blessed One, Christ Jesus has borne. The judgment which our sins deserved He has borne also; and death, which was the wages of our sins, He has tasted. His holy head has been bowed in death. But, thank God, He is risen again, and lives on high, a Saviour to whom all may come, who died the Just for the unjust to bring us to God.

May the language of your heart be: "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee"! At such a moment you shall know the greatness of His love who can say: "Bring

forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet." And you shall know the greatness of His grace, who commends His love to us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

Come to Him now, for "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Pet. iii. 9.)

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### **"FAR BETTER."**

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**T**AKING up "WORDS OF SALVATION" to-day, I read with interest an article entitled, "What must it be to be there." A blessed place indeed heaven must be! How "far better" and far eclipsing every earthly happiness are the "pleasures for evermore" and "fulness of joy" known only in the presence of God. But are all sure of getting there? How many people would be only too thankful to know with certainty that heaven was their destiny! There are many Christians too, who have a lurking suspicion, if not confirmed idea, that they will have to pass through some kind of process after death

to fit them for the presence of so holy a Being as we know God to be, and would feel it presumption to be quite sure in this life of forgiveness and fitness for heaven.

Let us consider what the scriptures say on the subject. For it is with a view to help such cases I pen these few lines.

The Apostle Paul was commissioned and sent to Gentiles (so we are told in Acts xxvi.) to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ. How wonderfully this devoted servant of Christ fulfilled his ministry ! From place to place he journeyed, often midst most difficult circumstances, telling people this wonderful message.

Simple indeed it was, but how clear and direct : “ Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” Turn to God from idols, from the power of Satan to God, and RECEIVE the FORGIVENESS of SINS.

Many believed, and as a consequence, received the blessing.

The Epistle to the Colossians was written by the Apostle Paul to some who had believed this blessed news ; and in it

we read of three things for which they could give thanks.

We do not give thanks for what we want, but for what we *have*. We can pray for things we need, but when we give thanks it is because we possess something, or because God has done something for us.

Now notice what these believers could give thanks for:—

(1.) The Father had made them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

(2.) He had delivered them from the power of darkness and translated them into the kingdom of His dear Son.

(3.) They had redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

Remember, they gave thanks for these things, that is, they *had* them. They had believed God's message in the gospel, and amongst others, these were some of their blessings.

Let us briefly notice them in detail, taking them in reverse order to that in which they are stated, because in Colossians usually the highest blessings are put first, and those we commence with are given afterwards.

*First* then, their sins were forgiven, they had redemption through the blood. What a blessing! As Israel under the

shelter of the blood of the passover lamb were secure from the judgment which fell on Egypt, so those who believe God's message have redemption, not through any merit of their own, but through the blood of Jesus. Their sins are put away for ever by His sacrifice. (Heb. x. 12.) “The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” (1 John i. 7.)

*Secondly.* They were translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Again the children of Israel afford us a type—for as they were not only sheltered from judgment by the blood of the lamb, but delivered right out of Pharaoh's dominions—through the Red Sea—and came under the leadership of Moses, so believers have been translated from the “power of darkness” (that is from under the rule which Satan held over them through the world in one of its many forms) and they are now in the kingdom of God's dear Son. Christ is not only our Saviour (having put away our sins by His death) but, risen from the dead, He is our LORD, our Leader, and we are under His rule. And as God saved Israel (Exo. xiv.), so we believe on the *Lord* Jesus Christ and are saved. (Acts xvi. 31.) Happy people indeed! saved by the Lord.

*Thirdly.* The Father had made them



meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

God's plan for His people the children of Israel was not to take them from under the rule of Pharaoh and leave them in the desert. He would also bring them *in*, into His land of promise. So is it also with believers—we have a land of promise—not an earthly, but an heavenly land, and God has already made us fit for it. All that *we* were—our sins and ourselves—all has been removed by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and now risen and in heaven He is the measure of our acceptance. “As he is, so are we in this world.” God *hath* made us meet or fit. Presumption it would be indeed if we thought we were *fit in ourselves*, and presumption it is if we think we can make ourselves fit. In fact God could not make us *fit in ourselves*: our fitness is all in another, the Lord Jesus Christ. We are accepted in Him.

Yes, heaven is the destiny of every believer, and at any time He may call us home—home in His presence where there is fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

What, indeed, must it be to be there? And how blessed to know that God has made us meet—even now—for the inheritance of the saints in light.—M. W. B.

**REMEMBER!**(ECCLES. XI. 7 ; XII. 2.)  

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**WHAT** a wonderful faculty is memory!

How good to be able to recall and to enjoy over again pleasant scenes—happy events which are past, and to live over again in thought that which has given us pleasure.

But on the other hand, how often things recur to our minds which we would fain forget, but which we have no power to dismiss. It is very important then that our attention should be fixed upon that which is good, and that there should not be anything in our ways which we would not like to recall.

Probably with most of us our happiest memories are connected with our childhood or youth, when our circumstances were more under the control of others, and our responsibilities and troubles were neither so many nor so great.

It is often said that earliest recollections remain the longest, and that in extreme old age the mind more frequently reverts to childhood's days than to later years. How important then that we should pay heed to the gracious warning and exhortation of Him who knoweth our frame, and

remembereth that we are dust; He who has every right to our earnest attention, and whose word to all is, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

God has rights over us as Creator, for "in him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts xvii. 28.) But the natural man does not respect those rights, nor does he desire to retain the knowledge of God (see Rom. i. 19-25), because "the carnal mind is enmity against God." (Rom. viii. 7.) Nevertheless, He graciously seeks to gain our attention.

Let the mind, especially of the young reader, turn to Him, ere it be filled with that which savours of earth and evil, to Him who only is good; and where the mind is fixed the heart will soon follow.

Consider Him, and He will make you to know, in the love of His heart, how He has met and will meet all your need.

But lest you should turn from His voice and follow the bent of your natural heart, let me call your attention to a parable uttered by the Lord Jesus Himself.

In Luke xvi. 19-31, two men are mentioned, one living for himself and his own

selfish enjoyment, clothed luxuriously, faring sumptuously, having his portion in this life, and without a thought of God, or of the poor beggar at his gate. Now in Deuteronomy xv. 7, 8 the Israelite was commanded to care for the poor and in the law provision is made for them (see Lev. xix. 9, 10); moreover, those who forget them are classed by God as wicked. (Prov. xxix. 7.) Is it any wonder then that the man who lived regardless of God and His law should, at the end of his life here, find himself in hell?

Psalm ix. 17, 18 reads thus, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that *forget God*. For the needy shall not alway be forgotten." Let God be true though every man be found a liar: His word must stand. So this rich man must leave his riches and find himself in the poverty of death and in hell. Now, although when on the point of death the person may be unconscious, the scripture we are considering shews plainly that the moment death's gloomy portals are passed, full consciousness returns, for we read, "in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham *afar off*, and Lazarus in his bosom:" the once rich man in torment, the once poor man at rest. And memory

awakes the rich man to the recollection of what he once enjoyed, only to increase his sufferings. His tongue, which once tasted the delights of earth, now thirsts for *a single drop of water*, and this is denied him.

Now, when it is too late, he can remember his brethren, but the prayer which he neglected in his lifetime is unavailing now. Beloved reader, if you are living in forgetfulness of God and your relatives, let me earnestly beseech you to consider the destiny of this man, of whom nothing bad is said, as men speak, but who remembered not his God and kept not His commandments.

Through the infinite value of the precious blood of God's own Son who died on Calvary for sinners, God can put away your sins for ever and remember them no more. He has said of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. x. 17.) Precious words! May the reader know experimentally the preciousness of them, and remember now Him who has claims over him not only as Creator but also as Redeemer.

## IT IS APPOINTED.

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**I**T is said that not long ago a man requested that when he was dead his body was to be burned and the ashes carefully collected and carried by friendly hands to some high mountain peak and flung to the four winds of heaven.

He died and his request was granted.

Foolish man! did he think that by such means he would escape the day of judgment? I do not know whether that was his reason, but I fully expect that it was.

And can any of us escape that day, in which the secrets of all hearts will be revealed, when God will judge every one according to the deeds done in the body? No, at least, not by burning the body and casting the ashes in the air. There is a way of escape, but it has not been found by human hands.

How foolish men are! Do they suppose that the use of such means as we have referred to can destroy the soul? Some do, alas! or, at least, they say they do. Let it be remembered that when man dies

his *spirit* returns to God who gave it. (Eccles. xii. 7.)

The body may crumble to ashes, but what is that to Him who made it? "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John v. 28, 29.)

Man, with his finite mind, may say, "It cannot be," but take heed, I pray you, lest you be deceived as to these things. God has rights over us all as His creatures, and unless we heed the call of His grace in the gospel, depend upon it we shall be compelled to answer His call to judgment. Awful day, indeed, will that be! Day of which, I trust, the reader may know nothing.

The apostle, to whom it was given to see a vision of that day, wrote—"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell [hades] delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.”

The scoffer may raise his voice in protest, and say that these things shall never be, but let him know that IT IS APPOINTED UNTO MEN once to die, but after this the judgment. (Heb. ix. 27.)

Progressive thought may teach that man's wonderful work in the direction of social reform and the reduction of taxation by the removal of national armament will, by-and-by, usher in a millennium, but let the reader remember that God's Son has been cruelly murdered in this earth and cast out as worthless, and let him ask himself the question whether such sin is likely to pass unnoticed by heaven.

And yet, thank God, there is another side of the matter—a side to which I gladly turn, and that is to speak of the grace of God, set forth so beautifully in the gospel.

The GRACE OF GOD! and what is that?

Blessed story of comfort for a contrite heart!

Reader, I need not remind you that you are a sinner, you *know* that and perhaps you are smitten in your con-



science even now. But there is glad tidings.

Neither your sins nor your sinful state could escape the judgment of God's throne—judgment which must fall if the holiness of that throne was to be upheld. No, but God has found a way by which salvation can be preached to the ends of the earth. His Son became a man and in such condition took up our case and died under the judgment of the throne of God. There in that hour of woe and darkness on Calvary He died as the sinner's substitute, and all who come unto God by Him receive forgiveness of sins, through faith in His blood. They appear before God in Christ Jesus, He who is risen again from the dead; and there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

No, thank God, they shall never come into condemnation, but are passed from death unto life. (John v. 24.)

Reader, if you would escape that terrible day of wrath, of which I have spoken, BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED. (Acts xvi. 31.)

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## CHRIST OR OPINIONS.

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**I**T is only a question of opinions! How often we hear these words spoken when speaking to men and women about their souls; they own that they believe there is a God, they have a hope of going to heaven when called to leave this earth. Such persons would scorn to take God's name in vain or to forget their church services, which they attend with a rigid regularity. Speak to them of eternal things they will say, I am going to heaven one way, you are going another, we shall meet in the end. The difference between us is only a question of opinion. Is it true? It behoves us to think!

We can turn to no other guide than the holy scriptures. Therein we read: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John xiv. 6.) "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts ii. 36.) "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.)

There is *one* way and *one* name. The

Lord Jesus plainly says, "I am the way," and after He had ascended into heaven the Holy Spirit said, by the apostle, "There is none other name."

We read also : " This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner." (Acts iv. 11.)

It is because Christ is " set at nought " that men have different views and opinions as to God and His ways. God has raised Jesus from the dead and exalted Him far above all things and He has decreed that every tongue shall confess Him Lord and every knee bow to Him.

Men and women to-day are trusting church attendance, prayers, good works of many kinds, and rejecting or ignoring the Saviour, who sits at God's own right hand.

Where is the difference between those who know the blessed God as their Father, Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, and rejoice in the knowledge of sins forgiven ; and those who, under the pretence of going to God, reject the true way of which the Bible speaks ?

Is it not that those who know the blessed certainty of which the Bible speaks have owned to God their lost and ruined condition and trusted Jesus and His precious

blood ; while there are others who have “ set at nought ” God’s beloved Son, who came into the world “ to seek and to save that which was LOST.” Occupied with their own good works and self-righteousness, which God says are “ filthy rags,” they have not listened to the voice that says, “ There is none that doeth good.” “ There is none righteous, no, not one.” They have never known the blessed peace which comes to a *ruined sinner* who accepts in faith such precious words as these : “ The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from ALL sin.”

Dear reader, are you one such, are you trusting in anything else but the Lord Jesus Christ ? Need I press that God says, “ All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

Jesus is a living Saviour, waiting that you may know through Him the blessed peace which His precious blood has secured, for since He has died and risen again God can freely pardon your many sins and give you to rejoice in the knowledge of Himself. May you know the blessed rest that comes to those who trust in Christ alone !

Nothing but the precious blood  
 Can give lasting peace with God  
 For the heart so dark, so stained with sin and guilt ;

There is nothing can atone  
But the blood of Christ alone,  
Blood which Christ in love for guilty sinners spilt.

H. C. S.

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## THE ONLY WAY.

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**W**HATEVER may be taught by men concerning the character of God, and His dealings with the unsaved, His word unmistakably declares that there is "ONE God, and ONE mediator between God and men, the man CHRIST JESUS; who gave HIMSELF a ransom for ALL" (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6), and the Lord Himself said, "I AM THE WAY, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, BUT BY ME." (John xiv. 6.)

It matters not what other ways may be taken by men, whether they are good or evil, they will all end in death. (Prov. xiv. 12.)

Many of the pious statements of a false charity about hell and the love of God reveal the utter ignorance of the human mind concerning the true nature both of God and of sin.

The words of John are often quoted to prove that hell and the punishment of the wicked are not according to God's love.

It is well to remember that John not only said, "God is LOVE," but he also said (by inspiration of the Holy Spirit), "God is LIGHT," and (where it is not spoken of in a literal sense) light stands for righteousness, justice and truth. Nowhere does the word of God reveal God as "an indulgent parent" who can look over the guilt of men as a mere infirmity, and consequently treat the sinner as if he should be "more pitied than blamed." That may be unregenerate man's view of sin, but it is not God's. God declares Himself to be holy, and that He cannot look upon iniquity. Even nature's revelation of God as the Creator and Ruler reveals His justice, but the fuller revelation in the Bible shews both His justice and His love. God is love, and in this was manifested the love of God toward us, in that *He sent His Son* into the world, *that we might live through Him.* (1 John iv. 8, 9.) "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." (John iii. 16.) "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.) Now just as under the old covenant the way to God was through sacrifice, and as Jehovah was approached through the mediation of the priests, and by the high priest who entered the holy

place once a year, so by the death of Christ the way to God has been opened for every sinner. At His death the temple veil was torn from the top to the bottom (Matt. xxvii. 51), revealing the fact that the old way of approach had come to an end, and that God had provided another more excellent and far-reaching way, "a new and living way." (Heb. x. 19, 20.) Now there is no other way to God, but *through* the Lord Jesus, that is, through His death and resurrection.

He was God's love gift, "God *so loved* . . . . that he *gave* his only begotten Son," therefore if that gift is rejected there is no other way by which God's love can be received. "He that *believeth not* the Son shall not see life; but *the wrath of God abideth on him.*" (John iii. 36.)

God LOVED the world and in the gift of Christ He revealed it, and the rejection of the work of the cross by the sinner is a rejection of the love that gave His Son. God's love has provided a Saviour for every sinner and the sin that will shut a soul out of heaven is the sin of refusing to be saved by the death of Christ Jesus. God can have no dealings with men (except as the Creator who will provide for His creatures' temporal needs) by any means except *through* His Son.

HE IS THE ONLY WAY. God's love cannot be known except through the Lord Jesus and if He is rejected there can be no place for man in heaven, and hell is the only place left; and what the Lord Jesus said to His rejecters in the days of His earthly ministry is still true. "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins . . . whither I go ye *cannot* come." (John viii. 21, 24.) Dear reader, do not be deceived. There is no way to God but the one He has Himself provided. SALVATION IS IN CHRIST JESUS AND IN HIM ALONE.

F. J. A.

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## CHRIST'S SALVATION.

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(ACTS XXVIII. 28; 2 TIM. III. 15; ROM. I. 16, 17.)

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**S**INNER! where is thy to-morrow,  
 If ere then thou diest?  
 Grief there is and endless sorrow,  
 Bliss there is the highest.

Trifle not! thy soul is precious,  
 And procrastination  
 May at last defeat the gracious  
 Pleadings of salvation.

Hence, bethink thee: God is holy:  
 Death is in evasion!



In th' exalted, once the lowly,  
Jesus, there's salvation.

Golden moments God is giving  
Thee, that He may win thee  
For the home-scene of the living  
With His Spirit in thee.

There the Lamb is all the glory ;  
Yea, the Living Centre ;  
By His blood—sweet gospel story —  
Sinner, thou may'st enter.

Hearken to the word of promise,  
Christ's own heart would place thee  
Where the Father's blessed home is,  
Where He would embrace thee.

Yea, *there* God Himself rejoices  
O'er His new creation ;  
Heavenly theme of harps and voices—  
Christ is God's salvation.

J. M.

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## GUILTY, BUT FORGIVEN.

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**I**T was early in the morning, but Jesus was already in the temple teaching the people, when the scribes and Pharisees came to Him with a woman who had been guilty of sin, whom they set in the midst, and having accused her in the Lord's presence, stated that Moses in the law commanded that such offenders should be stoned, but inquired what He had to say in the matter.

Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote upon the ground, as though He heard them not.

So when they continued asking Him, He lifted up Himself and said unto them: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her," and He stooped down and wrote on the ground again.

The accusers of the woman, being convicted in their conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last; and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

When Jesus had lifted up Himself, and saw none but the woman, He said unto her: "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?" She said, "No man, Lord." Then Jesus

answered and said, "Neither do I condemn thee : go, and sin no more."

But what of the law of Moses which commanded that such as she should be put to death, how could such an offence be passed over ; and why did Jesus stoop down and with His finger write upon the ground ?

It is needful that we should understand that no one could be justified by the law of Moses, for the law was not given with that end in view, but in order that the offence might abound. Yet since Christ has come, and in His death brought to light a new covenant, it can be said that, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

The meaning of Jesus stooping down and with His finger writing upon the ground was that the revelation which God gave to man in Him—the infinite grace to the guilty, had no more effect upon the hearts of the accusers of the woman than the movement of the finger of Jesus upon the stone floor of the temple.

The scribes and Pharisees did not discern in the lowly Jesus that God was there, in all the fulness of divine grace, come near to fallen man for his deliverance ; their hearts were as hard and incapable of being impressed as the stone of the temple floor.

To place oneself under the law of Moses is to secure condemnation at once, and if the woman who had sinned was condemned by that law and worthy only of death, her accusers were also guilty, for they had broken the law, if indeed in other respects, and as "the wages of sin is death," they also must die.

But in that blessed One who stooped down and wrote upon the ground there was a Mediator between God and men, who could say to the guilty sinner: "Neither do I condemn thee"; *He* could say that because He was the Lamb of God who had come to bear away the sin of the world. He became the Sin-bearer, yea more, He was *made sin*, and the righteousness of God was accomplished in His death; and the law of God—indeed, all that God was, was fully vindicated upon the cross.

Sin is not imputed to any one during the present period; forgiveness is freely proclaimed to all, and is presented in perfect righteousness in virtue of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The penalty of human sin has been borne by a divine Person who became man, and the message of God to men now is, that their sins are not imputed to them, guilty though they are, and He is calling

attention to Christ in whose death not only has every claim of God been met, but God has revealed His great love and His desire to grant forgiveness to all in the name of that wonderful Person.

Of course, it is not necessary to remind the reader that should he reject the overtures which God has made in such wondrous grace both in the person of Jesus and also in the preaching (which latter, no doubt, he has heard), that he will die in his sins and be raised again to take his place before the great white throne to receive the due reward of his deeds.

There are those, alas! who, although they are informed of God's grace and disposition to grant forgiveness to all, remain quite indifferent if not careless of the whole matter. They must unhappily be classed with the accusers of the woman who, although convicted in their conscience, turned their backs upon Jesus, rather than with the woman to whom it was given to hear the words: "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more."

Reader, it is mine once more to present to you this wonderful testimony that, guilty though you are beyond all question, you are not condemned, but may receive forgiveness of sins through Christ Jesus the Lord.

I can hardly imagine that you will turn your back upon the great grace of God again and I pray that you may not do so, but that you will now, as this paper is in your hand, turn to God in repentance, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

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**“THOUGH YOUR SINS BE AS  
SCARLET.”**

**I**T was midnight, when all had retired to rest, and not only so, but it was midnight in my soul. I lay awake thinking with no small exercise that possibly I might sacrifice the eternal joys of heaven for the passing pleasures of earth. As I lay there my sins rose up before me—sins that I had long forgotten: my anguish of soul was great. The remembrance of my mother’s prayers and my father’s entreaties only seemed to add to it. I thought of the eternity to which I was hastening, and of the God whose love and patience I had spurned.

But He was about to snatch another brand from the burning, about to set another captive free. Six months previous to this, a tract lay upon the table where I was, which bore this title: “Though your sins be as scarlet.” The words seemed to force themselves upon

me with irresistible power, and kept ringing in my ears. The tract told briefly of a young man who, one evening, was on his way to a scene of pleasure, but was suddenly brought to a standstill by a man thrusting a tract into his hand bearing the title: "Though your sins be as scarlet." He was arrested then and there, like Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus in the days of old. Annoyed at being thus so rudely interrupted the young man made an effort to get rid of the tract. But the Spirit of God had already done His convicting work in his soul, and he was constrained to turn into a hall where the gospel was being preached. It was remarkable indeed, but there he heard again from the preacher's lips the very words that had been the means of arresting 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." (Isa. i. 18.) What wonderful and assuring words! They were used of God to that young man and the same words have been used to my own soul also.

And let me ask, have they no voice to you, my reader, have such blessed words no charm for you? Is there nothing in

them that would suggest to you the gracious attitude of the blessed God? Do you not think the question of your sins a serious one? You must have to do with Him about them sooner or later; to Him you must render an account.

You will do well to consider the present situation. You may be shrewd enough in matters of business, far-seeing with respect to things of time and sense; very little escapes your observation. It is indeed strange that you have not seen your need nor considered this “Come now” of the blessed God.

If you accept the invitation—and it is surely a worthy one—it will indeed be well with you, but if you reject it, what then? Who can tell the remorse that will fill your soul in that day when you will be compelled to hear His voice speaking in judgment. Let me beseech you, therefore, to “come now,” for it is written: “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.” (Heb. xii. 25.)

“ No curse of law, in Thee was sovereign grace ;  
And now what glory in Thine unveiled face !  
Thou didst attract the wretched and the weak,  
Thy joy the wanderers and the lost to seek.”



## THE DRY LAND.

“Let the dry land appear.” (GEN. I. 9.)

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**O**UT of the overflowing waters of judgment which had long covered the earth, at the word of the Creator the solid land appeared.

The ever-changing, tumultuous sea is a type of the conflicting wills and restless passions which continually agitate the whole race of fallen humanity. “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” (Isa. lvii. 20, 21.) “The way of peace have they not known.” (Rom. iii. 17.) “There is sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet.” (Jer. xlix. 23.)

The thought attaching to the solid land on the contrary is that of rest, security, abiding strength and support, something which will not give way and cannot be overthrown.

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is the rock of ages.” (Margin). (Isa. xxvi. 3, 4.)

What a contrast! Below and around,

all shaking, shifting and restless; sorrow and death penetrating everywhere, desolating homes and defeating sooner or later every human project, so that one of earth's greatest princes pronounced all beneath the sun to be "vanity and vexation of spirit." On the other hand, in Christ risen from among the dead, every blessing God has to bestow upon man is absolutely secured and established for evermore.

"Sorrow and death cannot enter there."

Here is the dry land where God can accomplish His purposes and produce fruit for His own glory. Dear reader, do you know the living God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent?

"This is life eternal." (John xvii. 3.)

While man is striving to perform the impossible, that is, *by searching* to find out God, He, in the gospel of His Son, is seeking to woo and win him for Himself. God is patiently waiting, exercising long-suffering, while He announces to the blind and deaf sons of men—blinded by the god of this world, and deafened by the music with which Satan seeks to drown the still small voice of His Spirit—the new creation He has already begun. Unknown by the human race, God has already commenced, out of the reach of man, a new creation which is soon to supersede en-

tirely the one in which the people of this world are doing their own will and walking in the way which seems right in their own eyes.

They are, alas, utterly regardless of God, of *His* will, of what He is doing and of the purposes which He will shortly bring to pass.

God is not mocked. His Son has been here, and has been rejected and slain by man.

God has raised Him, as a Man, from the dead and said unto Him: "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Psa. cx. 1.) There He sits to-day, the One who "by himself purged our sins." (Heb. i. 3.)

But who are these enemies?

"Those mine enemies, *which would not that I should reign over them*, bring hither, and slay them before me." (Luke xix. 27.)

Man will not listen to the voice of God, he laughs at those who do.

He says: "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." God Himself tells us the reason, for He goes on to say: "For this they *willingly* are ignorant of, that *by the word of God* the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the

water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, *by the same word* are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." (2 Pet. iii. 4-7.)

Willing ignorance! What a condition!

But who are the ungodly? The ungodly are "those who know not God;" but "CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY" (Rom. v. 6), and thus God's love is commended unto us. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for *our* justification."

Dear reader, you are thus addressed by a God of love: "If *thou* shalt confess with thy mouth *the Lord Jesus*, and shalt believe *in thine heart* that God hath raised him from the dead, *thou shalt be saved*. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. x. 9, 10.)

The new sphere of blessing and glory for man, into which Christ is raised and of which He has become the centre, is called in scripture "in Christ."

"If any man be *in Christ*, there is a new creation: old things are passed away behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God." (2 Cor. v. 17, 18.)

Here is the dry solid land pointed out in the gospel.

Have you, dear reader, thus passed “out of death into life”? (John v. 24.)

J. V.

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**“TO HIM THAT WORKETH  
NOT.”**

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**D**ON'T tell me that I can be saved without doing anything,” said an old man to a christian lady who was trying to comfort him and point out the way of salvation. As he was saying this a little boy of about eleven years of age, who had been looking out a verse in his Bible, touched the lady and said: “Please read that to him.” It was Romans iv. 5: “To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” The lady read it. The man listened most attentively, and after a little exclaimed: “It’s a fact! God says it: ‘TO HIM THAT WORKETH NOT.’”

The word to all appearance entered his soul with saving power.

Reader, are you working for salvation? If so, remember these words.