



THE FAITH
AND
THE FLOCK,
1912.



THE FAITH AND THE FLOCK.

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The Faith and The Flock.

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1912.

A NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE.

“PERFECTED FOR EVER” ; “MAKE YOU PERFECT.”

Now the God of PEACE,
That brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,
That GREAT SHEPHERD of the sheep,
Through the Blood of the EVERLASTING COVENANT,
MAKE you PERFECT
In every good work to do His will,
Working in you that which is well pleasing
in His sight.
Through Jesus Christ ;
To Whom be glory for ever and ever.—Amen.

(Heb. xiii. 20-21).

The above verses stand in the greatest possible contrast to each other. In the one, everything is perfect ; in the other, there is something to be made perfect. The first, presents a work done *for us* ; the second, a work to be done *in us*. Ver. 20 asks us to look at God, at Christ, at His blood ; ver. 21 directs attention to ourselves.

These verses may be summed up thus : From the standpoint of ver. 20, we are—

“ PERFECTED FOR EVER.”

Yet ver. 21 adds :—

“ MAKE *you* PERFECT.”

Of these two aspects of truth we wish now to speak. It is of all importance for every believer to know that he is already “perfected

for ever"; yet, that, he is being made perfect. As Christians, our peace and progress depend upon the right understanding of this two-fold truth.

At first sight there may seem some slight contradiction between these two statements. If I am "perfected for ever," why do I need to be made perfect? If I need to be made perfect, in what sense am I already "perfected for ever"? There is, however, no contradiction, for the simple reason that they stand in a quite different connection. The believer is "perfected for ever" in connection with the sacrifice that has removed his sins. "Make you perfect" refers to ourselves and what we are personally. The one stands in relation to a *finished* work, done by another, in which we had no part. The other, refers to a work done in us, which is still proceeding, and in which we co-operate. It will thus be seen that the two things are quite distinct, and it would be disastrous to our peace to confuse them.

Let us consider first, what is involved in being "Perfected for ever." This expression will be found in Heb. x. 14. The writer is contrasting Christ's sacrifice with those under law, and the effect of each. The sacrifices under the law could not make the comers thereunto perfect (ver. 1); they were continually offered (ver. 2); there was a fresh remembrance of sins every year (ver. 3); they never gave God full satisfaction (ver. 6). [Now, the very opposite is expressly stated with regard to Christ's sacrifice. In the words, "Lo, I come to do Thy will," He undertakes to give God all He required. The offering of the body of Jesus Christ was *once*. And by that one offering we are said to be "perfected for ever." The perfection lasts as long as the value of the sacrifice.⁷ And the perfection consists in this, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no^m more;" and, in having "no more conscience of sins."

Now, it is as connected with Christ's one offering that we are said to be "perfected for ever." "*For by one offering He hath PERFECTED FOR EVER them that are sanctified.*" Will the reader place vers. 10 and 14 together, and he will learn two things. 1. It was God's will that the offering of the body of Jesus Christ was for us, and we are sanctified by it. [2. That offering being all that God required, for it fulfilled His will, was perfect; and therefore, if the offering was perfect, we, who are sanctified by it, are perfected for ever.

You are not called to look at yourself, and ask if you are perfect, but in connection with being "perfected for ever" you are invited to look at Christ. And as you hear Him speaking—speaking in such majestic language, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God"—and as you see Him offering Himself, and thus fulfilling all that was written of Him in the volume of the book, it is for you to accept in simple faith the fact that it was God's will that Christ should offer Himself for you; as well as that other fact that, His offering being perfect in God's account, you are "perfected for ever." God wants you to look at yourself as identified with Christ's offering. This is how God sees you. And the only question is, Was that offering perfect? We know it was. Who was the Offerer? The Son. The Lamb fore-ordained before the foundation of the world. What did He offer? Himself. Then his offering must have been perfect. And, if so, the simple truth is that, if you are trusting in Him, you are "perfected for ever."

Now, what does "perfected for ever" signify? Not that we are, any of us, personally perfect; but it means two things. 1. We are sanctified, *i.e.*, separated for ever from our sins. 2. We are so identified with the offering of Christ that all its perfection is ours. Our sins are taken away, and remembered no more, because Christ bore them; and all the perfection of His offering covers us instead.

It will thus be seen, we trust, that "perfected for ever" does not mean we are perfect in ourselves, but through what Another has done, by which our sins are completely taken away. In this light let us now read again the verses quoted at the beginning. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, *make you perfect, &c.*"; and it will be seen at once that ver. 20 relates to our being "perfected for ever," while ver. 21 introduces an additional thought—"Make *you* perfect."

Perfect peace, then, ought to be ours with regard to the past and all we may have done, because we are "perfected for ever." Notice how ver. 20 begins: "Now the God of *peace*." God might have kept the question of sin open with us; He had justice on His side, and we were the offenders. Instead of which He has been the One to close it, by providing that which could meet His righteous requirements. He is thus the God of peace. The question of the believer's guilt is forever closed—closed on the ground of the blood of the everlasting covenant.

But more than that, God is said to have "brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus." That, too, demonstrates Him to be "the God of peace." He cannot have a single charge against us, for HE has "brought again from the dead OUR Lord Jesus." Christ was our Surety, and God has set our Surety free. He cannot go behind His own work. Is He not the God of peace? and ought we not to have peace?

Further, the One brought again from the dead is the Great Shepherd of the sheep. Could we be more secure?

God is thus the God of peace:—

1. Because He has provided the blood of the everlasting covenant. This has been the ground of blessing and relationship through all dispensations, and is still.

2. Because He has brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus.

3. God has committed us to the keeping of the Great Shepherd.

How absolutely perfect is everything in this twentieth verse! Perfect peace, because God is the God of peace. Every question is settled. A perfect work, for Christ has been raised from the dead. The perfect value of the blood, for it is everlasting. And we are in perfect keeping, for Christ is the Great Shepherd of the sheep. It is in this connection we are "perfected for ever," because all is God's work, *and* all for us. Are you assured of this as you enter another year? How blessed to be able to face every changing period of time, yea, even eternity with the assurance that every question with God is settled—we are "perfected for ever" by the one offering of Christ.

MAKE YOU PERFECT.

We come now to the other side:—"Make *you* perfect." Will the reader notice the whole trend of the passage before us? All is moving towards this one point. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, *make you perfect*"; there is not a pause anywhere. This is the climax, "*Make you perfect.*" And yet if God seems to have taught us anything, it is how *imperfect* we are. One is positively ashamed, depressed, at the thought of it; yet here is the end; this is why Christ shed His blood; this is why Christ rose again from the dead; this is why He has become the Great Shepherd of the sheep—to

make the sheep like Himself. Do we aim at it? Do we ardently desire it?

Now, do not let us confound these two verses. The one speaks of a perfect work, the basis of our peace; the other of our being made perfect; the one is a work outside and independent of us, the other a work in us, and by us. And I must first rest upon the work done *for* me, before I can contemplate rightly the work to be done *in* me.

In the first you cannot find a flaw; the blood, you cannot increase its value; the resurrection, neither devil nor angel can find any fault with it or undo it; the great Shepherd, He could not be better than He is. And having peace as to our sins depends upon all this, and not upon what we are. But when we come to ourselves, how imperfect! Has God been showing any of us our imperfections only this week? Has he put us under a little bit of stress, and have we broken down under it? Have we murmured? Have we been ill-tempered? Have we repined? until we are positively ashamed of ourselves, perhaps. Yet this is what God is about—to “Make you perfect.”

And it indicates here the line along which this perfection is reached; it says, “Make you perfect in every good work to do His will.” The perfection is to do His will. That is the point. The perfection is not measured by some lofty standard that man may erect or that one may set before oneself; it is just simply this: are we doing the will of God to-day and always? Notice the exact phrase here; it is not simply, “make you perfect in every good work”; *we* should very likely stop there, but to stop there would falsify the whole passage. No, it is “make you perfect in every good work *to do His will*”; because a good work that another may be doing is not the good work that God may want you to do, and therefore it would not be sufficient to say, “make you perfect in every good work”; there are many good works that God may not be asking you to do. The great point is, are you doing the good work He *is* asking you to do? If you are, that is enough.

For instance, you might, in a moment of zeal, think you would like to go out to the heathen. That is a good work, a splendid work, but if it is not God's will that you should become a missionary, it would not be a good work for *you*. God wants you to stay at home, perhaps, and do something that you think very trifling, it

may be almost menial, and you say you cannot see anything in it, but, if that is God's will for you, He will make you perfect in it; He will make you as perfect in that sphere as if you were the most prominent worker in Christendom.

"Make you perfect in every good work to do His will"; that is the point. This perfection is reached along that road; simply finding out what God's will is and doing it.

"I said, 'Let me walk in the fields,'
He said, 'Nay, walk in the town.'
I said, 'There are no flowers there.'
He said, 'No flowers, but a crown.'

"I said, 'But the skies are black;
There is nothing but noise and din.'
And He wept as He sent me back:
'There is more,' He said—'*there is sin.*'

"I said, 'But the air is thick,
And fogs are veiling the sun.'
He answered, 'Yet souls are sick,
And souls in the dark undone.'

"I said, 'I shall miss the light,
And friends will miss me, they say.'
He answered, 'Choose you to-night,
If I am to miss you, or *they?*'

"I pleaded for time to be given.
He said, 'Is it hard to decide?
*It will not seem hard in heaven,
To have followed the steps of your Guide.*'"

If we are to be made perfect, God must work *in* us; "Working *in* you that which is well pleasing in His sight." We get a very similar thought in the second chapter of Philippians: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (vers. 12-13).

Now, how is this to be accomplished? We must realise, first of all, that we are the subjects of this work. God has a work to do in us.

We have seen how great the work is that Christ did for us on the Cross. Thank God for that! But it is the working *in* you, not *for* you, here; working *in* you that which is well pleasing in His sight. And this work, *in its own place*, is correspondingly great. Christ was never more pleasing to God than when He did that work *for* us. But God wants us to be pleasing to Him as well, and to this end He works *in* us. And He works in us that in every

good work we may do His will. Is not this precisely what characterised Christ? What did He say on coming into the world? "Lo, I come, to do Thy will, O God." To do God's will was everything. For had it not been God's will that Christ should die for sinners, even the sacrifice of Calvary would not have been a good work.

In order that this work in us may be accomplished we must give God opportunity; we must give Him time.

One contrast between the 20th and 21st verses of this thirteenth chapter of Hebrews is this, that all the work described in the former verse was done almost immediately; but the work described in the latter verse is a much longer process. God delivered Christ for your offences and raised Him again for your justification in three days. But the working in us; the displacement of self; and the bringing in of what is of God into our hearts—our thorough subjugation to His will—is a much longer process. Yet the very thought that God is bent on doing this work ought to be an incentive to us to give Him opportunity.

Perhaps someone will say, What do you mean by that? What do you mean by giving God time and opportunity? In plain language, just this: If you only give five minutes to God in the morning for reading and prayer, and five minutes at night, you are neither giving your own soul nor God an opportunity.

Have you seen that memorial to the late Queen Victoria in the front of Buckingham Palace? That work was being carried on during almost the entire reign of Edward VII. Do you think it was accomplished by giving five or ten minutes to it in the morning and five or ten minutes at night? It took many a long hour and many a blow to produce that monument. Supposing, for the sake of illustration, when the sculptor approached one of the blocks of marble on which he had carved some hands the day before, he found that it had come down from its pedestal and was busily using them. We are supposing the marble figure to be like ourselves and that when the sculptor entered his studio, he found it on the floor doing some work, and when remonstrated with it answered, "You carved some hands on me yesterday, can I not use them?" The sculptor would say: "I want you here, I have some more work to do upon you. You are far from perfect yet." Do you not think God might often say this to us? Consider the work He has to do. Nothing less than conform us to the image of His Son.

Do we spare all the time we might for God to do this stupendous work—"Working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight"?

Is there anything more sweet, when we have once tasted it, than knowing something of this good pleasure, God's good pleasure realised in us; to think that He has taken hold of us, and, perhaps, taken hold of us so strongly that we have not been able to elude Him, that He might work out in us, such contrary material, that which shall be a pleasure to Himself?

Do you not think that it is the sculptor who looks with the greatest pleasure on that memorial in London to which we were referring; and would you not like to be one of those in whom God can take pleasure, because He is working in you to produce the very traits that were once seen in His own beloved Son down here?

Take these two verses and look at them. Ver. 20, where all is perfect—perfect peace, perfect Shepherd, perfect sacrifice—the blood bringing us into the very sanctuary of God, where, before His face, we learn the durable, unshakable character of the peace that is ours; and then ver. 21, "Make *you* perfect in every good work to do His will."

"Perfected for ever"; "Make *you* perfect." Here we have well nigh the whole of Christian experience, and fervently does the writer desire that everyone may become acquainted with what they involve for the believer. And, as each one of us faces another year, may it be as knowing the God of peace, and the peace of which He is the God; entrusted by Him to the care of the Great Shepherd—the everlasting arms; conscious that the everlasting covenant, based upon blood, stands unmoved while all else changes, the security of all our blessings and all our hopes; and knowing, too, that the One, Who has done all this *for* us, now wishes to work *in* us, and make us perfect in every good work to do His will.

"How often has that word in Psalm xxv. been a comfort to me when I have prayed 'Lord shew me Thy way.' 'What man is he that feareth the Lord? even him will He shew the way that he should take,' and, again, Ps. xxxviii. 23, 'The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delighteth in his way.'"

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

By WALTER SCOTT.

INTRODUCTION.

NONE of the sacred writers gave titles to their respective books ; the headings are destitute of scriptural authority. We may also remark that the subscriptions to the Pauline epistles should be discarded ; they are of fifth century origin.

THE WRITER.—There are twenty-one epistles in all ; of these, four are anonymous, namely, the Hebrews, and the three usually and rightly ascribed to John. On the authority of the Jewish Apostle (2 Peter iii. 15) we are satisfied of the Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews. External and internal evidence conclusively shew that John, the beloved Apostle—the writer of the fourth Gospel—is the inspired penman of the three epistles bearing his name.

The *external* evidence for the Johannine authorship of our Epistle is beyond question or dispute. The two apostolic Fathers, Polycarp (A.D. 116) and Papias (A.D. 120), both knew John—the former, especially, being in closest touch with the aged and beloved Apostle—and both bear their testimony to John as the writer. The Fathers of the second and third century are unanimous in their witness to the same effect. Eusebius, the distinguished ecclesiastical historian of the early years of the fourth century, writes thus, “ Besides the Gospel of John, his first Epistle is acknowledged without doubt both by those of the present day and also by the ancients.” In an almost unbroken tradition from the close of the first century, this Epistle has been regarded as from the pen of the beloved John.

The *internal* evidence of the Johannine authorship is equally conclusive. The writer was an eye-witness of Christ on earth. He relates what he personally saw, heard, and knew (ver. 1). He lay *in* the bosom of the Son (John xiii. 23 R.V.) ; and thus his intimate knowledge of the Son of the Father and personal, loving fellowship, are features common to John's epistles and Gospel, and give them a peculiar charm. There is but one John enshrined in

the heart and memory of the Church in all ages. The Epistle presupposes the Gospel as a known and divine account of the Lord's history on earth. There are more than thirty passages in the Epistle found almost verbatim in the Gospel. The characteristic words and themes of the Gospel are LIFE, LIGHT, LOVE, *Believe*. In the Epistle the key words are LIFE, LIGHT, LOVE, *know*. Both Gospel and Epistle bear one distinctive feature peculiar to John, namely, an unfolding of *the Divine glory of the Son manifested in true and holy humanity*. This fundamental truth underlies and permeates every statement and fact recorded. The *same* personal acquaintance with Christ, the *same* intimacy of communion, the *same* tender solicitude, the *same* absorbing love, and the *same* passionate zeal for the glory of the Master are characteristically graven on the pages of both Gospel and Epistle. The style is terse, antithetical, and abstract; at times quietly contemplative, again roused to holy and lofty indignation when Christ is assailed. Such is John in character—reflected in his writings. John the Apostle of love is the penman.

DATE OF THE EPISTLE.—The great subjects of Divine Revelation were completed by Paul in the unfolding of the mystery (Col. i. 25). About twenty-five years afterwards John closed the sacred volume in the following order: (1) the Gospel; (2) his first Epistle; (3) the second Epistle; (4) the third Epistle; (5) the Apocalypse. It is impossible to fix with absolute certainty the exact date of the writing of the Epistle. It would be about A.D. 90, or perhaps a few years later. The question is unimportant. There is almost unanimous agreement that the Epistle was written in Ephesus towards the close of the Apostle's thirty years' residence in the Capital of Proconsular Asia.

CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THE EPISTLE WAS WRITTEN.

For a quarter of a century the Church and the Truth were maintained in a measure of integrity through apostolic energy and watchfulness. Satan sought to ruin the Church in a threefold way. First, by breaking up her practical and manifested unity (John x. 12); second, by corrupting the principles of divine and sovereign grace—a vile mixture of *Judaism* and *Christianity*, which meant the loss of both (Gal. i.-iv.); third, in the introduction of soul-destructive doctrines and teachings (1 Cor. xv.). These evils were exposed, checked and resisted.

Then Jude, in his brief and energetically written Epistle, develops another and even more insidious error than that denounced by Paul. "There are certain men crept in unawares," writes the Lord's brother. Then the character, course, and doom of those corrupters of the Faith are succinctly unfolded—men twice dead—spiritually and by apostasy. But in our Epistle a yet deeper and more serious state of things is contemplated. Jude writes of those who had crept *in*. John writes of those who had gone *out*. The Church is not once named in the Epistle. The going out (ii. 19) is not *from* the Church, but signifies a complete and thorough abandonment of Christianity. These apostates were never real, never saved.

Gnosticism (*knowledge*) is a term employed to denote various schools of thought as opposed to Christian teaching. The worst forms of Gnosticism were those which obtained in John's day. Some denied the Deity of the Lord, others His holy and incorruptible humanity. To deny Him come in flesh, either on the Divine or human side of His nature is fatal to the soul's salvation. God manifest in the flesh *is* the rock of ages. Unholy and speculative teachings on the Person of the Lord were prevalent in John's day, as also in our own day and generation, hence the polemical character of part of our Epistle. John, in indignant zeal, does not spare those deniers of Christ. The Apostle never practised the spurious charity of regarding men as Christians who defame the Lord—who assail His character or nature either as God or man. Such, then, were the special circumstances under which this Epistle was written.

THE CHARACTER AND DESIGN OF THE EPISTLE.

The Epistle is alone, in this respect, that it contains no personal allusions. The writer must have known many beloved saints, yet greetings and salutations—common to many of the Pauline letters—are here conspicuously absent. But it is not a cold treatise on the nature of God, and its reproduction in the children of God. The Epistle breathes the warmth of divine love. God is light and God is love, and these, are, in the main, the themes of the Epistle. Love, however, is the predominant topic, being verbally referred to nearly fifty times. Its measure is the gift of God's Son. It is a love which has provided life for the dead (iv. 9), and propitiation for the sins of the guilty (10). The Father's love and God's love are accurately distinguished in our Epistle: *Our* love to God is but rarely stated.

His love is the all-absorbing topic, and the answer He looks for is our love to each other practically shewn even to the extent of laying down our lives. The love of which the Epistle treats is ever maintained on a high level, and is quite unlike the spurious charity of the day, falsely labelled with the holy word LOVE. Divine love never compromises with evil, nor does it embrace in *one* brotherhood the friends and enemies of our Lord.

Eternal Life is here witnessed in three connections : first, with the Father in eternity ; second, manifested by Christ in His incarnation ; and, third, as displayed in each member of the family of God, provision being made for failure in, and by us. In the Gospel, eternal life is witnessed in perfection in the Son of God. In the Epistle, eternal life is imperfectly displayed in the children of God, but in both it is the *same* life : “ Which thing is true in Him and in you ” (ii. 8). In the Epistle is witnessed an intense hatred of sin, and an equally intense love of holiness.

The design of the Gospel is stated in xx. 31, “ These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” The intention of the Epistle is the subject of chap. v. 13 : “ These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, *even* unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God ” (R.V.). *Have* eternal life is the object of the Gospel. *Know* that ye have it is the design of the Epistle.

The five inspired writers of the epistolary portion of the New Testament are as follows :—

Paul addresses the Church of God ;
 Peter writes for the Flock of God ;
 James writes to the Israel of God ;
 Jude addresses the Saints of God ;
 John writes to the Children of God (ii. 12).

DIVISIONS AND SUBJECTS OF THE EPISTLE.

Many and varied divisions have been suggested, all more or less helpful. We would, however, commend the following to the consideration of our readers :—

1. The Children, or family of God, gathered in the Father's presence for fellowship and instruction (chaps. i.-ii. 12).

2. The Children at school progressively classified as babes, young men and fathers (chap. ii. 13-27).

3. The Children of God in the world, and their relation thereto (chaps. ii. 28, v. 21) ; with the *Father*, at *School*, and in the *World*.

A yet fuller classification may prove of interest to readers and students of this precious page of divine inspiration.

1. Apostolic testimony to Christ Incarnate in whom was life, and by whom it was manifested. Fellowship with the Father and the Son in which all believers equally share with the Apostle to whom the intimacies of the Divine bosom were made known—this our highest joy (chap. i. 1-4).

2. But this fellowship must be in keeping with the nature of God as light (ver. 5). He and we are in the light (ver. 7) and there and thus fellowship is maintained. Our fellowship is with the Father and the Son (ver. 3), and with each other (ver. 7), hence all pretension to be in the light is severely judged. In the light or in darkness is the all-important question. It is not *how* you walk, but *where* you walk—in the light or in the darkness (chap. i. 5-10).

3. Christ's advocacy with the Father for an erring child founded on the righteousness of His Person and propitiatory sacrifice (chap. ii. 1-2).

4. Eternal life manifested in obedience to divine authority (chap. ii. 3-8.)

5. Eternal life shewn in love to the brethren (chap. ii. 9-11).

6. A parenthetic portion of real interest in which the "little children," *teknia*,* meaning all Christians, share in one common blessing, forgiveness of sins (ver. 12), and all equally the object of ministerial care and solicitude (ver. 28). In the intervening vers. 13-27 the whole family of God are arranged according to growth and spiritual attainment into three classes respectively spoken of as fathers, young men and babes (*paidia*). The aged Apostle addresses each class twice (chap. ii. 12-28).

7. The children of God in the world contrasted with the children of the Devil; with the characteristics of each family (chaps. ii. 29, iii.).

* Little Children in vers. 1, 12 and 28 signifies *all* Christians. Little Children in vers. 13 and 18 refers to babes of the family. *Teknia* for the former; *Paidia* for the latter (Chap. ii.).

8. Christianity : the Spirit of God ; the love of God ; the Son of God sent for life and propitiation ; God himself known and loved ; the effects of God's love in casting out fear and imparting holy boldness in the light of judgment (chap. iv.).

9. Love and obedience—the one the counter-proof of the other. The assurance of divine testimony and the soul's practical confidence in God. What, as believers, "*We know*" (chap. v.).

REASON AND EXPERIENCE.

"This man is not of God, because He keepeth not the sabbath day." John ix. 16.

AMONGST men of science it is considered quite essential that all logical deductions, however reasonable they may appear, should be verified by actual experiment whenever possible, so that they may be conveyed from the region of academic discussion to that of ascertained fact.

This practice is of far-reaching importance, and of much wider applicability than to scientific investigation. "Seven men who can render a reason" may claim our attention, but one who can bring a *fact* under our observation will be much more likely to convince us.

In every department of knowledge, instances might be quoted to show the ridiculous mistakes which result from reasoning apart from experiment. Indeed, many of the great inventions to which we are indebted for the conveniences of our civilization were condemned at their inception with every show of reason.

The railway, for instance, was voted the worthless notion of an enthusiast, and plenty of intelligent people could have explained to you why it would never be of use. The land would have to be bought, levelled, prepared and railed, and the permanent way maintained at enormous expense, whereas locomotion along the ordinary roads was free from any such objections.

All this was perfectly reasonable, but tested by long and persevering experiment, it was found that, in spite of all the drawbacks, railways were yet worth while.

In the same way one might produce plenty of logic to show that the costly, cumbersome installation of electric light, with its heavy machinery and intricate system of wiring, its fragile lamps, and its dangers from shock and fire, must on no account be preferred

to the much simpler and more portable tallow candle, lighted with a match and extinguished by a puff. And demagogues might have discussed the matter for centuries, had it not been conclusively settled by experiment.

When I was a boy it occurred to me to ask why they did not put brakes on two-wheeled vehicles, and I was told that it must on no account be done, because the brake would throw the weight of the cart upon the horse. The explanation commended itself to me as reasonable, as I was able to follow the simple problem of applied mechanics which it involved.

However, on going to live in Lisbon, I was astonished to find that all two-wheeled carts there have brakes, and the drivers, who know nothing about mechanics, but a good deal about carting, would never take a heavy load down a steep hill without putting the brake on with all their strength. Yet it is as true in Lisbon as in London that the brake of a two-wheeled cart will put some weight on the horse; but it will not be much, and it will come vertically on his back, where he can sustain it, instead of being a push from behind, which he is not able to resist.

In the above, and in very many other cases, it may be admitted that the reasoning is quite correct so far as it goes, but it will be found that it does not take adequate account of some *other reasons*, which are of sufficient importance to neutralise it altogether.

When I was attending evening classes many years ago at a technical college, I was much interested in a beautiful experiment called the triangle of forces. To a small ring, otherwise entirely free, three fine cords were attached and led away in different directions over little wheels or rollers, and from their extremities scale pans were hung.

The experiment was to record the movement of the ring, which resulted from different weights being placed in the pans. With all the weights in one pan, of course the movement of the ring was in the direction of the cord sustaining that pan. With even a little weight in another pan, the ring no longer moved in the same direction, its position being exactly determined by the *resultant* of the pull in each of the three cords.

The reader may think I have laboured my point too much and offered almost an excess of proof. My apology must be the very great importance of the application, which I fear even now may be missed by some, however fully the truth may have been illustrated to them.

The physical world is a striking picture of the spiritual world. Just as the movement of the ring was consequent on the total of the forces acting upon it, so *our* conduct should be the exact result of every motive that may rightly influence it. Simple and obvious as this may seem, it will be found that it is far too often forgotten. Some will insist that we should take a certain course in precisely one direction and it will often be found that their insistence quite ignores a divine drawing in another and, possibly, an opposite sense.

We should recognise a moral perspective, which will enable us to appreciate things that differ in their relative proportions. We need to "rightly divide the word of truth" so as not to distort its meaning or deface its beauty by an undue insistence on one aspect of it. No doubt the Pharisees were most punctilious in their tithing of small herbs, but some weightier matters, where law, judgment, mercy and faith were involved, they omitted to allow for. It was a zeal for God, no doubt, and for the letter of His law, that led them to condemn One who made a poor crippled sinner "every whit whole" on the Sabbath day.

A desire to be separate from evil will drive me away from the brother who has sinned, and if nothing else comes in to counteract the tendency, the separation may become permanent. The remembrance that "the members should have the same care one for another" will draw me back to him—not to consent with his sin—but to serve him for Christ's sake.

I think we must reconcile ourselves to an extreme simplicity in the divine path. Indeed, were it not so, the simple could neither find nor follow it. The reasonings of the seven might confuse and possibly mislead the cleverest, for experience has shown that conclusions based on the subtlest process of reasoning are quite often out of harmony with admitted facts. Logically, somebody may be contaminated or compromised by a particular evil. Yet at the same time it may be admitted as a matter of fact that he knows nothing whatever about it. One may, on purely theoretical grounds, be held unfit for christian fellowship, while—strange inconsistency!—it may be confessed that in reality he is more godly than those who condemn him.

It is instructive to notice that the Jews in John ix. had reasons for their conclusions: "This man is not of God, for he keepeth not the Sabbath." "We know (they had reasoned it out sufficiently to persuade themselves) that this man is a sinner." So they cast out

the man whose life (a matter of fact, not logic) was transformed through the grace of Christ, and *outside* he again met the One who had blessed him.

Instances need not be multiplied, but enough has perhaps been written to show the imperative necessity of our reasoning being corrected by experience of actual facts.

In 2 Tim. ii. 19-22, we are taught to depart from iniquity and also to follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. The former exhortation will lead us to refuse everything that is not of God, and the latter will make us just as zealous in owning all that is of Him.

S. E. McN.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

LUKE XVI.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

NO one could be more competent than the Lord Jesus to draw aside the veil which separates us from the unseen world. He could speak with divine knowledge. His mission, at His first coming to earth, was to declare the heart of God, and to speak of what is befitting the divine presence (John iii. 11). But while doing this, it was natural that He should present vividly that to which men's sins are hurrying them, if they heed not the warning and come to repentance. Accordingly both the intermediate and the eternal state of the impenitent are plainly set forth in the gospel history.

Some of the most anxious questions of the human heart are answered in the solemn story of the rich man and Lazarus. This story is often spoken of as a parable. Personally, I am not free so to regard it. First, it is not called a parable; and second, it was not customary on the part of our Lord to introduce names into His parabolic instruction. It is simpler to regard Luke xvi. 19-31 as a divine sketch of the course and end of two persons whose career the eye of the Lord had noted.

The contrasts in this story are tremendous: earth, hades; luxury, torment; beggary, bliss. The question naturally arises, what was the sin of the rich man which involved him in so fearful a doom? Was he morally one of earth's vilest? Nothing of the

kind is stated concerning him. Neither blasphemy, nor adultery, nor any other glaring transgression is laid to his charge. Then what was it that blasted his prospects for eternity? Simply this: he lived entirely for the present, with never a thought of God or his own soul. He was the twin brother, so to speak, of the rich fool of Luke xii. 16-21; a neglecter, rather than a deliberate rejecter (Heb. ii. 3). In connection with God's government of the earth, riches were, for the Jew, a mark of divine favour (Ps. cxii. 3); but such is the perverseness of the human heart in making everything of the visible and temporal that it becomes exceedingly difficult for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God (Mark x. 24-25). The parable of the great supper in Luke xiv. 16-24 was intended to shew how things which are perfectly legitimate in themselves, and which indeed are favours from a bountiful God to men, may be used to the utter exclusion of God Himself, and to the everlasting ruin of the soul.

The beggar's name was Lazarus; the rich man's name is not recorded. Lazarus means "God is my helper." It is infinitely better to have the knowledge of God than to have all the world rolled into one's lap. For of all that which stands connected with a man here below nothing can be carried out of the world but his sins, and these he carries with him to the Judgment Throne! The beggar's name has been carefully preserved for us, for precious in the sight of the Lord is every child of faith, however lowly his station here; the name of the fool who wasted his life (however exalted his standing) is better blotted out.

Is there a life beyond the grave? Often and anxiously the question is agitated amongst men. The Son of God answers it for us here. The beggar died, and was forthwith, not extinguished, nor consigned to ages of insensibility, but carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The matter is stated from the Jewish point of view. Conscious blessedness, and that in the company of the father of the faithful, is plainly set forth. The rich man also died, and of him it is said, "he was buried." Why is this added in his case? Clearly because the Lord would carefully distinguish between body and soul.* The man's body was buried, doubtless with all the pomp and circumstance that suited so wealthy a person; but immediately afterwards we read, "in hell (Hades) he lift up his eyes, being in torments." Let me repeat, his body was laid in

* Other Scriptures emphasising the same distinction will be found in Psa. xvi. 10; Acts ii. 31; Eccles. xii.

the tomb, but his soul went to Hades. Beyond all just controversy this is the Saviour's meaning in the passage before us.

Hades is not Gehenna. The latter is the lake of fire, to which the lost are despatched after the judgment of the great white throne (the mass being preceded by the Beast and the False Prophet, and Satan); Hades is the term divinely employed to designate the intermediate unclothed state.

Luke xvi. 19-31, then, gives us a "picture of a lost soul in Hades, awaiting its final sentence on the judgment day."

Let us tread softly here. Human words may well be few. The sufferer was experiencing a sense of pain ("I am tormented"—ver. 24); of loss ("he seeth Abraham," etc.—ver. 23); and of fear ("I have five brethren," etc.—ver. 28). Memory, too, was active (ver. 25). He had no expectation of any change of condition. As we listen to the conversation between father Abraham and the lost one, there is no hint on either side of ultimate annihilation, and no suggestion of universal Restoration. Neither of these dreams, so popular in our day, occurred to the minds of these men thus conversing in the invisible world.

The rich man asked but two things, and both were denied him. He craved a drop of water for himself, and also he pleaded for a special mission to his living brethren. Neither request could be granted; when the border line is passed, praying time is ended for ever.

The five brethren were shut up to the Scriptures: "they have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." We are in the same position to-day. No light have we beyond the revelation of God, and in this Satan is determined to destroy the confidence of men around us. The rich man imagined that something sensational would appeal to his brethren's consciences. This Abraham repudiated. It is not a little remarkable that the next person our Lord raised from the dead was a man named Lazarus (John xi.). But did this mighty fact strike home to the consciences of the people? Far from it. They only took counsel how they might put both Lazarus and the Lord Jesus to death.

I repeat, no light have we beyond the revelation of God. May God, in His infinite mercy, dispose the hearts of both reader and writer ever to heed His divine voice speaking therein. There only is truth; there only is safety for the soul.

“CHANGING BEHAVIOUR.”

PSALM XXXIV.

By F. C. JENNINGS.

THE phrase is taken from the introductory words of Psalm xxxiv., “*A psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech, who drove him away and he departed.*” But I judge we may find in them a common standing-ground, where not only a New Testament saint clasps hands with one of the Old Testament, but where all saints of all dispensations are on common ground. Let us at least see two striking and illustrious examples of this happy community between New and Old dispensations; the same need, the same grace, the same result in each.

David has had to play the madman—a sad loss of moral dignity; quite consistent, however with the lie preceding it. (1 Sam. xxi. 2 and 13.) God says nothing as to all this, save to record it, leaving His people to gather for themselves warnings and lessons from it for all time. Yet when Achish drives his guest away, instantly he begins again to sing. There has been no singing as long as he is in comfortable communion with the Philistine; but as soon as he “changes his behaviour,” and is driven off, once more a homeless wanderer on earth, then his poor heart returns from its wanderings to its true rest, and he *sings*. At home with the Philistines, he is a wanderer from God; a wanderer on earth, he is at home with God, and he *sings*.

And what a lovely song of quiet confident faith it is! How it makes one long to be always “out” with the Philistine—“in” with God! Its whole burden is in praise of a Lord now well-known, and the worthiness of complete confidence in Him, and in none else. As a song based on experience, it should be very valuable to us.

We are apt to forget that vers. 13 and 14 are not the teachings of a self-satisfied moralist. “Keep thy tongue from evil and thy lips from speaking guile, Depart from evil and do good: seek peace and pursue it,” are not the lofty words of one who does not himself well know what being in the mud of evil is. He speaks, not from the platform of conscious superiority; but from the same level as his audience. Just read 1 Samuel xxi. and you will see that the speaker is fresh from the experiences of his tongue being in evil; of

his lips speaking guile ; and it is with this clear in his mind that he counsels, " Depart from evil, &c." But does this weaken what he says ? Indeed, no ; how gently, yet irresistibly, it forces its way into our hearts when we recognise a failing man like ourselves in the speaker. Oh, the grace and the wisdom of making forgiven sinners the preachers of grace to sinners ! Let the righteous—and this is a day of endless prating as to the sufficiency of human righteousness to meet all God's requirements without the shedding of blood—let the righteous preach to their fellowrighteous ; this is quite suitable. For us, sinners, we will only listen to the gospel from *sinners'* lips, who know from experience, both the love that is willing to save, and the wisdom that has found a way to save righteously in spite of our sin. For us poor failing saints, no moralist will do ; we must hear from the lips of failing saints who can speak from experience of the grace and love that has met their failure. Oh, this is preaching worth " hearkening unto."

So David's words, " Depart from evil " is the quiet, sober, intelligent judgment of a man who is fresh from trying evil—fresh from testing the banefulness of speaking guile.

Thus, as the Fifty-first Psalm must be read in connection with the sin as to Bathsheba, the Thirty-fourth gets its light from the failure as to Achish. Thus our very sins—our very failures—when divine mercy has led us to " brokenness of heart," and " contrition " as to them (see ver. 18), deepen our experience of His grace, and make us fit to be helpers of " children " (ver. 11).

As the Lord Jesus said to Peter, " When thou art *converted*," *i.e.*, not when thou art born again, or saved eternally ; but when thou hast " changed thy behaviour " ; turned from *self* ; hast learned thy helplessness and the untrustworthiness of the flesh, hast learned where true strength is—*then*, " strengthen thy brethren."

And it is well and profitable for us to note that it is indeed Peter who feels that this Psalm is in line with his own restored spirit ; and to see how naturally and simply the thoughts of the N.T. saint express themselves in the words of the O.T. saint ; when both have drunk of the fountain of the same love, and they can thus commend this fountain to others.

" O, taste and see that the Lord is good," cries the Psalmist. " If so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious (or good*) "

* " *Chrēstos* " : the same word, both in 1 Pet. ii. 3, and Ps. xxxiv. 8 (Sept.)

echoes the Apostle. "O, fear the Lord, ye his saints," says the Psalmist. Yea, "pass the time of your sojourning here in fear," says the Apostle. "The Lord delivereth the righteous out of all their troubles," sings the restored Psalmist. Yea, again, "He knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation," responds the restored Apostle. "Evil shall slay the wicked," and "the face of the Lord is against them that do evil to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth"—the Psalmist strikes a deeper chord. "Amen," solemnly asserts the Apostle, "He knows how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." And Psalmist and Apostle sing together: "What man is he that desireth life and loveth many days that he may see good; keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile, depart from evil and do good, seek peace and pursue it."

Peter, too, as David, has "changed his behaviour" before the Philistine. When he said "Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended," he was trusting in the flesh; taking refuge, as it were, with Achish. When he said "I know not the man," the comfort of the fire, at which he thus maintained his place, was as the comfort of the Philistine's Court: he was "in" with the Philistine, and "out" with God. But when he went out into the dark night and "wept bitterly," he was indeed "changing his behaviour"; when he cast himself into the sea that early morning, his spirit was seeking its true rest, and he proved the truth of David's word, "blessed is the man who takes refuge* with Him"; soon, too, he was peacefully saying, "Come ye children, hearken unto me and I will teach you the fear of the Lord." For had not the Lord said to him: "Feed my lambs," "Feed my sheep."

Yea, and when at Pentecost, it was no other lip than this same Peter's that spoke that solemn charge, "Ye denied the Holy One and the Just"; was it not exactly in the same line? for was not that lip—touched though it had been with the burning coal from off the altar, yet, in a sense—still fresh from denying the Holy One and the Just? Of course, it was; and *your* lip, dear saved sinner, is just the one to tell others of a Saviour: *your* lip, dear saint, you who have constant experiences of His restoring grace, is just the one to cheer others by telling of the grace that has restored you.

* A strictly correct rendering of verse 8, as see Ps. lvii. 1.

My dear reader, I do not ask, "Are you living in sin?" Oh no, that is not a question to be even thought of in connection with a believer in the Lord Jesus. But I do ask—and I ask myself at the same time—"Is anything *in this world* your confidence, your soul's comfort or rest, outside of Christ? Are you getting along in a friendly way with the world? Are you trusting in any arm of flesh for support in the various trials—*tests*—that go so largely to make up life?

If so, search and look! Where is the joy that you once had? Oh these Philistines, how they rob us of our joy! There is no one who can "stop" a well of joy like a Philistine (Gen. xxvi. 18)—a decent, respectable, religious, *graceless* Philistine. There is no singing as long as we are simply respectable and easy in a Christ-rejecting world—not a twitter: no "melody in the heart," all is silence instead of song.

Ah, "change thy behaviour," learn the blessings of being "out" with the Philistine, "in" with God; thus shalt thou, too, learn that sweet melody: "I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad." Such joy is very "catching."

Be helpless. We cannot praise Him for help if we are not helpless. He will not share praise with the Philistine. It is either Jehovah or Achish: the Lord Jesus or self altogether. Cast thyself, ever, always, wholly on the Lord Jesus; and constant need, combined with constant trust, means constant salvation, and that is constant praise, constant singing. Oh, that He may grant us to walk in that happy path for the few minutes before He comes for us, to the praise of the glory of His grace. Amen.

"We should more intensely press the Scripture on the soul. We should remember that all in us is to be subject to Christ, the heart, the conscience, and the understanding. The light and joy and beauty of the truth may be received at the door, but the *reality* of the truth must be known in the soul its *dwelling place*. God looks for it, that *our very selves* be occupied with this truth. It addresses itself to *us*, in the deep full sense of *us*."

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY:
SINNER, SAINT AND SERVANT.
INTRODUCTION.

By R. E.

WE have ventured to call this an autobiography. At the close, the reader will be able to judge whether this title is justified. St. Paul, unlike any other writer in the New Testament, makes constant allusion to himself, so that we have almost a complete account of his inner and outer life. The others scarcely make one personal or passing reference to themselves ; he is constantly relating his experiences, and giving glimpses of his inward exercises. He permits us to know what things were happening to him, and how he was affected by them. We are made conscious almost of the mental anguish, the stern resolve, the throb of pain, or the spiritual ecstasy that passed through him. This feature is in every way a most striking characteristic of his epistles ; and is so present in all his writings that to say we have his autobiography is neither doing violence to them nor to the English language. His journeys, his labours, his griefs, his disappointments ; the energy of his faith and the deep feelings of his heart ; his boundless sufferings and constant humiliations ; his joys and sorrows ; the dangers braved and the difficulties overcome ; the way he was forsaken, and the way he was befriended, are all depicted in his own words.

The fact is, St. Paul not only gives us Christianity in doctrine, he presents it to us personified. He not only sets it before us as abstract truth, but in concrete form. What, for instance, can surpass this ? *“ For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more . . . To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak : I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some . . . Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize ? . . . I therefore so run, not as uncertainly ; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air : but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection : lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”* (1 Cor. ix. 19, 22, 24, 26, 27). Or this, “ For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the

excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed ; we are perplexed, but not in despair ; persecuted, but not forsaken ; cast down, but not destroyed ; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. SO THEN DEATH WORKETH IN US, BUT LIFE IN YOU." (2 Cor. iv. 6-12). And again, almost his last words to Timothy : "*But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecution, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra : what persecutions I endured : but out of them all the Lord delivered me.*" (2 Tim. iii. 10-11).

Nor does St. Paul leave us in any doubt as to his own estimate of his work and mission, the power by which both were accomplished, or as to the source and character of his inspiration. It is well to remember this in the face of the adverse criticism of the present day. There are not wanting those who disparage the Apostle's authority and teaching. We would rather accept his own estimate of his mission and of the inspiration which was the source and strength of it, than that of twentieth century rationalists ; and as to this we are left in no doubt. He speaks of Christ having appeared to him ; he can testify to visions and revelations ; he claims that the very words he uses are given by the Holy Ghost. His repeated formula is, "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord" ; or, "I have received of the Lord" ; or, again, "These things we testify in the Lord." He affirms, that he was working "the work of the Lord ;" that Christ sent him ; that the gospel he preached was not after man, neither was he taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ. He repeats the very words used by his Lord and Master when he received his commission, "For I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." (1 Cor. ii. 13 ; xi. 23 ; xv. 8 ; 2 Cor. xii. 1 ; 1 Thess. iv. 15 ; Eph. iv. 17 ; Gal. i. 11-12).

Perhaps there was never a moment when the professors of, and the professed exponents of, Christianity needed so much to stand in the presence of such a man as Paul, and take their true measure. We are surrounded on every hand by a class of teacher, and a kind of

Christianity, that the Apostle would have wept over. If he had occasion to do so in his own day (as Philippians iii. 18-19 informs us), how much more in this. "*For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.*" These words have their application to-day, and we seem to hear the echo of them. Paul knew what it was to lose his life in order to find it. He never knew what it was to be all things to all men in order to save his own skin. The optimism of this twentieth century, which refuses to face facts, and declines to accept the repeated testimony of Scripture but glories in expectation of progress and achievement as the outcome of fancied human goodness and ability, he would have abhorred. He never expected anything so futile. He was optimistic, but with an optimism far different from this. He knew that God would accomplish His purpose—he never doubted Christ would triumph—he never ceased to look for a glorious future—and his heart never failed him, but all this as arising out of the ruin of the present, and not as being evolved from it.

A word as to the scope of these articles. They make no pretence either to be learned or exhaustive. Generally speaking, we shall confine ourselves strictly to the Apostle's own references to himself and his work; though occasionally we may crave a little latitude. We propose to consider him under the heads of Sinner, Saint and Servant: the Man and his Message.

Just as a vase of flowers might be spoken of from four different standpoints, so is it with the subject before us. 1. The flowers might be approached from the standpoint of their origin, and how they were produced—so we hope to speak of St. Paul's conversion and preparation for the ministry. 2. Their beauty and perfume might be described—so we shall endeavour to set forth the lovely Christian graces and Christlike traits manifested in this devoted saint. 3. Their use—this will cover what has to be said of St. Paul as a Servant. Lastly, we might like to know what kind of a vase contained the flowers. This will lead us to speak of St. Paul, the man. What kind of a vessel was he? "He is a chosen vessel unto Me," said Christ, "to bear My Name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." St. Paul was no ordinary man, as is proved by the fact that he was no ordinary sinner, as well as the fact that he afterwards became no ordinary saint and servant

Thus it will be seen that this is an attempt to delineate the character and service of the great Apostle of the Gentiles by a four-fold description of him borrowed from statements of his own scattered though the various Epistles he wrote, as well as in the Acts of the Apostles. From observations he drops, here and there, it is not difficult to form an accurate idea of the man, his methods, the object for which he laboured, his ideals, his service and his saintship. There is no doubt a special reason why, in this respect, Paul is quite an exception to all the other writers of the New Testament. He was, as he says, "One born out of due time." He was not one of the twelve. Much of his teaching was looked upon as a new departure, and brought him into conflict even with those who professed to accept Christ. His conversion was apart from human instrumentality. All these things taken together account for the fact that he had often to be on the defensive, and found his path a particularly trying one. He had to justify his position. He did this by constant reference to his life, labours and sufferings, and by the repeated asseveration that what he taught he received from Heaven. The consequence is, we practically have his autobiography. How completely it vindicates him from all the assaults of his opponents and traducers in his lifetime, and should from the petty attacks of present day criticism, is apparent enough to those who follow the record, which God in his infinite goodness has preserved to us. It reveals to us one who in every way towers above his fellows, and who on one occasion received the most unimpeachable testimony from the ranks of those whose works he was overthrowing; which testimony gave him the supreme honour of having his name coupled with that of his Master and Lord, and should be sufficient, of itself, to lay every criticism in the dust: "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?"

"The measure of our love to the Lord will be always proportionate to the measure of the sense we have of His love to us."

* * * *

"All practical Christianity is comprehended in the word of the Apostle, 'We love Him, because He first loved us.'"

* * * *

"There is nothing in all the world so precious to God as a heart that in any measure appreciates Christ."

FAITH AND LOVE : A COMMAND.

By WILLIAM JEATER.

THE most casual reader of the first Epistle of St. John can hardly fail to notice the apostle's fondness for the formula, "And this is —." Sometimes he slightly varies the phrase, dropping the "and" (chap. v. 20) or substituting "for" (chap. v. 9), but his ordinary phrase is the one quoted. In one form or another the words may be found at least a dozen times introducing some weighty affirmation, and the whole series is well worth the most devout consideration.

In writing this epistle (as it is called, though it is rather a complementary treatise or homily issued with his Gospel), the apostle probably had no thought that he was placing "the coping-stone upon the edifice of the New Testament." Yet, as a fact, he *was* doing so, in this, the last-written document of the New Testament. And in doing it he makes a series of statements (each introduced by the formula mentioned), that sum up, not indeed the whole, but a great portion of the revelation brought us by the Son of God. They are statements that will never become obsolete. Intelligence as to their meaning does not depend upon learned investigations into Eastern customs or habits of thought, for the language of the apostle is of light and darkness, life and death, love and hate, truth and falsehood, and these ideas are as old and as enduring as human nature.

The reader will find it worth his while to note these great affirmations, and for his sake I set them down here. They constitute a mine of wealth at which no one will work in vain.

It should be premised that the word "this" in Greek, unlike our English word, is capable of three grammatical forms, masculine, feminine and neuter. In each case that form is used which is in "agreement" with the "subject" of the sentence. Thrice only does St. John use the masculine—of the Antichrist (chap. ii. 22); of Him that came by water and by blood (chap. v. 6); and of the true God (chap. v. 20). The neuter is used but once—of the spirit or power of Antichrist (chap. iv. 3). A *personal* element comes into those passages. In all other instances the feminine is used; they are instances that deal with the faith and life of the Christian in relation to revealed things, rather than with personalities.

First the Apostle speaks of—

The message declared—that God is light (chap. i. 5).*

The promise made—of life, eternal life (chap. ii. 25).

The message heard—that we love one another (chap. iii. 11).

The commandment laid upon us—to believe Christ's Name and to love one another (chap. iii. 23).

Then he defines—

The love that is toward God—shown in keeping His commandments (chap. v. 3).

The victory that overcomes the world—our faith (chap. v. 4).

The testimony of God—life given in His Son (chap. v. 9, 11).

The confidence we have concerning Him—prayer heard (chap. v. 14).

These are the affirmations with which St. John brings to a close his memoirs of and his thoughts about his adorable Master and Lord. And I repeat that they are not obsolete, and never can become obsolete. They touch us in the varied needs of our hearts. They begin, as the first verse of Scripture begins, with God; they bring us His promises, they lay upon us His gentle commands, they assure us of victory, and leave us in the confidence of faith upon the knees of our heart in His presence.

In more detail I desire to speak of *the commandment laid upon us* (chap. iii. 23). Like the Tables of the Law from Sinai, it has two parts, one speaking of our relation to the Divine, the other of our relation to our fellows. Yet the command is one.

It may seem the merest commonplace to urge the necessity of faith Christward, and of love manward. But the full and solemn way in which the Apostle cites the command is proof of its urgency: "And this is His commandment, that we should believe in the Name [literally, believe the Name] of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, even as He gave us commandment." We need but to pass in review our own Christian course to be convinced of the necessity of the injunction, and to realise that the command in either or both its parts can be obeyed only by the soul that is "enabled" or strengthened by God for the purpose. Yet, as the old Puritan writer has it, "the call and command of God is the conduit

* "This, then" of the A. V. is an instance of that version's fondness for variety of rendering. The formula is the same as in other passages, e.g., chap. iii. 23, properly rendered "And this—."

pipe of strength and ability," or as it has been even more tersely put, "God's biddings are our enablings."

It is to the Christian believer that this command comes—a fact that calls for thought. It might seem right and proper to be addressed to rejecting Jews, to mocking pagans, or to scoffing philosophers. But St. John lays the charge upon those whom he addresses as fathers, young men, and little children—fathers who have known Him that is from the beginning, young men who have overcome the wicked one, and little children who yet possess the greatest of all learning, the knowledge of the Father. He appeals to the veteran and the novice. And whatever may be the length of our Christian experience, we need again and again to challenge our hearts, and to question ourselves concerning our belief in the Name of God's Son.

With us, names are often merely distinguishing labels, with little or no moral or spiritual significance; with God, Name means revelation. "To believe the Name means to believe all that the Name [of Christ] implies, His Divinity, His Sonship, and His office as Mediator, Advocate and Saviour. Hence the solemn fulness with which the Name is given—*His Son Jesus Christ.*"* Trace through this short epistle of three pages the wealth of name that is bestowed on Christ. "Jesus Christ" is itself a Gospel. He is the Word of Life; the Eternal Life; the Advocate; Jesus Christ the Righteous; the Propitiation; the Saviour of the World; the Son of God; the true God. Remember, too, that St. John includes in the meaning of The Name all those titles that are found in the Gospel issued with the Epistle, titles in which Christ is declared to be The Word; the Only Begotten of the Father; the Lamb of God. Especially should we remember Christ's own seven-fold "I AM"—The Bread of Life; The Light of the World; The Door of the Sheep; The Good Shepherd; The Resurrection and the Life; The Way, the Truth and the Life; the True Vine.

A beam of white light, passed through the prism, is broken up into the various colours that we see crystallised in gems or reflected in flowers. And the glorious "Name," touching the prism of the Incarnation and the Cross, spreads itself before us, not in a blaze of unapproachable Light, but in titles gracious and compassionate, helpful and healing. My hopes and longings for my own blessing

* Plummer, Camb. Gk. Test., *in loc.*

find their answer in some one or other of His names ; my necessities, as I live and fight, and perchance fall, are met in Him ; my prayers for all sorts and conditions of men are based upon the fact that He is "The Saviour of the World." Can we find ourselves in any circumstances of life, difficult or depressing, in which we may not hearten ourselves by calling upon The Name, in one of its various forms, of the Son of God ? Light, Life, Love ; Advocate, Saviour, Shepherd ; all this is He, and I "believe His Name" for my present need. Such is the language of faith.

It should be noticed that in the dividing of this commandment, belief in the Name comes before love of the brethren. It is the invariable rule of Scripture. St. Paul commended the converts at Thessalonica for their work of faith and labour of love ; he gave thanks for the Colossian brethren when he heard of their faith in the Lord Jesus and their love to all the saints. To-day, as in the apostle's day, a severance is made between the two portions of the one commandment ; faith is flouted and doctrine is derided. For some, it does not matter what a man thinks or believes, "so long as his life is right." The cynical lines of Pope have been quoted with approval a thousand times :—

" For modes of faith let graceless bigots fight ;
He can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

By "modes of faith" is meant any definite, well-assured belief in God's revelation of Himself by His Son. Faith is somehow taken to be a living in cloudland ; our relation to our fellows is at least something practical and tangible. A fresh set of words has come to the front in the religious phraseology of the day, and to be in the fashion we must talk largely about Christian "ethics." But, if Scripture is to be my guide, my ethics *must* come from my faith. In other words, what I am and do must be governed absolutely by my relation to Christ and my attitude towards Him ; for *that* is faith. It is only as we cleave to Him and "believe in His Name," that we shall be able truly and effectively to observe the second half of the "commandment."

"That we should . . . love one another." Does St. John give us any indication of the way this love expresses itself ? Perhaps no two Christians would interpret the idea in precisely the same way. There are some so constituted that they contend that Paul's love to Peter was never so manifest as when he "withstood him to the

face"! It is a curious point of view, and whatever partial truth there may be in it, it is not the point of view of our apostle. It is not often his way to light up his abstract statements with illustrations and instances, though he does it in telling fashion when he refers to Cain and Abel. It is an arresting circumstance that when he gives a concrete instance of love to our brother, it is along the line of what is now called "social service." Has our brother need of this world's goods? Shut not up your compassions from him. If you do, how can you say that the love of God dwells in you? (chap. iii. 17). If a man love not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God Whom he has not seen? (chap. iv. 20).

We are left in no doubt as to the meaning St. John attaches to the word, for though he deals with principles, they are not principles that lie out of sight of all but the scholar or the philosopher. "Herein is love, . . . God . . . loved us and sent His Son the Saviour of the world." That is the self-sacrifice of the Father. Yet again: "Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us." That is the self-sacrifice of the Son. And sooner or later we have to learn, both in our homes and in the Church of God, that that is what love spells. For though the Church is a divine institution, its members are very human, and our intercourse with, and our service for, each other can only be maintained as we grow into the self-sacrificing spirit of our Lord—the spirit of love. It involves no legalism to point out (as R. Law does in his valuable book, *The Tests of Life*), that in the Epistle, as everywhere in the New Testament, love is "a duty (chap. iv. 7,11), a subject of commandment (chap. ii. 7, 8, iii. 23, iv. 21), and is therefore, a moral self-determination which, in man, must often act in direct opposition to natural instinct and inclination" (p. 77). Yet the inveterate and obstinate resistance of instinct and inclination can be overcome as we believe in and abide in Him, Who, loving His people, loved them "to the end."

"Perfect love never forgets, and does not like to be forgotten, and so we have the tender request of Jesus, 'Remember me,' and the holy ordinance of 'breaking of bread' to call Him to mind."

* * * *

"True devotedness will ever be founded upon, and governed by, divine principle."

The Faith and The Flock.

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FEBRUARY, 1912.

PRICE—ONE PENNY.

EDITORIALS.

THANKS BE UNTO GOD FOR HIS UNSPEAKABLE GIFT.

The subject of *giving* may well be pressed home upon our attention again and again. Its importance can hardly be exaggerated. First, one special character of God is, that, He is the *giving* God. From all we read in the Scriptures on this point we learn that the Supreme Being specially delights to display Himself as a Giver. What a rich earth, full of fruitfulness and treasure, He gave to man at the beginning. But this did not exhaust His liberality. When man had lost everything, He gave more. He "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." God was not tired of giving even then—with Him He freely gives all things. "The gift of God is eternal life." "He giveth more grace." He "giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not."

* * * *

Second—God wishes us to be like Him in this, as in all else. The Lord Jesus, Who though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, once used these remarkable words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." There is no record of these words in the gospels, and we do not know under what circumstances they were spoken, but that they were spoken, there can be no doubt; and that they left a deep impression upon one man, at least, is equally clear. Christ was always inculcating this principle of giving. "Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom." And on another occasion He made use of this remarkable statement, "But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you." Shewing that giving alms is one of the principal matters claiming our attention, and that God judges of us largely from this standpoint.

* * * *

"Freely ye have received, freely give." What are we to give? *Let us give of our love.* How freely this has been bestowed upon us, and if we do not give of it, whatever else we may part with, we have scarcely given anything. Whereas the giving of this means the giving of all. Why do we not give more of our love to people? They would be enriched by it; and without our being the poorer.

Far otherwise, we should increase our own wealth, and multiply our happiness a hundred-fold if we gave away more of this treasure of the heart. How many a one is hungering for sympathy and affection, and we have it in our power to bestow it, if we would, but somehow the avenues are choked. The love is there deep down in our hearts, but it stays there. It does not find vent. It is seldom exercised. And so it remains dormant, and dies from *inertia*. *Let us cultivate this fine art of loving.* Pure as the crystal fount where it has its source and from which it eternally flows, let us allow it to course through our hearts and find an outlet. It will express itself in numberless ways, but it needs to be cultivated, for it is the finest of the fine arts. Sometimes we may blunder sadly, but even the effort will do us good, if it fails to be appreciated by anybody else. It is said that a man is as old as his arteries. That is, in proportion as the arteries become choked and the blood is unable to flow freely, decay and death follow. We are only full of life and vigour as Christians, as we allow love full play, and it flows freely through us and from us. It is a debt we owe to all.

* * * *

Let us give of whatever we possess. As we have opportunity let us do good unto all men. The more good we do, the more we shall want to do. The more we give, the more giving will grow into a habit—a habit productive of greater happiness than anything we lavish upon ourselves. Who does not know the joy of giving? The man or woman that does not, has never tasted true pleasure. It is the joy of God Himself. Why are we told so often to *ask*? Because God so delights in giving. He is always bestowing His gifts, and, with reverence be it said, few things would make the beneficent Creator more sad than for everybody to stop asking. With us, is it not sometimes the other way about? But with the Father of glory—the God and Father of all—there is a ceaseless session of giving, and from Him there flows day and night, and through all the hours of every day and every night, without intermission, to all His creatures “life and breath and all things.”

* * * *

Let us be quite sure of this, *the greatest happiness belongs to the greatest giver.* And if anyone reading these lines wants a recipe for increasing his or her happiness (and who does not?), it is to be found in that one word, GIVE. A friend of ours once related the following personal experience. He had undertaken to collect a sum of money, in three years, for some beneficent object. An acquaintance—a

wealthy man—promised him twenty pounds towards the amount, to be spread over the above period. The three years passed and not one penny was forthcoming, although, had he pleased, he could have paid the entire sum at once without missing it. But all sorts of excuses were made to stave the matter off. At last, after the three years had expired, my friend was sent for, and, after sundry apologies and explanations, he was offered half the sum originally promised. He took the ten pound note in his hand, and looking the other straight in the face, said, “Three years ago you promised me twenty pounds, the time is gone, and you offer me half, but, tell me, isn’t it the happiest day you have had for a long time?” The man confessed, with tears in his eyes, that it was. “Then,” said my friend, “give me the other half and get the full blessing.” But nothing would induce him to do this. He promised the other ten pounds some other time. In three days he was dead; his wealth went to a dissolute son, who, finally, squandered it all. How true are the words, “There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.” “God loveth a cheerful giver.” Whether, therefore, it is time, money, strength or affection, let us give what we have, and in giving, we shall get.

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THE LATE MR. E. E. WHITFIELD, M.A.

We cannot allow this number to go forth without some reference to one whose departure to be with the Lord on December 22nd last is a loss to the Church, and specially so to those who knew him. After a short illness he passed away at the age of sixty-three. In our deceased brother there was the rare combination of learning, simplicity and piety. His reverence for the Scriptures and the Christian faith was as profound as his knowledge of both; and he ever made use of his extensive acquaintance with theological literature to defend and elucidate the doctrines of Holy Writ. It is well known that he edited some of the late Mr. Kelly’s writings, and we are informed that some of the footnotes in the late J. N. Darby’s translation of the O.T. are from his pen. Amidst learned labours such as these, (to show the character of the man) he willingly served others in whatever capacity he could render help, however unnoticed and unremunerative the service. As an instance of this, we might mention, that, he kindly undertook the reading of the proofs of this magazine. While we all mourn his loss, may the comfort of God and His special guidance and support be with those who will miss him most.

KEY NOTES TO THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

By WALTER SCOTT.

- GENESIS - - Beginnings. Sources. Seed-plot of the Bible.
 EXODUS - - Deliverance. Redemption. Law. Grace in Tabernacle-type.
 LEVITICUS - - Sacrifice. Priesthood. Worship.
 NUMBERS - - Wilderness-Walk, Trial and Service.
 DEUTERONOMY - - Review of the Wilderness. Canaan—conduct and ways.
 JOSHUA - - The energy of Faith. The Wars of Canaan.
 JUDGES - - Decline of Faith. Repeated failures of Israel.
 RUTH - - David-root of grace and royalty.
 1 SAMUEL - - Royal Government in the hands of Saul.
 2 SAMUEL - - Royal Government in the hands of David.
 1 KINGS - - Royal Government in the hands of Solomon and successors
 2 KINGS - - Royal Government in its decline.
 1 CHRONICLES - - God's earthly elect connected with the Throne and Ark.
 2 CHRONICLES - - The ruin of Royal Government in the House of David.
 EZRA - - Religious condition of the returned Babylon-remnants.
 NEHEMIAH - - Civil condition of the restored Babylon-remnant.
 ESTHER - - Providential care over Judah in captivity.
 JOB - - Human righteousness and goodness divinely tested.
 BOOK OF PSALMS - - Israel's Praise-Book of Holy Song and Worship.
 PROVERBS - - Path of Wisdom under the government of God.
 ECCLESIASTES - - Everything under the sun tested—the result *Vanity*.
 SONG - - The King developing and drawing out the affections of the spouse.
- ISAIAH - - The most comprehensive of the Prophetical Books.
 JEREMIAH - - Warnings to conscience of Israel, and latter-day blessing.
 LAMENTATIONS - - Mournful elegies over the desolation of Judah.
 EZEKIEL - - Judgment of Israel and the nations. Millennial arrangements.
 DANIEL - - Gentile History and Prophecy.
 HOSEA - - Israel's moral condition—past, present, future.
 JOEL - - Judgment and Universal Blessing.
 AMOS - - Judgment and Blessing—Israel and the Nations.
 OBADIAH - - Judgment upon Edom and the Heathen.
 JONAH - - Judgment pronounced upon Nineveh, and its repentance.
 MICAH - - Judgment and Blessing upon Jerusalem and Samaria.
 NAHUM - - The final doom of Nineveh and Assyria.
 HABAKKUK - - Jewish Spiritual exercise.
 ZEPHANIAH - - Judgment upon Jerusalem and the nations. Blessing at the end.
- HAGGAI - - Encouragement to rebuild the Temple.
 ZECHARIAH - - Judgment upon Israel's enemies. Full blessing after judgment.
 MALACHI - - Jehovah's last pleadings and expostulations with Judah.

“BEGINNINGS.”

I. THE FIRST MAN.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

GENESIS, as its name implies, is the book of “beginnings.” It not only furnishes us with God’s account of the origin of the heavens and the earth, and of the various denizens of the latter, but it shews us the rise of all the principles which have developed themselves in the subsequent history of the human race. To reject the book of Genesis is to cut away from our feet the foundations of all true knowledge.

The title of this article would possibly evoke a smile from some of the sages of this hour. “The first man”: who can know anything about him? Is he not lost in the dim mists of antiquity? To such queries the soul that fears God pays no heed. The divine Spirit in I Cor. xv. 45 speaks of “the first man Adam”; and in Gen. i., ii., every needful particular is recorded concerning him. This is sufficient for faith. Prove a man before Adam, or another man alongside of him, and the whole structure of Holy Scripture falls to pieces like a house of cards. For Scripture is manifestly the history of two men, the first and the second; the one who brought in all the mischief, and the One who has triumphed over it all, and so made eternal blessing secure for all who are associated with Him.

Adam may be regarded in a twofold way: (1) as a creation of God; (2) as a type of the second man, the Lord Jesus.

First, as a creation of God. Gen. i. 27 distinctly forbids the notion that man is an evolution from some lower order of being. Three times in this verse the Spirit uses the word “created,” as if He would insist with all possible emphasis on the fact that he is a distinct and independent creation of God. Not on the first day, but on the last was the man brought into being. His home was fully furnished before he was formed to occupy and govern it. When the moment came for man to be brought forward, the divine procedure was altogether different from that of the previous days. “God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every

creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth " (Gen. i. 26). Fishes, birds, cattle all sprang out of the waters and out of the earth at the divine fiat ; but not man. A divine consultation is suggested in the words, " Let us make man." The gravity and majesty of this utterance command our reverent attention.

What are we to understand by the words, " image " and " likeness " ? Certainly neither term has reference to man's physical frame. Putting it briefly, " image " represents ; " likeness " resembles. An image is not necessarily like the thing or person it is intended to represent. The coin that was shewn to the Lord Jesus in Matt. xxii. 20 may not have borne a " likeness " of Cæsar, but it certainly bore an " image " of him. As made in the " image " of God, man is set in this world to represent Him to the lower creatures in rule and blessing ; this term has thus to do with man's position. " Likeness " has reference to his moral being, as one capable of entering into relationships and bearing responsibilities. Neither God's " image " nor " likeness " has been lost by the fall (Gen. ix. 6 ; James iii. 9). It is because of God's image in man that the sin of murder is so serious. To kill one who represents God is high treason against Him whom he represents.

Two steps in the creation of man are noted in Gen. ii. 7. " The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life ; and man became a living soul." The body was thus formed first, but this passage teaches distinctly that life does not inhere therein. Something else was necessary ere there could be vitality. This reminds us of our Lord's words to His disciples in Matt. x. 28 : " Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Man's constitution is described in 1 Thess. v. 23—" Spirit and soul and body." Note the order (so often rendered in the opposite way), for God always begins with what is highest. (Compare Ex. xxv., etc. ; Lev. i., etc.). The spirit is the seat of the will and of the intelligence (1 Cor. ii. 11) ; the soul of the passions and emotions (though the word is often used in the sense of mere personality, as in Ezek. xviii. 4 ; 1 Pet. iii. 20), the body is the outer vessel by means of which the Spirit and soul manifest themselves.

Unlike the Second Man, who in His wondrous grace was born a Babe, and " increased in wisdom and stature " (Luke ii. 52), Adam came forth from the divine hand full of vigour from the

moment that he first drew breath. He was, moreover, no savage having to work his way upward by painful stages, he was endowed with understanding from the beginning, able to receive and comprehend communications from his Creator (Gen. i. 28), capable also of giving names intelligently to all the lower orders (Gen. ii. 19-20). The savagery subsequently observable in the greater part of the human family came in through sin, and especially as the fruit of idolatry. Rom. i. 18-32 shews this clearly.

Many people have a vague kind of notion that Adam, had he never sinned, would have lived here a number of years, and then have gone to heaven. The opposite is nearer the truth. Adam was created for the earth, and should have remained here, working the will of God, and enjoying His beneficence. Sin has caused the forfeiture of the earth, but the infinite Grace of God (which never knows defeat) has planned a better thing for sinners who believe, even eternal bliss with Christ in heaven above.

Let us now consider Adam as a type of the Second Man, the Lord Jesus. Our authority for doing so will be found in Rom. v. 14. In 1 Cor. xv. the Lord Jesus is called both "the Second Man" and "the last Adam." As the former, He supersedes the first man, glorifying God where he so miserably failed; as the latter, He sums up in His own blessed person the whole divine thought for man, so that there can be nothing to follow Him, for there is no advance on Christ. As the "Last Adam," He is, moreover, a quickening Spirit, imparting life to others, in contrast with the first man Adam, who was simply what God made him—a living soul.

Adam typifies Christ in his various headships. Take first his headship of creation. The fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and every living thing that moveth upon the earth was placed under his hands. In the grant of power to Nebuchadnezzar at a later date, men were added, but the sea was omitted (Dan. ii. 37-38). An immensely wider dominion is reserved for the Second Man. God's purpose is to "put all things under His feet," and to set Him at the head of all glory; both above and below. Adam's headship of creation was manifested before Eve came upon the scene. The Lord God brought every beast and fowl before Adam to see what he would call them, "and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." Giving names is an expression of Lordship. We see this in Pharaoh with Joseph, in

Nebuchadnezzar with Daniel and his three friends, and in the Lord Jesus with Simon. Christ's headship of creation, though to be shared with the Church, is a thing above and apart from any such relationship. His headship flows from the mighty fact that "by Him were all things created" (Col. i. 16). Aaron, as typically representing Him, was anointed, and the tabernacle and its vessels with him, before his sons received the sacred oil (Lev. viii. 10-12).

Adam is also a type of Christ as head of a race. "In Adam" and "in Christ" describe the two families in Holy Scripture. In each case all share the position of their head. Adam was not the father of a family until after his disobedience; and his whole progeny stand with him under condemnation and death. Christ became head of a new and heavenly race in resurrection; all who are identified with Him stand eternally before God in His acceptance and blessing. Whatever God has made true of that blessed man who, in contrast to Adam, became obedient unto death, is likewise true of all those whom grace has set "in Him." In the divine thought there has been a transfer from Adam to Christ; but are we in the consciousness of it in our own souls?

A few words now as to Adam's headship of the woman. The very first type in the Bible shows us Christ and the Church. When the first man named every living creature he must have realised his own loneliness. Everything passed before him with its mate, "but for Adam there was not found an helpmeet for him." Yet the Lord God had said: "It is not good that the man should be alone." How was this to be met? The woman was formed. "The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept." Wonderful foreshadowing of the deeper sleep of death that was experienced by our blessed Lord! "He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man." In like manner the Church is the direct fruit of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. The first mention of His sufferings is in Matt. xvi. 21, just after His wonderful words to Simon Bar-Jona, "on this rock I will build My Church."

Mark, the bone was not taken from the man's head, nor from his feet, but from his side. The Creator's purpose was not to form for him one equal to him in every particular, still less was it His

thought to create for him a slave. From his *side* the bone was taken, indicating the place of the woman in relation to the man; ever by him as his companion and counsellor, and the object of his love.

We may find a contrast with Christ in Gen. ii. 22. The Lord God presented Eve to Adam; in Eph. v. 27 Christ presents the Church to Himself. Why is this? The answer is very simple—Christ *is God*

LINES TO A CHRISTIAN PILGRIM.*

Whither—'mid clouds of earth,
 Whilst a strange sunlight brightens on thy brow,
 And on thy lips such song as ne'er had birth
 From this world's womb of woe?

Whither—but what can be
 The goal of man, but one dark awful end?
 Yet even Death, could we but know that he
 Summed all, were still a friend.

Alas—yon judgment cloud
 To'ard which thy rapid step e'er draws thee near!
 Art blind to its sharp flash? Its thunder loud
 Dost thou not, trembling, hear?

What law can urge thee there?
 To what wild call doth thy poor spirit hark,
 To lead thee far from all that we hold fair
 To judgment and the dark?

THE ANSWER.

Nay, I have seen a Cross,
 On which hung One upon whose blessed Head
 The cloud of which ye speak spent all its force;
 And, for me, left Him—*dead*.

But Victor from the dead,
 In holy calm, He passed Stone, Watch and Seal,
 Then heavenward rising, showed my foe's proud head
 All crushed beneath His heel.

No death remains to meet,
 Nor do I haste to fill a grave of earth,
 Far brighter hopes now wing my willing feet.
 And flood my soul with mirth.

'Tis Life, He gives, 'tis Life,
 Which to its source must ever force its way;—
 Till, through a scene of sorrow, sin and strife,
 It reach its kindred Day.

Soon, soon I'll be with Him,
 And not till then shall I be fully blest—
 With happy tears my longing eye grow dim,
 For then—I'll rest! I'll rest!—F. C. J.

* After William Cullen Bryant's "*Lines to a Waterfowl*."

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY: SINNER, SAINT AND SERVANT.

SAUL OF TARSUS, THE SINNER. HIS CONVERSION.

“. . . . Sinners, of whom I am chief.” (1 Tim. i. 15.)

By R. E.

CONVERSION.

THE usual method of commencing a biography or an autobiography is by a reference to the birth, antecedents, training and early experiences of the subject of the memoir. But this aspect of the life of Saul of Tarsus, afterwards known as Paul the Apostle, is so dwarfed by the record of his spiritual experiences, that our first notice of him must be in connection with his conversion. If it had not been for this stupendous catastrophe which overturned all his schemes, and changed his whole outlook, we should scarcely have known anything about him. It was this “change”—this “turning”—that led him into a path and to follow pursuits, to endure hardships, and deliver messages which have filled the world with wonder and gratitude ever since. But for this, with all his gifts and natural greatness, he would have remained, at the most, but a name upon the page of history.

It will not be out of place, therefore, to put his conversion in the very foreground of the narrative. This method is in harmony, too, with the whole genius of the sacred writings. “This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you,” was said long ago with respect to Israel. The statement covers a profound truth. No man has made any beginning worth speaking of until he has begun with God. And this beginning stands at the head of everything—it is “the first month of the year.” Until we have found Christ we are out of the reckoning. It is not our natural birth; it is not anything we have done, that puts us right with God, or forms the basis of this new start. It is the revelation of Jesus Christ; it is the blood on the lintel; it is a vision of the lamb for sinners slain.

Two things must be taken account of if we are to form a just estimate of the Apostle Paul's career—his conversion, and his special ministry.—We find him constantly referring to both, and

the one is as unique as the other. Not only did our Lord specially reveal Himself to this erstwhile antagonist, so that his wild and wayward course was completely reversed, but He gave him a special revelation of truth. He was, in every sense, "a chosen vessel." Again and again He refers to what he calls "My gospel." He tells us in Col. i. 25 that to him it was given to complete the word of God. He was a minister of the gospel and a minister of the mystery, and no further truth has been given since the Apostle's ministry closed. The whole scope of revelation is complete. With this we shall hope to deal later on. We are now concerned with the first fact mentioned, viz., the special character of his conversion.

That conversion was as sudden as it was overwhelming. There may have been some preparatory work going on—this may be implied in the words, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks"*—yet, nevertheless, the actual conversion was with tragic suddenness. It is well for those who object to sudden conversion to consider this. Conversion is something more than a gradual process of moral development. It is an arresting, a turning, a *new* birth. How real, how striking conversion becomes, looked at in the light of what took place on the road to Damascus. Saul heard a voice, he saw a face, he became acquainted with a Person he had never known before. It left an impression that was to last for ever. Through cloud and sunshine, through evil report and good report, whether led in triumph or confined within prison walls, in success or in failure, in sickness or in health, whatever his circumstances, the effect of this revelation was never effaced.

Twice does the great Apostle of the Gentiles recount the story of his conversion. Both occasions were memorable. The first was during his final visit to Jerusalem before the people who clamoured for his life; the second, before Agrippa, more than two years after. Each was an important crisis in the life of St. Paul, and it is, therefore, evident that he regarded his conversion, and the special manner of it, as of vital consequence.

From the Bible standpoint (the only true one in such matters) conversion is not only a necessity, but a great central fact in the history of every human life, into which this experience enters. It would, however, be totally wrong to demand that this experience

* Though many MSS. omit these words,

must be the same, in all its details, in every case. The spiritual life of children, brought up under decided Christian influences, may develop as naturally and noiselessly as a flower. The bud and bloom appear without suddenness or noise. It is simply the ordinary and natural unfolding of the life within, implanted one hardly knows how or when. There appears to have been no sudden revolution in Timothy's case, for instance, like that which happened in the career of Saul of Tarsus ; and while it took an earthquake to arouse the Philippian jailor ; of Lydia, in the very same chapter, we read, " Whose heart the Lord opened." Nevertheless, conversion is a great and impressive fact in human life, as is recorded of some of St. Paul's own converts, " Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God ; and to wait for His Son from Heaven." While amongst his Corinthian converts, were those who once had been thieves, drunkards, revilers and adulterers, but now were washed, sanctified and justified (1 Cor. vi. 9-11).

Conversion is always referred to in Scripture as implying a divine work. Its simple meaning is, to turn, or turn again. Thus in the commission given to St. Paul, he was sent to " Open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." (Acts xxvi. 18). A man cannot convert himself. Those Thessalonians would never have turned to God had not the gospel been preached to them, not " in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost " (1 Thess. i. 5). It is no mere reformation of character, or giving up bad habits, or even sorrow for past misdoings. It is described as, " Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

The conversion of Saul of Tarsus is remarkable, in many ways, beyond all others. It is so, inasmuch as he was already living a strictly moral life. " Touching the righteousness which is in the law," he says, " blameless." His conscience never had to smite him for any of those moral lapses of which so many are guilty. Even in youth he was pure. Neither was he irreligious. He " profited," he tells us, " in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." Yet, notwithstanding all this, he was at enmity with God, and ignorant of His truth. To employ his own words about others, as descriptive of himself, he had " the *form* of knowledge and of the truth in the law." But it was only the *form*.

The *manner* of his conversion was not less remarkable. It was not by study, or by listening to a sermon. It was not brought about by a dream, or in conversation with someone more enlightened than himself. It had nothing to do with a revival, or any human instrumentality whatever. His conversion was unique and unprecedented. The very One he was opposing and persecuting revealed Himself to him, arresting him suddenly in his mad career by speaking to him from heaven.

There was never any doubt in the Apostle's mind as to what had happened. Three times in the Acts we have the distinct record of it ; once historically by Luke, in chap. ix. ; and twice from his own lips, in chaps. xxii. and xxvi. The last two were given years after the occurrence, at the close of his life. The years between had not dimmed the sense of the transcendent reality and effect of what had happened. One thing, and one thing alone, accounted for the overwhelming transformation that turned the persecutor of Christ into His devoted servant and follower. He had seen Him : he had heard His voice : the glory of the once-despised, rejected, and crucified Nazarene had shone upon him, and blinded him to all else but the one vision.

It is impossible to account for the complete change—the new and overmastering passion—the zeal on behalf of Him Whom he had hated, and whose followers he had hunted, which took possession of Saul of Tarsus, in any other way than by attributing it to this conversion, which, for suddenness, strangeness, completeness, and far-reaching results, distances all previous records.

In Saul, then, we see conversion, and we understand something of what it means, and we see its stupendous results. It is God entering a human life. It is the revelation of Christ to a human soul. It is the love and grace, the pity and compassion of Calvary taking possession of a human heart. It is the awakening of a soul to new surroundings, new joys, and powers before unknown. It is a change of attitude toward God, and a change of thought about Him ; so much so, that the soul learns all that God is willing to be to the one that turns to Him through Jesus Christ.

But let us look more closely at this remarkable conversion, for the Apostle tells us in his autobiographical reference to it, in his first letter to Timothy, that the reason of it was a wider one than

his own immediate blessing. It will be well to quote the entire passage :—

“ And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, Who hath enabled me, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry ; who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious ; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” (Ch. i. 12-17.)

Two points in this passage stand out with great clearness : Saul of Tarsus was converted in order that he might be put into the ministry, and, secondly, that he might be a pattern. It is with the latter of these that we have chiefly to do now.

In what respect was Saul the chief of sinners ? There are some who regard this as the language of hyperbole, and hardly credit the Apostle with meaning literally what he said. But, if this were so, how then did Jesus Christ shew forth in him the whole of His long-suffering ? It will be seen, therefore, that the context, apart from other considerations, demands a literal interpretation. There are, however, other reasons which compel us to adopt this view. He was, indeed, as we have seen, religious and exemplary in his conduct, as far as mere ordinary morality went. He could have entered the best society, and filled a foremost place in the councils of his nation. His character, from a human point of view, was unimpeachable. He was not dishonest, neither was he licentious ; in all the relations of life he was conspicuous for honorable conduct. Is it possible, then, to agree with this man's own estimate of himself when he declares that of sinners he was chief ?

The answer must be found in the words in which Paul describes himself—“ a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and worthless.” A man's sin cannot be estimated simply according to the way in which it may affect himself, or damage him in the eyes of his fellow-men. Saul's sin was of a tremendous nature. He was a persecutor ; he says :—

“ I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem ; and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests ; and when they were put to death I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme ; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.” (Acts xxvi. 9-11.)

Saul was thus, not only ill-treating his fellow creatures, but he was setting himself with all the force of his great intellect and unrivalled powers against God, and attempting to frustrate the purpose He had in sending His Son into the world. I thought "*that I ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth.*" There lay the enormity of his guilt. For, supposing he had succeeded—and, as far as he was concerned, he meant to succeed, and therefore his guilt is proportioned to his motive and intent, not merely by the measure of success—supposing he had succeeded in stamping out the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, and ridding the world for ever of all mention of that Name, who can measure the loss to humanity at large? Even as regards this life, the loss cannot be computed. All the comfort that Christianity ministers to the living and the dying; all that makes for the formation of the highest and noblest character; all that gives guidance in perplexity, courage in adversity, and strength in temptation, would have been unknown. And what shall be said of the life beyond? Death would still have been the King of terrors, holding in bondage, through fear of it, all mankind. The grave would have remained the goal, and all beyond it shrouded in uncertainty and mystery. No voice would have been heard uttering those words, "I am the resurrection and the life" over the grave of the departed, or sung with triumph, "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep."

These calamitous results were all, potentially, within the persecuting propaganda of Saul. Could there have been a greater sin? If a man becomes an habitual drunkard, or if he gives way to immorality or dishonesty he injures himself, his family, and perhaps a few others. But the effect of Saul's sin embraced the world! He sinned against God and all mankind. Saul set himself to thwart the very purposes of God. He was the *declared* enemy of Christ. He stood, as it were, directly confronting the Almighty. Is it any wonder then that Paul, even at the very end of his days, describes himself as a "blasphemer, and a persecutor, and worthless," and, as he reflected upon it all, exclaimed, "Sinners, of whom I am chief"?

What accounts for this religious, highly-educated, moral man embarking upon such a course? He explains it all in a few words: "I did it ignorantly in unbelief." Yes, it was *ignorance*. Ignorance in spite of all his education and training, and having

been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, "taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers." Ignorance and unbelief! Is there none of it to-day? Yes, even where we should least expect to find it. Are not men attacking the Scriptures now just as the learned Saul of Tarsus attacked the followers of Jesus then, only with different weapons, and just as truly ignorant of what they are doing, and as full of unbelief as the arch-persecutor of old?

Thus Saul of Tarsus was the chief of sinners. Yet this gave occasion for Christ to manifest the full extent of his long-suffering, and we now turn to examine a little this aspect of the subject.

The Apostle's own view of his conversion was, that, it was to be the means of shewing forth the whole of the long-suffering of Christ; and this in order that others who came after should be encouraged to trust in Him. In what way was the long-suffering of the Saviour thus manifested? We must trace, a little, the life of the one who became the subject of such marvellous grace in order to discover the answer.

The first reference to Saul of Tarsus is in Acts vii., in connection with the martyrdom of Stephen. In addition to the historical record we are permitted to hear his own account of it. In Acts xxii., in his harangue to the multitude after he has been taken captive, he quotes words used long before in answer to Christ's summons to him on a former occasion to depart from Jerusalem: "*Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on Thee; and when the blood of Thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him*" (vers. 19-20). This autobiographical record (if we may call it so without being sure that the Apostle ever actually wrote it down) leaves no doubt as to the accuracy of St. Luke's account, or as to the guilt of Saul. No witnesses are necessary to prove the tremendous bias that existed in the mind of this young man, and his hatred of everything Christian. Acts vii. 58, informs us that he was only a young man,* yet he was taking a foremost part in putting to death one of Christ's most earnest followers. Not only was he "standing by," but he acknowledges he gave his consent to the deed, and further, "Kept the raiment of them that slew him." So that as the Lord Jesus received the spirit of his faithful servant, He looked down upon one determined to spend his life in devastating His Church. Why did not the same moment

* Probably about thirty.

that witnessed the departure of Stephen witness also the death of Saul? How, then, would the *whole* long-suffering of Christ have been shewn forth? And how would that prayer have been answered, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"? It was to receive a full answer in one case at least.

There was evidently no repentance on the part of Saul; it might have been thought that the heart of a young man would have relented; but we go on to read, "As for Saul, he made havoc of the Church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women committed them to prison." (Acts viii. 3). Weeks and months pass, and still we find him pursuing the same course, for the next reference to him is as follows: "Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem." In his own words: "Being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities."

And now he is on his way to Damascus—and now he has nearly reached the gates. For we are told it was only when "he came near Damascus" that Christ spoke to him. They know within the city that he is coming. Tidings have reached them,* that, "Here he hath authority from the Chief Priests to bind all that call on Thy Name." His horses' hoofs are almost within sound. "O Lord why dost Thou suffer this man to go on? Thy people have been put to death through his means. He has punished them oft in every city. Dost Thou not care for Thine own? Now *we* are about to be delivered into his hand." Can we not imagine some such cry ascending to the throne of the Majesty in the heavens? Yes, why was it? Why was Saul allowed to have it all his own way? He was *not* having it all his own way. Really and truly, though it did not seem like it, Christ was having His way. We can see it now, though no one knew it then, not even Saul himself. "That in me first Jesus Christ might show forth *all* long-suffering." This was the secret of all those days of trial, and weary weeks of waiting. For how else could the whole of the longsuffering of Christ have been shewn forth? It was all purposed, it was all planned, and though God's people had to suffer meanwhile, generations yet-unborn were to reap the benefit of their hours of anguish.

* We have this on the authority of Ananias (Acts ix. 14).

Oh! that we understood more of God's ways; oh! that we more often waited to see the end. Christ could have smitten the persecutor to the ground more easily than the moth perishes in the candle light, had He so chosen. But, had He done so, we should not have known His long-suffering; and had He intervened sooner we should not have known *all* of it. Long ago the Name of the Lord had been proclaimed, "*The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin*": and this had to be made good. The whole extent to which the long-suffering of God could go was never seen until Saul, red-handed, bent on destroying the excellent of the earth, after a prolonged course of bitter persecution, his heart full of "wild fury," is met by Him Whose Name he hated above everything else, and won by "the meekness and gentleness of Christ."

(*To be continued.*)

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.

What is a pearl?

First of all the product of a living being! the only jewel that is so—this surely is the first thing we are intended to realize in it.

A pearl is the result of injury done to the animal that produces it! Its material is the nacre, as it is called, or "mother of pearl" which lines the interior of the shell, and which is renewed by it as often as it is injured or worn away. When a particle of sand gets between the animal and the shell, the irritation causes a deposit of nacre upon it, which goes on being deposited, layer after layer, till a pearl is formed. But completely "spherical pearls," and these are the valuable ones, can only be formed loose in the muscle or soft parts of the animal. The Chinese obtain them artificially, by introducing into the living mussel foreign substances, such as pieces of "mother of pearl" fixed on wires, which thus become coated with a more brilliant material. The pearl is thus, as we may say, *an answer to an injury, and it is the offending object that becomes through the work of the injured one, a precious beautiful gem.* It is clothed with a comeliness put upon it as the objects of divine grace are, with a beauty and glory of Him we crucified. It is in truth nothing else that He sought in coming among us, but objects of divine grace.—*Extract from F. W. Grant.*

CHRIST IN THE LEVITICAL OFFERINGS.

By G. HUCKLESBY.

III. THE PEACE OFFERING (Lev. iii.).

NO one type could ever fully set forth all the varied graces and manifold glories of "the Altogether Lovely One"; and no single Offering could by any means give a complete view of the finished work of Christ, even as it was impossible for any single Gospel to give us anything like an adequate idea of His wondrous life on earth. Thus the Holy Spirit has graciously given us a four-fold narrative of the sojourn of our blessed Lord below, and He has been pleased to give for our instruction, in detailed form, the account of these various Offerings, in order that we might, by looking at them together, obtain a better view, and have a more perfect understanding of the Great Atoning Sacrifice. Then, by contrasting one with the other, striking differences appear, fine distinctions are observed, which could not have been the case otherwise. And in this we see the "Lights and Perfections" of the Inspired Record.

For instance, by contrasting the account of the Burnt Offering with that of the Peace Offering, how many differences at once appear? Concerning the former, we read, it was to be "cut into his pieces . . . and his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water," whereas nothing of the kind is said about this in the latter. Then again, the *whole* animal brought as a Burnt Offering was to be consumed by fire upon the altar, but in that which was offered as a Peace Offering, only a certain part was thus burned. A part thereof was eaten by the priests, and the remainder was shared by the one who presented it, and his friends. But why has the unerring Author been pleased to institute and to record such differences? Is it not, that, He desires us to take our stand by faith with Himself, and view the same glorious object from different standpoints, and to see it in various lights? Hence in the Burnt Offering we behold the work of Christ from the Divine point of view, and discover that there is that in Christ which God alone can rightly enter into and fully appreciate. The Omniscient eye of Jehovah could alone see the full devotedness of that heart, and the untiring energy of that subject will, which characterised the willing Servant and obedient Son, as He pursued with undeviating course the path of absolute

subjection to God's will, and of perfect obedience to His Word. But, when we gaze upon the same work as shadowed forth in the Peace Offering, we see God's redeemed ones are invited to share with Him the rest, the joy, and satisfaction, which the Father has found in His beloved Son.

Moreover, we find that for the Burnt Offering the victim must be "a male," whereas, in the Peace Offering, the animal might be either "a male" or "a female." "The male" implies the thought of strength, of moral courage, and power of endurance; the "female" suggests more the idea of weakness. Thus "the male" for the Burnt Offering prefigured Christ as the One Who willingly offered Himself to God in all the glory of His Person, and in the might of His strength to execute the Divine plan, and accomplish the Divine work. It represented the Lord Jesus yielding up every power, and dedicating every faculty He possessed to the Father. The One Who "loved God with all His heart, with all His soul, with all His strength, and with all His mind, and His neighbour as Himself." But in the Divine permission for the offerer to bring "a female" for his Peace Offering, God graciously considered the ability and circumstances of the offerer. And this beautifully brings out the tenderness of the grace of God in coming down to the imperfect view, and the feeble apprehension of those who are called to participate with Him in these Divine realities. To those who are thus privileged He assigns the "wave-breast," telling us in figure of the special portion we have in that adorable One, Who makes room for us in His bosom of everlasting love and changeless affection.

We must also notice one most important distinction between the Meat Offering and the Peace Offering. The former was bloodless, whereas the thought of blood-shedding is most prominently brought before us in the latter. The Lord Jesus, as the Perfect Man, was the only One Who could ever claim life on the ground of law-keeping. He might have entered Heaven as a man who had passed through this defiled world without ever contracting defilement. But this would never have availed for us as sinners. He must suffer if we are to be blessed; He must die if we are to live. And the death of Atonement was the only death that He could die, and this He has done, and so made peace for us by the blood of His Cross. Hence the holy life, and the peace-making death are so strikingly joined together in these two Offerings.

The leading thought in the Peace Offering seems to be

THE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD,

which is enjoyed by those who are reconciled to Him through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. And there are three things in connection with this important subject clearly set forth. First, we see the *title* to this fellowship; secondly, the *subject* concerning which we are called to have fellowship; and thirdly, the *condition* laid down whereby alone this fellowship can be enjoyed. First, then, we notice

THE TITLE TO THIS FELLOWSHIP.

It is the "sprinkled blood," as mentioned in ver. 2. The blood of Christ is the only thing which can ever fit a guilty soul for God's presence or ever entitle a sinner to such an inestimable privilege. Adam, during the brief period of his unfallen state, enjoyed fellowship with his Maker. We read that "in the cool of the day the voice of the Lord God was heard walking in the midst of the garden," and there that kind, beneficent Creator deigned to hold converse with man. But this high honour was soon forfeited by sin, and our first parents, who were thus favoured, were expelled from that fair and lovely scene. From that moment the joy of fellowship with God was lost, for "how can two walk together unless they be agreed?" The link of communion was snapped by the Fall. And from that time fallen man has made it only too manifest that he is alienated from the life of God. At Calvary's Cross it became unmistakably apparent that he was an *enemy* to God, in defying His law, despising His grace, and in murdering the Son of His love.

Hence, it is evident, that before this communion could be renewed, peace must be made, and reconciliation must be effected. But who can accomplish such a stupendous work? How can such a marvellous result be brought about? Blessed be God, He has devised a way whereby His banished be not expelled for ever, but be brought back into His everlasting embrace.

We turn to the Peace Offering and learn the perfect solution of this mighty problem. The rod of Divine Judgment has fallen upon Jehovah's Fellow. That sin-avenging sword has been bathed in the blood of "Immanuel," and it now sleeps for ever for the child of God. By the Cross the righteous claims of the Throne of Heaven have been adequately met; the inflexible holiness of the One upon

that Throne has been fully upheld and gloriously vindicated; sin has been publicly judged, and Satan has been eternally silenced. "The Healer of the Breach" has been down into the mire of death, and amidst the raging tempest and angry billows He has laid a firm foundation on which we may build with safety our hope for eternity. At an infinite cost He has wrought out for us a free, full and an eternal salvation.

The believing sinner finds that instead of God wishing to punish him He delights to save him. Instead of keeping him at a distance, He bids him draw near. Instead of spurning his cry for mercy and banishing the returning prodigal from His presence, He runs to meet him, and imprints the kiss of reconciliation upon his cheek. The shoes of sonship are placed upon his feet, the ring of changeless love is put upon the finger, and Heaven's best robe adorns his person. Thus clothed in garments of salvation, and covered with the robe of righteousness, he is brought by the Father to His own table, and shares with Him the bounties of His well-spread board. The Spirit of sonship takes up His abode in his heart, creating therein the emotions and desires of a child, causing him to cry, "Abba Father." This is the position, the privilege and the portion of all true believers. For being justified by faith we have peace with God, we stand in grace, and we wait for glory. "The work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."

God has not made peace by destroying conscience, but by tranquillizing and purging it by the blood of Christ. He does not obliterate all recollection of sin, but pardons iniquity, transgression and sin. It will be the remembrance of transgressions forgiven, and of sin being covered in such a way that will draw out the soul in praise, and the lips in song to all eternity.

We see also in this suggestive type

THE SUBJECT OF THE COMMUNION

which believers are called to share with God. It is the Person and the work of Him Who has made peace at such a costly sacrifice. The One in Whom God finds undisturbed rest, eternal joy, and everlasting satisfaction.

In the 11th verse of this chapter we find a new expression in connection with these Offerings; "It is the *food* of the Offering

made by fire unto the Lord." The Peace Offering thus provided food for God. The fat was Jehovah's special portion, which was all burned upon the altar. Elsewhere in Leviticus this Offering is also called "the bread of God" (ch. xxii.), and in Malachi, the altar on which it was offered is called "the table of the Lord." All these expressions convey the idea of fellowship, and imply joint participation. But there were two things which Israel were strictly commanded not to eat, which are mentioned in ver. 17, "It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations, throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither *fat* nor *blood*." I suppose from the latter we may learn that, as sinners, we have no title to life, hence the injunction to abstain from eating blood, "for the life of the flesh is in the blood." Our every claim to life has been forfeited through sin. But, when we come to the New Testament, we read in the sixth of John, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." In this scripture we are taught that our life flows to us through His death. Before we can partake of the flesh of an animal it must first die, and flesh and blood are not separated at death except it be by a violent death. Hence we obtain life by faith in a once crucified but risen Saviour. The command to abstain from eating of the "fat" may teach us that God alone can fully comprehend and rightly prize all the deep inward perfections of Him Who died to give us life. But having received Him by faith as God's free Gift, we possess eternal life, and are called to enter in some measure into the Father's thought of the manifold excellencies and Divine perfections of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

From the Law of the Peace Offering, in chap. vii. 31, we learn that "the breast" was the special part given by God to Aaron and his sons. The breast is the *seat of affection*, and so suggestively sets forth the special portion which God's priestly house is called to find in the Lord Jesus. We are called to feast upon the timeless, fathomless, and deathless love of Christ. As individuals we can say, "The Son of God, Who *loved me*, and gave Himself for me." Collectively we say, "Christ also hath *loved us*, and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." And again, "Christ *loved the Church* and gave Himself for it." We have no doubt of this, for He Himself assures us that "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them

unto the end." Of such love we may truly say, "It is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame; many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it." Such love can be found only in the heart of Jesus. The power of death conquers all. It comes and clasps its object in its icy arms, holding it with a tenacious grip which despises all resistance, and carries off its prize despite all efforts to escape. Then the cold and cruel grave retains that which death has seized. This is the figure used by the Spirit of God of that love which Christ has set upon us. Nothing is so jealous as real love and ardent affection. It admits of no rival, and can endure no half-measures. From His hand no power can pluck us, and from His heart no created thing can separate us. Like a devouring fire His love has consumed every difficulty, and like a vehement flame it has surmounted every barrier, leaping above every obstacle to secure its object. Yea, at that tragic scene at Calvary, when love and death met in fearful conflict, love triumphed, and death was for ever vanquished. All the waves of wrath, and billows of judgment could not drown or even quench it. Oh! the deep, vast, profound, unutterable and unmerited love of our Heavenly Bridegroom! The very contemplation of it warms the heart and makes the spirit all aglow, and constrains us to say, "Unto Him that loveth us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen."

In chap. vii. 32-33 we find that "the shoulder" was also to be the special portion of the priest who offered the blood. The shoulder is the seat of *strength*, from which we learn, that the Lord Jesus has become "the Strength" as well as "the Redeemer" of His people.*

We also gather from chap. vii. 19 that the one who brought the Peace Offering partook of the remainder of the flesh in fellowship with his friends, who had journeyed with him to the sanctuary. From this we learn, that, we not only have fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, but we are also called to have fellowship one with another, of which the communion of 1 Cor. x. 16 is the antitype. Gathered by the Holy Spirit with fellow saints as partakers of the Table of our Lord, we hear Him say, "Eat, O friends ;

* Or it may typify Christ's own portion as the One, Who, having offered up Himself, is now, in virtue of it, seated at the right-hand of power [*Ed.*].

drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." Thus enjoying His presence, we become "abundantly satisfied with the fatness of His house," and are made "to drink of the river of His pleasure."

This brings us to

THE CONDITION OF THIS FELLOWSHIP,

as stated in chap. vii. 20-21 ; " But the soul that eateth of the flesh of the Peace Offerings, that pertain unto the Lord, having *his uncleanness upon him*, even that soul shall be cut off from his people. Moreover, the soul that shall *touch any unclean thing*, as the uncleanness of man, or any unclean beast, or any abominable unclean thing, and eat the flesh of the Sacrifice of Peace Offerings which pertain unto the Lord, even that soul shall be cut off from his people." To have fellowship with a thrice holy God is an inestimable privilege, but it carries with it a corresponding responsibility. " For what communion hath righteousness with unrighteousness ? or what fellowship hath light with darkness ? or what concord hath Christ with Belial ? " Only those who were ceremonially clean could be partakers with the Altar then, and only those who are kept morally clean now by the effect of the word and by living in the spirit can have fellowship with God. It was to bring judgment upon himself for an Israelite to attempt to eat the Peace Offering when thus defiled ; and for a Christian to presume to hold fellowship with God while indulging in sin or in any way compromising with evil, is to bring judgment upon himself. But whatever defilement or sin there may be upon us, if we are led to make a frank, honest confession of the sin, we have the blessed assurance that " He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The Corinthians were assaying to partake of the Peace Offering with their uncleanness upon them. They were going to the Lord's Table with unjudged walk and ways. Sin was not judged, and practical holiness was not cultivated, consequently, God's chastening rod was upon them, even as we read, " For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged."

The same important lesson is taught us by our blessed Lord, when he arose from the Paschal Supper, and poured water into a basin, and " began to wash His disciples' feet," before instituting that memorial feast which proclaims His death until He come.

Directly a child of God becomes defiled by sin, or contaminated by some unholy alliance, then his communion with God ceases. He at once forfeits this happy, holy privilege, the loss of which nothing else can make up for. Thus by trifling with conscience and persisting in evil conduct he loses the joy of salvation, which can only be restored upon the ground of honest confession, and truly forsaking the sin.

May we have grace to exercise ourselves, that we may always have a conscience void of offence, cultivating a spirit of self-judgment, and perfecting holiness in our walk and ways, and in our words and worship. Thus we shall, in the power and energy of an ungrieved spirit, have fellowship with the Father and with the Son, and with one another, until the scene of communion here is exchanged for that higher, deeper, holier, and more perfect fellowship above.

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

THE INCARNATION.

By WALTER SCOTT.

THE Gospel and Epistles of St. John derive their force and value from that great and fundamental truth, "God manifest in flesh," or, God Himself on earth witnessed in holy humanity. The words of Jesus were the words of God. The doings of Jesus were the doings of God. Inasmuch as this truth is assailed to-day, a scriptural statement of the Incarnation, ere we commence the study of our Epistle, seems called for.

Two of the leading truths of the New Testament are the Incarnation and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the former, God comes down to man; in the latter is laid the basis on which men can be righteously brought to God. The babe in the manger (Bethlehem), and the victim on the Cross (Jerusalem), are the respective points of view.

THE INCARNATION,

or

THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

is an essential truth of Christianity, and is the great foundation-rock of divine revelation. The whole system of Christianity rests upon it. The moral and subjective forces which lead to deeds of

heroism in service and suffering have their roots struck deep in the fact of the Incarnation. If the scriptural account of the virgin birth of our Lord is denied or frittered away, then the whole body of Christian truth is swept aside; the character of God, as light, is assailed, and the Cross vitiated. The birth of the Lord in the order of human generation is absolutely at variance with the facts of the case. God's glory would have been compromised, and salvation for men rendered impossible. A sinful taint in the nature of our Lord would have made the Cross a necessity for *Himself*, but null and void for others.

The Incarnation—true alone of our Lord—necessarily supposes His pre-existence. In coming into the world He did not *become* a Person, He was that before He came. Incarnation manifested WHO and WHAT He was. He was a divine Person equally before as after Incarnation. He was the God-man. Two natures—the divine and human—were united in one Person. The divine glory of Christ, the Son, was veiled in an absolutely perfect and peerless humanity, which again and again broke through, for the glory could not be hid (see chaps. viii. 58, xviii. 4-6 of the fourth Gospel).

There are three historical accounts of the wonderful story of God coming down in humiliation and grace; besides numerous scattered notices throughout the Scriptures. The moral order in which the Incarnation is revealed in the Gospels is first John, second Luke, third Matthew. John first, because, not the human, but the divine generation of our Lord is disclosed. Luke next, for the announcing Angel first appeared to Mary, and told of the birth, before he appeared to Joseph.*

In the Gospel by "the disciple whom Jesus loved," the fact of the Incarnation, not the manner of it, is expressed in five words, "The Word was made flesh." But you cannot make the Word—a divine Being—this or that. "The Word *became* flesh" (R.V.). He voluntarily assumed humanity. The bosom of the Father was the source of those wonderful disclosures which in their range and character are unequalled in the sacred volume.

The apostle shews Christ in this world as the WORD—a divine Person. He is so termed as absolutely expressing God in His nature, character, and ways. He is also termed the WORD OF LIFE (1 Epistle), as Eternal Life is alone expressed in and by Him. The

* An unnamed angel to Joseph. Gabriel to Mary.

Lord is also spoken of as the WORD OF GOD (Rev. xix. 13), as fully representing God in judgment.

In the first two verses of the Gospel we have a compendium of divine truth which the keenest intellect in existence cannot fathom. Those twenty-five words lead us with believing hearts and adoring souls into the region of the Eternal and Infinite. The question is not: Do you understand? but, Do you implicitly believe? The mystery of the God-head cannot be solved by reason. Faith believes where reason gropes in utter darkness. Then in verse three we get the relation of the WORD to creation. "All things were made by Him"; while in verse four His relation to the responsible part of this creation is next stated, "In Him was life." Then we pass on to ver. 14, "The WORD became flesh." This is the last notice of the WORD in the Gospel. To sum up in briefest terms possible, the foregoing testimony, we have:—

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. "Was the WORD" | <i>Eternal Existence.</i> |
| 2. "Was with God" | <i>Distinct Personality.</i> |
| 3. "Was God" | <i>Deity.</i> |
| 4. "In the beginning with God" | <i>Eternal Companionship.</i> |
| 5. "All things made by Him" | <i>Creatorial Power.</i> |
| 6. "In Him was life" | <i>Source and Fountain.</i> |
| 7. "The light of men" | <i>Revealer of God.</i> |
| 8. "Became flesh" | <i>Assumed Humanity.</i> |

In the two synoptical Gospels—Matthew and Luke—we have the most careful adjustment of those two closely related facts: The Divine conception and the human birth; *conceived* of the Holy Ghost, yet *born* of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem—the birthplace of David, Israel's illustrious King.

In the Johannine record of the Lord's Incarnation we can readily see *why* there is no statement as to the holiness of the humanity He assumed. Any such assertion would have been out of place. The assumption of humanity by the Eternal WORD settles the question. "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all." God in becoming man did not cease to be God. The fact that it was *God* Who became flesh settles for all time the question of the intrinsic holiness of Christ's humanity. Holiness was inherent in His Being. As the man Christ Jesus, He was as absolutely holy, as He was as God in eternal ages.

The beloved Physician, Luke, develops in fulness and in wealth of detail the holy humanity of our Lord. Christ as man is

the aspect in which He is set forth in the third Gospel. Luke is the Gospel of the Son of Man, hence the precision of statement guarding the holy humanity of our Lord. In the very record in which His connection with the human race is shewn He is separated from every member of the human family in the impeccability of His nature. *He* holy, *they* sinful, yet, strange to say, "His delights were with the sons of men." In the manner of His conception He stands absolutely alone, but a true, real human birth.

CONCEIVED OF THE HOLY GHOST (Matt. i. 20).

Explanation of this anomalous fact is impossible. Unquestioning reception or absolute rejection is the vital question confronting every soul. The conception took place *before* Joseph and Mary came together as man and wife (Matt. i. 18). Mary was the Bethlehem-selected Virgin* *in* whom the Holy Ghost wrought, and *on* whom the Holy Ghost rested (Matt. i. 20; Luke i. 35). "She was found with child of the Holy Ghost" is a divine statement of fact, but one baffling to human wisdom. We are here on holy ground. But the statement holy as it is, and one incapable of analysis, must be received without reservation on the supreme authority of God Himself. "*It is written,*" and that is enough.

THE HOLY GHOST SHALL COME UPON THEE (Luke i. 35).

The Virgin Mary—not the mother of God, but the mother of Jesus Who is God—was from the conception to the birth under the *special* guardianship of the Holy Ghost. There never was a being so jealously protected. We have angels to guard us, Mary had the Holy Ghost Himself as her keeper. The unfathomable mystery deepens. No doubt thoughts, acts, ways, and the whole being were under the direct control of the Holy Spirit.

THE POWER OF THE HIGHEST SHALL OVERSHADOW THEE (Luke i. 35).

The Virgin birth with its attendant circumstances is fully detailed in Luke i. 26-35. The force and value of those ten verses cannot be overstated. On the other hand, they must not be evaded, for, with the Cross, they constitute the rock-bed of Salvation. On this vital subject argument, compromise, or an attitude of neutrality is an impossibility. You cannot explain what preceded the miraculous circumstances of our Lord's birth. The babe in the manger was none other than "The Ancient of Days." His greatness and marvellous destiny were announced to Mary before the birth (Luke i. 32-33), so that thoughts of *Him* might flood her soul.

* "The Virgin" (Matt. i. 23); "A Virgin" (Luke i. 27).

The power of the Highest, of the Omnipotent Creator, overshadowed the Virgin. No outside, hostile power could possibly break down the unseen arm which protected, shielded, and completely covered the mother of our Lord. The yet unborn babe was Jehovah's care (Ps. xxii. 10-11). God erected a mighty wall of defence around the Virgin. The unseen angels under the immediate control of Satan (Rev. xii. 4 ; Eph. ii. 2, vi. 12) were utterly powerless to crush or destroy the encircling power of Jehovah. The Virgin and Babe had as their divine guardians the Holy Ghost, and the Highest in His greatness and might.

Both Catholics and Protestants in their attitude toward the Virgin greatly err, especially the former. The Catholic directly addresses Mary as a Mediator with Christ, whereas Scripture knows of but "One Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. ii. 5)—*One* Mediator, and two divine Intercessors, Christ on high (Rom. viii. 34), and the Holy Ghost on earth (ver. 27). Protestants, on the other hand, fail to accord Mary that distinguished place of honour assigned to her in the Scriptures. "Blessed art thou among women," was the pronouncement of Gabriel (Luke i. 28), and "Blessed art thou among women," was the loudly uttered testimony of Elizabeth filled with the Holy Ghost (ver. 42). All honour to Mary, for she was greatly honoured of God, yet, like every other child of Adam's race, she needed a Saviour.

Womanhood, in the person of Mary, so enriched by the favour of God, has been marvellously exalted. *Motherhood* has had its own peculiar glory attached to it, and this great fact gives her a place of moral dignity in the human race—a dignity and place alone recognised under Christianity.

THAT HOLY THING BORN OF THEE (Luke i. 35).

Humanity may be viewed under three conditions: innocent (Gen. ii.); sinful (Ps. li. 5); holy (Luke i. 35). The first applies only to Adam and Eve; the second to every member of the human race; the third is alone true of Christ. He never *became* holy. He was born in that condition. Satan, the ruler of the world, could find nothing *in* Him (John xiv. 30). In nature He was holy, in life blameless. *

The natural consequence of conception by the Holy Ghost is the birth of an absolutely holy being. The child born was

EMMANUEL—*God with us* (Matt. i. 23). This assertion of His Deity ought to be regarded as an absolute demonstration of the impeccability of His human nature. Neither *in* Him, nor *on* Him was there flaw, defect, or sin. On the Cross He vicariously bore our sins, but that, of course, He could only do as in Himself a Holy Being.

About the time of the Lord's birth the civilised world was Roman. The Empire had attained the zenith of its greatness. The Emperor had conferred upon him the proud title of Augustus—one never before applied to any man. It was a time, moreover, of general peace. For the third time in the course of 700 years the Temple of Janus was closed, thus indicating a state of peace and prosperity throughout the Empire. For the time being the Roman sword was sheathed. Augustus, the most potent of Emperors, ruled the world, while Herod the Great, in his palace-fortress had laid his mailed fist on Palestine. The advent of a world-deliverer from its sins and sorrows was, singularly enough, an almost universal expectation preceding the royal birth in Bethlehem.

Crude notions of a Coming King, and portents in the heavens, were prevalent in the East, founded more or less on Balaam's ancient prophecy (Num. xxiv. 17 with Matt. ii. 1-2). In the West, the Romans were wont to frequent the Jewish Synagogues to learn about the religion of the Jews, as a result, the Hope of the Messiah was not unknown in Italy and adjacent countries. "A great feeling of curiosity on the subject of religion seems to have pervaded the Roman mind a little before the advent of Christianity."

Under these circumstances God entered the world which He had created, not as an *angel*, nor as a *man* in full development of mind and body, but as a *babe*. He passed over palace and pomp. The King of kings and Lord of lords came into the scene of His yet future reign and glory unknown, unheralded. But if earth was indifferent, heaven was roused. The Angelic Choir could no longer contain themselves. Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying (not singing) "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

There are three important points to bear in mind. *First*, had the Lord not been the actual son of Mary, there could have been

neither death nor priesthood. *Second*, had the Lord been the actual son of Joseph, He must have had a sinful nature and thus Salvation for men an impossibility. *Third*, had He not been the legal son of Joseph, His claim to the throne of David would have been invalidated. How perfect, how wonderful are the ways of God!

WORLDLINESS.

To the Editor of "The Faith and the Flock."

DEAR SIR,

I am desirous of calling the attention of Christians to a subject which has become a snare to very many in this present age, and that is dress. It is lamentable how the heart is carried away by such a trivial object, and my desire is to bring it solemnly before the minds of my fellow Christians. It is sad indeed to see how many on the Lord's Day can come into His presence in a garb which is undistinguishable from that of a worldly person. Ought this to be?

Should not a follower of Christ be so attired as to leave no room for doubt as to Whom she belongs, and Who she is seeking to please?

A Christian is one who is a pilgrim and a sojourner in this world, whose calling is a Heavenly one, and how inconsistent it is to see one of this high calling following the course of this world, disregarding the injunction to be attired in "modest apparel," (1 Tim. ii. 9); not the "outward adorning" (1 Pet. iii. 3), but seeking to be an example of the believer in all things, following in the footsteps of Him Who has called us to His eternal glory.

"The fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Cor. vii. 31). It is so easy to drift into the current of the age, and there never was more cause for watchfulness in this particular than now, for Satan is ever seeking to draw away the heart through "the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," which "is not of the Father, but of the world" (1 Jno. ii. 16). Surely if our hearts were more set on things above, we should not be so engrossed with the fashion of this world, which passeth away, for Scripture tells us "where your treasure is there will your heart be also" (Matt. vi. 21).

Yours truly,

A. L.

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EDITORIALS.

“AS A SNARE SHALL IT COME” (Luke xxi. 35).

The Lord Jesus had been telling His disciples what was going to happen. In the following words He *foretold* the destruction of the Temple—Jehovah’s house on earth: “*The days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*” A statement which must have been as startling as it was surprising. In reply, the disciples ask, “But when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?”

In response to this question our Lord enlarges upon events of the utmost moment, which would culminate (for the time being) in the total destruction of Jerusalem, and in the dispersion of the Jews. The result being thus described: “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (ver. 24).

* * * *

Three very important facts are here brought to light. 1. This present period is called “The times of the Gentiles.” 2. Such period is to have a termination. 3. Until it does terminate, Jerusalem will be trodden down.

But the scope of our Lord’s prediction goes beyond these limits. He proceeds to make statements in detail which go further than the destruction of Jerusalem, and which reach down to the very end of the present age. He speaks of signs which would indicate His own return. What are these signs, and are any of them apparent to-day?

“There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars.” Cannot we see these signs, or, at least, indications of them, around us on every hand? Sun, moon and stars speak of rule and authority. For this purpose they were made. Do not let us forget what is said about them in the earliest account we have. In Gen. i. 14, we read: “And God said . . . let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.” Here, right back at the beginning, they are said to be for *signs*. They are also for *seasons*. Now while the primary application, no doubt, is to the ordinary seasons, such as spring, summer, autumn and winter, yet, as already indicated, they have a purpose to serve beyond this immediate one,

and that is, to indicate God's seasons, not only in creation, but, in grace, government and judgment. In them, too, we may learn how the days and years, in connection with His dispensations, are passing.

Where then shall we look for these signs? In these orbs of light themselves? Not necessarily. Let us read a little further on in Gen. i. Verse 16 says, "And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day; and the lesser light to rule the night; He made the stars also." The idea of rule is thus distinctly connected with these luminaries. In harmony with this, we find throughout Scripture, that, sun, moon and stars are employed as symbolical of this very idea, in connection with the earth. Rev. xii. affords, perhaps, the most striking instance of this. Where, then, are we to look for the signs of which the Lord speaks? Clearly at the governing classes, whether kings, or rulers of any kind. And if we look there to-day, do we not see signs? Within the last few months, even, have we not seen signs in our own country, in Portugal, and in China? And in addition, do we not see what our Lord further speaks of: "Upon the earth distress of nations, *with perplexity*; the sea and the waves roaring." Was there ever more perplexity? and were the masses ever more disturbed and restless? For if the sun and moon represent those in authority, the sea and the waves just as truly represent the peoples of the earth in commotion.

Have we not these signs, then, clearly before our eyes? Is not the roar of discontent from the lower classes growing ever louder, on the one hand; and are not the powers of heaven being shaken, on the other? And as a consequence, "*Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.*"

* * * *

Now, all this just precedes the return of our Lord. "*And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.*"

What effect is all this to have upon us, and what is to be our attitude? Our Lord does not conclude without giving us a word both of encouragement and warning. The encouragement is here: "*When these things BEGIN to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads; FOR YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH.*" That which fills the world with uneasiness, is a source of hope and inspiration to the believer,

Now as to the warning. “ *And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. FOR AS A SNARE SHALL IT COME on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth* ” (vers. 34-5).

Our Lord, here, plainly predicts the world will be unprepared for His return, and that it will be taken as in a snare. This prediction will be verified as certainly as the rest of His forecast. Who would have believed that in the 20th century of the Christian era the world—even that part which is Christianised—would have been in the condition described in vers. 25-26? Yet Christ said it would be so, and so it is. With equal distinctness He declares the unpreparedness of the world at His return.

On the other hand, He would have His own prepared. Let us, then, take heed to ourselves. We are to be neither surfeited with the things of this life, nor anxious about them. If we have the means of gratifying natural tastes, let us indulge ourselves with restraint; if our means are small, let us not doubt God or waste ourselves upon idle regrets. In either case, Christ is coming, and the poverty or riches of this world will make no difference then. When a great king or conqueror is returning home, and the streets are thronged with expectant crowds, the rich and poor stand together, and neither the rich man thinks of his wealth nor the poor man of his poverty at that moment, so expectant are each and all for the coming one.

It is the COMING ONE we are looking for; and if, on the one hand, we are to be free both from *surfeiting* and *care*, on the other, our positive attitude is to be that of *watching* and *prayer*. “ **WATCH YE THEREFORE, AND PRAY ALWAYS.** ” Ponder these words, we beseech you. The time is near. The morning Star has long been in the sky. Watch! Let not a day pass without reminding yourself that Christ is coming to take you away, and let your heart be regulated by this expectation. It is not that you are to cease to be engaged in worldly pursuits, but this hope is to regulate them. It is the surfeiting, Christ warns against. Pray! Cultivate the habit of constant looking to God. Turn aside whenever you can, and let your heart fly upward. And, above all, let the cry be often upon your lips, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

THE ETERNAL CHRIST.

By WILLIAM LUFF.

[The following paper possesses extreme interest and importance at the present time, when even nominal evangelicals are departing from the faith ; and it is hoped that many of the Lord's people may be confirmed in the truth by it.]

The Eternal Christ of Scripture has Divine Attributes.

1. He is " a quickening spirit " (1 Cor. xv. 45).
2. He is eternal :—
 - " In the beginning was the Word " (John i. 1).
 - " He is before all things " (Col. i. 17).
 - " Before the world was " (John xvii. 5).
 - " The first and the last " (Rev. ii. 8).
 - " Alive for evermore " (Rev. i. 18).
3. He is unchangeable :—
 - " The heavens shall be changed, but Thou art the same " (Heb. i. 12).
 - " The same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever " (Heb. xiii. 8).
4. He is omnipresent :—

When on earth He spake of Himself as " the Son of Man, which is in heaven " (John iii. 13). And when going to heaven said, " Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world " (Matt. xxviii. 20). And " Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them " (Matt. xviii. 20).
5. He is omniscient :—All four evangelists declare this.

Matthew says : " And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This *man* blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts ? " (Matt. ix. 4, xii. 25).

Mark says His enemies asked : " Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not ? Shall we give, or shall we not give ? But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye Me ? bring me a penny, that I may see *it* " (Mark xii. 15).

Luke says : “ Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. And Jesus perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by Him ” (Luke ix. 47).

John gives Christ’s word to Nathanael, when He described his character, and added : “ When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee ” (John i. 48). He also tells us : “ He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man : for He knew what was in man ” (ii. 25). Hence the Lord “ knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him ” (vi. 64). Peter appealed to this omniscience when he said : “ Lord, thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee ” (xxi. 17). This omniscience produced faith in the disciples. “ Thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee : by this we believe that Thou camest forth from God ” (xvi. 30).

6. The Eternal Christ of Scripture is self-existent, for He “ hath life in Himself ” (John v. 26). “ In Him was life ” (John i. 4).

7. The Eternal Christ of Scripture is omnipotent :—

“ Thou hast given Him power over all flesh ” (John xvii. 2).

“ All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth ” (Matt. xxviii. 18).

“ He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself ” (Phil. iii. 21).

“ I have power to lay it (life) down : and I have power to take it again ” (John x. 18).

II. *Divine acts are ascribed to the Eternal Christ.* He even said Himself, “ If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not ” (John x. 37).

1. He creates :—

“ The world was made by Him ” (John i. 10).

“ By whom also He made the worlds ” (Heb. i. 2).

“ By Him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible ” (Col. i. 16).

“ “ All things were made by Him : and without Him was not anything made that was made ” (John i. 3).

2. He preserves :—

“ By Him all things consist (Col. i. 17).

“ Upholding all things by the word of His power ” (Heb. i. 3.)

3. He redeems, and no mere man can do this, for “ none can by any means redeem His brother, nor give to God a ransom for him ” (Ps. xlix. 7).

“ To redeem them that were under the law ” (Gal. iv. 5).

“ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law ” (Gal. iii. 13).

“ Who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity ” (Tit. ii. 14).

“ Justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ” (Rom. iii. 24).

“ In whom we have redemption, through His blood ” (Eph. i. 7).

“ Not redeemed with corruptible things . . . but with the precious blood of Christ ” (1 Pet. i. 18-19).

“ Who gave Himself a ransom for all ” (1 Tim. ii. 6).

“ Thou art worthy . . . for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ” (Rev. v. 9).

This was not a construction put upon His death ; but His own explanation. “ Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many ” (Matt. xx. 28).

4. God's Christ forgives sin :—

“ Man, thy sins are forgiven thee ” ; and when it was rightly asked, “ Who can forgive sins but God alone ? ” He added : “ But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins (he said unto the sick of the palsy) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house ” (Luke v. 24).

“ Him hath God exalted with His right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins ” (Acts v. 31).

“ Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye ” (Col. iii. 13).

5. The Eternal Christ of Scripture answers prayer : “ If ye shall ask anything in My Name, I will do it ” (John xiv. 14).

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY: SINNER, SAINT AND SERVANT.

By R. E.

CONVERSION.

II.

“. . . . Sinners, of whom I am chief.” (1 Tim. i. 15.)

HOW thankful we may be St. Paul has left on record the fact, that, of sinners he was the chief; and also, that, in his conversion, we may read the whole of the long-suffering of Christ. Can the world's literature furnish any autobiographical record half so interesting and valuable? For in whatever else we may differ, the whole of mankind are alike in this—all are sinners. In this there is no exception, whatever differences there may be in belief, in education, in customs and circumstances; and therefore Paul's reference has an interest for all. Here is one who singles himself out as chief amongst mankind in this very feature which is universal. Does he do this for the sake of mere notoriety? Is it an idle boast, for the sake of creating some new sensation? Is the man merely the greatest of egoists? No, he speaks soberly; as the result of deep conviction; and he can give reasons. We have seen what they are, and they may be briefly summed up. He was the chief of sinners (1) because he set himself in direct opposition to God's main purpose in the world; and (2) because, had those plans been thwarted, untold loss to all mankind must have resulted. This constituted the enormity of his offence. After the lapse of ages, God had sent the long promised Deliverer into the world, in the Person of His own Son, the Redeemer of men and the Revealer of the Father, and Saul was, however unwittingly, attempting to rob his fellow creatures of all that which was intended for their present and eternal blessing by trying to stamp out the very name of Christ from under heaven. May it not well cause us deep searching of heart as we remember that this was done by a moral, religious and enlightened man?

But, thank God, there is the other side; for if in Saul we see how destitute the human heart can be—even when possessed of the very highest advantages this life can afford—of love to God and knowledge of His ways, we see also those ways in a new and resplendent light, in discerning how His grace can turn hostility to friendship, and hatred to love,

How important, too, to notice that all turns upon a right or wrong attitude towards Jesus of Nazareth ; to observe that from the moment when Christ met him, all St. Paul's thoughts about God were coloured by what he had learned of Jesus ; that Christ's personal dealing changed his whole life ; and to see that the action of Jesus towards His enemy becomes the one determining factor in the whole transaction. In addition to this, it is to be noted that the Saviour, in His dealings with Saul, thought not of him only, but of all who should hereafter believe on Him.

"The whole of the long suffering." Succeeding generations could never furnish one sinner that need despair. Men might injure themselves and others by their sins, and wander far away from God and good ; they never could do worse than attempt to stamp out the very truth of God ; they never could go beyond attempting to defeat the Almighty in His world-wide purpose, intended to secure His own glory and the blessing of His creatures ; and, therefore, they never could place themselves beyond His long suffering.

THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS.

Has not the road to Damascus, then, an immense attraction for us, as well as Damascus itself ? While other ancient cities have disappeared, marked only by mounds or crumbling ruins, this city remains, and is not very different from what it was on that memorable occasion when Saul' of Tarsus and his fellow-travellers were approaching it. Is it left, while greater cities have been demolished, in order to be a visible reminder of transactions long ago that form part of God's wondrous story of grace ? It was a certain Eliezer of Damascus, who was Abraham's servant, and was sent by him to fetch a bride for Isaac—type of the Holy Ghost sent down from a risen and glorified Christ to gather a Bride for Him—and now it is to be the scene of the conversion of the one, who, above all others, was to be instrumental in proclaiming this very mystery concerning Christ and the Church. And those dealings would manifest a long-suffering which had never been witnessed before.

It is said that every 25th of January the Christians in Damascus walk in procession to the scene of the conversion of St. Paul, and read the history of it from the Acts. It would be well if we, at least once a year, went, in thought, over the same ground. Let us try to picture it now, and we shall become convinced that the

absolute triumph of good over evil, in the conversion of Saul, becomes increasingly apparent as we study the details of the scene. A verdict might be demanded in favour of Christianity, on the ground of this one incident alone. Its moral grandeur is overwhelming.

Saul is depicted as "yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter." There is no change in him. We are not invited to behold a suppliant at the bar of mercy. In all the vigour of manhood, and in all the power of his hatred against the Nazarene, he rides towards this further scene of persecution. "*And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven; and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?*" The impotence of man, even at his best, is at once apparent. Saul in the prime of manhood and in the supremacy of all his powers, can no more withstand this light from heaven than a reed can remain unshaken by a tornado. No wonder he could say, in writing to the Corinthians years after, "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord." He knew it as he lay on the Damascus road prostrate before a power that could not be withstood. But there was more than the light: he heard a voice: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" A voice in which there was no trace of bitterness or anger. A voice which contained no denunciation, and not even a reference to his past conduct, except in the form of a question. We might have looked for a stern rebuke, or a recital of the ills he had done. But instead, we have only his name repeated twice, and a question.

Yet there was no weakness. Saul was not having to do with someone who could not appreciate his offence or dare not mention it. He was on his back, and he was blinded; but he heard this voice, every sound of which seemed to echo in the dark caverns of his heart—a voice he had never heard before—indescribable. How much there is in a voice we all know; but who shall tell what there was in the voice which spoke to *him*? It must have been "full of pity, love and power." "Why persecutest thou Me?" He is face to face with Him against Whom he had launched his fiercest and most determined opposition; and he finds that One, although able to crush him, willing to save.

Recognising, probably, the majesty and authority of the Person Who spoke, and unable to stand before the light, the question which naturally rises to his lips, in answer to the one addressed

to him, is, "Who art Thou, Lord?" The answer he receives is, "I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest; *it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*" What a further revelation of the long-suffering of Christ these last words contain. Apparently the Saviour's whole concern is about Saul. We could well have understood Christ saying, "It is hard for Me to endure your evil ways any longer"; or, "It is hard for those defenceless sheep of mine you are persecuting," but, no, "It is hard for *thee.*" As though Christ thought and cared only about him. Only about him who was yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter, his feet almost within the gates of the city where he hoped to find something more to feed the hatred which he cherished against the sect of the Nazarene. When we see this very one met with such pity and with manifest concern, can we wonder any more at the words we have already quoted: "*That in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth ALL LONG-SUFFERING, for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting*"?

"It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." These words seem to suggest that Saul had exercises of conscience, and that he had reached a condition when he had really to goad himself to the despicable work in which he was engaged. This may be accounted for in various ways, for God speaks to us through the ordinary occurrences of daily life, and Saul cannot have remained altogether unaffected as he saw the behaviour of those he imprisoned and put to death—their sublime faith and heroic fortitude. It has been pointed out, too, that the journey from Jerusalem to Damascus lay through those parts of the country most frequented by our Lord, and where most of His miracles and works of mercy were done. The journey would occupy several days, and it is quite probable that, at the various inns he stopped at, Saul would hear the name of Jesus mentioned, would be compelled to listen to stories of His goodness, and might even see, in the very persons who crossed his path, evidence of His power. Be that as it may, there was evidently some preparatory work going on, and Saul might, at the very moment Christ met him, have been suffering a torture of soul compared with which the pain of body he inflicted upon others was small.

How hard, indeed, it is for those who walk in the ways of sin and resist the strivings of God's Spirit. Christ saw that, however

much suffering this man was inflicting upon others, he was inflicting a keener suffering upon himself. Verily, he thought within himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth. Yet when that One met him and asked the simple question, Why persecutest thou Me? no answer was forthcoming. And if Christ, to-day, were to appear to the many thousands who have heard of Him, but still refuse His claims or remain undecided, and were to ask, Why do you not believe? What adequate answer could be given? Does not the conversion of Saul, and the whole long-suffering of Christ displayed therein, only the more lay us under the imperative obligation of acknowledging the claims of Him Who is Lord?

THE SAVIOUR'S DEALINGS WITH THE SINNER.

It may be well to ponder for a moment longer the points that have briefly been considered, in order that the wonderful character of the Divine dealings with the chief of sinners may be fully realised.

There was, first of all, the light from heaven. Next, the voice. Thirdly, the question. Fourthly, the statement, "I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest"; and, lastly, the utterance, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

1. The light from heaven. St. Paul himself relates that it was at mid-day he saw in the way a light from heaven. That light outshone the beams of the sun in his noonday splendour. So bright was it that the Apostle informs us he "could not see for the glory of that light." It was one manifestation of Christ, and of God Who is light. It is the action of light to make manifest. It arrested the persecutor and prostrated him in the dust. Further, it revealed to him the manner of man he was.

2. A voice accompanied the light. This serves to show that the light was associated with a Person. The light did its work, but in order that Christ might be fully revealed, there needed some personal dealing. It is the tone of voice that manifests what is in the heart; its love, pity and concern. And the heart alone can speak to the heart. The light reaches the conscience, laying bare the sin, and the righteous claims of God. That, at least, is the first effect of it—the necessary effect of it—and we are not prepared for the love until this has done its work. In Saul's case, the voice

addressed him in the language which most of all appealed to him ; in this way bringing the speaker near, and obliterating all that was strange and distant. In harmony, surely, with all God's dealings, for are not the Manger and the Cross, and all that lies between, an appeal to man from his own standpoint ?

3. The question—"Why persecutest thou Me?" Was not this the most delicate handling on the part of Christ of one who had done his worst against Him? Think of Christ, Who He was; think of Saul, guilty and overpowered; and then think of this question. The meanest amongst the persecuted saints could not have asked less. "Why persecutest thou Me?" It declared plainly that the love of Christ remained unaltered in spite of the tremendous strain to which it had been subjected. For it arouses us more when others dear to us are wronged than when we are wronged ourselves. Was there any answer possible to such a question? How easy it is to pursue a course, or adopt a certain programme, and allow ourselves to be dominated by it, and yet a very simple question may leave us without an answer as to the reasonableness of our policy. Perhaps we will not allow even our own conscience to challenge our conduct. Why is it? May it not be because we have a remote suspicion that passion or prejudice or ignorance is being allowed to control us? Our own will is at work, and we want our own way? It was due to this that such a simple query as, "Why persecutest thou Me?" found Saul without an answer. Here is the record, in brief, of the One he had set himself to oppose: "JESUS OF NAZARETH . . . WHO WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD, AND HEALING ALL THAT WERE OPPRESSED WITH THE DEVIL; FOR GOD WAS WITH HIM. . . . *To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His Name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins*" (Acts x. 38 and 43). Do we find any reason here why Saul should have thought it right to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, and be exceedingly mad against those who followed Him? Let us never be afraid to put the question, Why?

4. The statement, "I am Jesus." The simple name. No regal titles. Christ made no attempt to leave an impression of greatness. And so it is the personal name—the one that implied His saving power and office. "Whom thou persecutest." A reminder to Saul, yet without any trace of bitterness.

5. "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

Think of all that these things must have meant to Saul. The light that searched him, shattering his self-confidence and conceit, and making him tremble. Accompanying this, the voice that, instead of speaking in thunder, asked the simple question, Why? And then the revelation that the One before Whom he had fallen to the ground, conscious of utter powerlessness and blinded by the light, was Jesus—the very one he was persecuting. And *that* Jesus concerned about him!

It will be noticed that Saul immediately acknowledges Jesus as Lord. How astonished he must have been to discover that in his question, "Who art Thou, Lord?" he had already said "Lord" to the One Whose claims he had up till that moment resisted. No wonder we read: "He trembling and astonished." He trembled before the light that made all things manifest, and before which he was unable to stand, and at the newly discovered fact that Jesus was actually Lord; but his astonishment was not less that that One should manifest such an interest in him, and address to him such mild and tender words. "Trembling and astonished"! Does not this cover the whole round of our experience? Do we not tremble as we think of the One we have resisted and so often grieved? Do we not tremble at the little progress we make, and at our coldness? Are we not daily more and more astonished at the love that bore, and still bears, with us, and that remains the same through all our changes, and never leaves nor forsakes us? Are we not astonished at the grace that is always at our disposal, and at the kindness that waits upon us day by day? Saul, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter," must indeed have been astonished that Christ could love *him*; but have we less reason for being astonished that He has loved *us*? As we see that love bending over the arch-persecutor, now prostrate on the ground, may we see how sovereign it is, and independent of everything in us, and learn with him the meaning of his own words, "The Son of God, Who loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*."

Paul did not miscalculate when he affirmed he was the chief of sinners. And as in all else Christ must have the pre-eminence, so in this—the *chief of sinners* will not be in hell but in heaven. Hell will have many sinners, but not the chief. Could anything be more arresting? Anything more calculated to awaken thought and

reflection than to see the Lord Jesus, the centre of heaven's worship, and occupying the supreme place amidst all its glories, turning aside, disengaging Himself from them, if we may so speak, in order to meet one sinner—and that the one who hated Him most—and speak to him? Surely heaven looked on, and heaven's music grew sweeter and louder—or perhaps softer—as heaven's Lord was thus engaged. Paul cannot recall that scene even after the lapse of years—and those years full of toil and incident—without breaking out into a doxology: and may we not imagine this ascription of praise to be the echo of what took place amidst the choirs that surround the throne—"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen." For this was Paul's utterance as he looked back upon that meeting.

There was also a very practical aspect to Saul's conversion. With him no half measures would ever suffice, whichever side of a question he took. He makes a complete surrender—"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" The one who had persecuted the saints is henceforth to minister to them; once he had made them suffer; now he is to suffer for them; he who had blasphemed the name of Christ, is now to be, in the words of his Lord, "A chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My Name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the Children of Israel." And all that energy and determination; all that ability and courage; all that zeal and devotion which had been employed against Christ and His saints, was now to be as lavishly expended in their service. What power had turned *such* a man completely round? What personality must that have been which drew him from the opposite ranks into its own service? Why was he now ready to become the off-scouring of all things, and to suffer the very ignominy he had inflicted upon others? It was not of man, neither by man, "but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." It was the power and glory and worth of that Person that did it all. And did he ever regret this change? This is his answer at the close: "What things were gain to me, those I *counted* loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I *COUNT* all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."

(*To be continued.*)

KEY-NOTES TO THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

By WALTER SCOTT.

MATTHEW	-	-	Christ the <i>King</i> and the Kingdom.
MARK	-	-	Christ the <i>Servant</i> and His service.
LUKE	-	-	Christ the <i>Man</i> and the human life.
JOHN	-	-	Christ the <i>Son</i> and His divine life.
ACTS	-	-	Christ in heaven. The Holy Ghost working on earth.
ROMANS	-	-	Christianity founded on the Righteousness of God.
1 CORINTHIANS	-	-	Ordering of the Church of God on earth.
2 CORINTHIANS	-	-	Christian Ministry. Paul's apostleship and sufferings.
GALATIANS	-	-	Christianity and Judaism. Law and grace contrasted.
EPHESIANS	-	-	Christian blessing, privilege and responsibility. Divine Counsel.
PHILIPPIANS	-	-	Record of true Christian experience.
COLOSSIANS	-	-	Christ in varied glories, the Church's Head.
1 THESSALONIANS	-	-	Christ coming <i>for</i> and <i>with</i> His saints. Our Hope.
2 THESSALONIANS	-	-	Christ coming, and the "Day of the Lord."
1 TIMOTHY	-	-	Church order and government. The House of God.
2 TIMOTHY	-	-	Church disorder. Laxity in doctrine and morals.
TITUS	-	-	Christian qualification for local office in the Church.
PHILEMON	-	-	Christian intercourse. A model Christian epistle.
HEBREWS	-	-	Christ the Apostle, High Priest, Sacrifice, Mediator and Witness.
JAMES	-	-	Christian Walk in and out of Church and Synagogue. Faith tested.
1 PETER	-	-	God's Holy and Righteous Government over His people.
2 PETER	-	-	God's Righteous Government over His House and the World.
1 JOHN	-	-	Fellowship with the Father and the Son, and Eternal Life tested.
2 JOHN	-	-	Christ in the truth of His Person maintained at all costs.
3 JOHN	-	-	Christian hospitality, especially to the Lord's servants.
JUDE	-	-	Christian Apostasy. Contend for the faith.
REVELATION	-	-	Christ's assumption of the government of the world.

NOTES.

Christ and Israel are connected in the Old Testament.

Christ and the Church are connected in the New Testament.

The Pentateuch is the foundation of all Scripture, History and Prophecy.

The Pentateuch is the foundation of European law.

The Pentateuch is amply verified in the New Testament, which search and see.

Nehemiah is the last historical book of the Old Testament.

Five books written after the return from Babylon:—*Nehemiah, Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.*

The divisions of the Old Testament are as follows (Luke xxiv. 44):—(1) "The Law of Moses," five books; (2) "The Prophets," twenty-nine books; (3) "The Psalms," five books, namely, *Job, Book of Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.*

The four Gospels form the first division of the New Testament.
 The Acts unfolds the service of Peter (i.-xii.), then of Paul (xiii.-xxviii.).
 Of the Epistles, Paul wrote fourteen.
 On the disputed question: "Who wrote the Hebrews?" see 2 Peter iii. 15.
 As to Justification: Paul treats of the inward principle—faith; James treats of the outward result—works.
 There are four Epistles having a more or less Jewish character, namely: the *Hebrews*, two by *Peter*, *James*, but although in Jewish mould, they are for us equally with the other Epistles.
 We have Kingdom History in Matthew, chap. xiii.
 We have Church History in Revelation, chaps. ii., iii.

THE FURNACE FOR GOLD.

silent to the Lord and let Him mould thee."—Ps. xxxvii. 7 (Heb.).

O Child of God, why this repining
 O'er unfulfilled desires,
 The great Refiner is refining
 His gold in sacred fires.

Look up, and see those eyes, soft beaming,
 Bent on you now in grace,
 Look up, and see the love-light gleaming,
 On that beloved face.

Accept with love this tribulation—
 Your Saviour's promised dower; (John xvi. 33)
 With it He links His consolation,
 Your weakness with His power.

Be silent, let Him mould and fashion
 His vessel to His will,
 He will subdue each wayward passion,
 Oh restless heart, be still.

Ah! you may shrink beneath the pressure
 Upon some tender spot,
 You fondly cling to some earth-treasure,
 And plead your lonesome lot.

But *let* Him form you, *let* Him mould you,
 Just how and where He will;
 In His kind arms He will enfold you,
 And draw you nearer still.

And He will grant your heart's desires
 In His own time and way,
 When, through His tribulation fires,
 Your dross is purged away.

And when, upon His "special treasure"
 His image shineth fair,
 He'll bear it to His courts with pleasure,
 To do Him service there.—ANNA WOODCOCK.

“BEGINNINGS.”

II. THE FIRST FALSE WORSHIPPER.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

GENESIS being, as we have said, the book of “beginnings,” Cain and his brother must be regarded as representative characters. We have many like them in our midst to-day, if only we have eyes to recognise them. They are the Pharisee and the Publican of the Old Testament. Cain is the father of all those who draw near to God on the ground of their own works; Abel is the parent of all who in faith approach Him on the ground of the death of another.

Let us look at Cain first. From our earliest infancy he has been held up to our minds as an object of infamy; indeed, as one of the wickedest men in earth's earliest ages. Presumably if many were asked why Cain is so generally regarded with abhorrence, they would reply, “Because he killed his brother.” But scripture puts the case somewhat differently. “*Wherefore* slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.” There was thus something behind his murder of Abel, which God calls “evil.” Examination will shew that his sin against man was preceded by sin against God. This latter, alas, is commonly regarded very lightly.

We would not willingly do Cain an injustice. He was no wastrel. He “was a tiller of the ground” (Gen. iv.). To be a successful farmer a man must be at least industrious. Then Cain acknowledged God, unlike many in our day who give the Creator no place whatever in their scheme of life. Industrious and religious! Such a person would be considered a most desirable addition to many a modern church-membership. Yet the man is held up to our stern reprobation in several portions of Holy Scripture!

What was wrong with Cain? His supreme mistake lay in the character of the offering that he brought. “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain” (Heb. xi. 4). Cain was of the school of Naaman who, although ultimately changed, said at the beginning, “Behold, I thought!” (2 Kings v. 11). Men should not follow their own thoughts in the things of God; instead, they should in all humility, seek to learn and follow His

will. "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto Jehovah." It may be remarked by some that Jehovah Himself prescribed a handful of fine flour for a sin-offering in Lev. v. 11. But this was His merciful provision for poverty. The flour in this case (or a part of it) was burnt upon the altar "upon" (not "according to," as in the Authorised Version) "the offerings made by fire" unto Jehovah." It was thus divinely connected with the sacrifices which spoke of death. Cain's offering savoured not of poverty, but of pride. There was in it no recognition of his fallen condition; no acknowledgment of sin and guilt. Cain approached his Creator as if all was right; when, indeed, between man and God all is sadly wrong. The diligent toiler had produced "the fruit of the ground," and he judged God should be well-pleased to receive the tribute from his hands. It has frequently been said that man's religion is ever represented by the word "Do"; God's religion by the word "Done." Of Cain and his entire progeny it is true: "they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Rom. x. 3). A man's religion may be his undoing. Listen to the elder son of Luke xv. 29 as he parades his virtues in the father's ears: "Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment." Such a speech suggests no sense of guilt and need, and no knowledge of Grace.

"The way of Cain" is pointed out in Jude 11 as one of Christendom's characteristic features at the end. It is the repudiation of the need of atonement; it is religion without blood. "Woe unto them," says the Spirit of God. God having sacrificed His Beloved Son for the salvation of sinners, will never tolerate men's slight of Him. When His long-suffering reaches its limit, He will arise in His might, and pour out the vials of His wrath upon all His foes. But the last great development of the Cain-principle, the Anti-christ, will come upon the scene ere that day.

"We need never be discouraged as long as we see such a motto inscribed on the door of our Father's treasury, 'He giveth more grace.' It has no limit, it is bottomless, and boundless."

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

By WALTER SCOTT.

CHAPTER i, Verses 1-2.

ETERNAL LIFE.

WE have not in this Epistle the disclosure of God's counsels, nor of His public government. The "disciple whom Jesus loved" treats of the nature of God Himself, and of our participation in fellowship with the Father and the Son as revealed in Holy Scripture—God in all that He is, and we brought into fellowship with Him. The subject is one of profound depth and, moreover, one of absorbing interest.

As the basis of this, highest of Christian blessings, we have the Incarnation of the Eternal Son of God, the second Person in the Godhead, the Creator of the Universe—Deity and humanity in one Person witnessed on earth for 33 years.

The Man Christ Jesus who trod the length and breadth of the Holy Land in such grace and perfection that millions since have bowed the heart in worship, was in the past with *God* in underived personal existence (John i. 1). He was ever the daily delight of *Jehovah* in eternal ages (Prov. viii. 22-31). He ever was, and is, in an unclouded intimacy of relationship with the *Father* (1 John i. 1). But another word was needed to express the mutual delight of Father and Son. "The only begotten Son which is *in* the bosom of the Father" (John i. 18). The divine bosom could hold but *one*, and that place of ineffable bliss He never left even when He came to die. He ever was, He ever is, He ever will be the object of the infinite delight of the Father's heart. Such, then, is the Person in view in the opening words of our Epistle.

Ver. 1: "That which was from the beginning." Here we have an historical start: "from" would indicate as much. The "beginning" refers us back to the virgin birth of our Lord. "The Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger" was the first manifestation of Him Who was the Eternal Life in this world. The weakness of the Babe was God's appeal to the human race, yet, in His own Person, the Babe was none other than the Ancient

of Days. In the first six words of the Gospel of John, the Word is viewed in the eternal past ; in the opening six words of the Epistle, a point of time is referred to. “ *In the beginning* ” (that is, in any beginning conceivable by man or angel) the Word was. “ *From the beginning* ” fixes a commencement. This word “ *beginning* ” occurs in four interesting connections, and each in relation to Christ. We indicate the chronological order :—

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. The WORD : His eternal existence | John i. 1. |
| 2. The CREATOR : Time and things began. | Gen. i. 1. |
| 3. The WORD : His Incarnation. | 1 John i. 1. |
| 4. The SON : His Public Ministry. | Mark i. |

“ Which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled, of the Word of life.” There was an actual manifestation of a divine Person on earth. Each of the Apostolic band had been in personal and closest touch with God manifest in flesh. We reveal our thoughts by *words*. God revealed Himself in and by a *Person* (John i. 18), the Word of life was a divine Person manifested on earth in real and holy humanity. The gnostic notion was that the Word was a mere abstraction, a fleeting phantom, a harmless illusion which a too credulous body of disciples in the warmth of imagination clothed with flesh and blood. But gnostic pretension is mere proud vapouring, having no foundation in fact. Its theories are baseless. The Apostles heard *Him* speak. *He* was seen with their physical eyes. *He* was looked upon in life, in word, in action. *He* was handled by the Apostles—His hands and His feet came within the personal touch of the disciples. His head was anointed with oil, and John leaned upon His bosom. Thus the three natural senses, hearing, seeing, touching, discerned Him as a veritable Man on earth. His moral glories, were of course, otherwise apprehended. “ The Word of life ” is to many a meaningless expression, but to the Spirit taught believer, it is a living and precious reality. Human thought is expressed in words. But no human alphabet, or collocation of words could convey the mind of God. His nature, His Being, His attributes were made fully known in a Person. The Word, whether viewed in eternity or time, is the absolute expression of what God is. “ The Word of life ” expresses what eternal life is in its character and blessedness. There is no definition of natural life. What *is* life, is insolvable by Science. It is known to exist by certain

characteristics, but the natural senses are baffled in the search to find out what it *is*. So spiritual life is equally beyond the mental capacity of the creature to understand. Eternal life cannot be defined, but its existence, its character, its features, and its blessedness can, happily, be discerned. Christ was the expression of it. As we sum up in *one* all He thought, all He said, all He did—His breathings, acts, ways, and words, we adoringly say, *that* is Eternal life.

Eternal life is revealed in and by a Person. “In Him was life” (John i. 4). The expression Eternal life occurs but twice in the Old Testament, and both times in millennial connection (Ps. cxxxiii. 3; Dan. xii. 2).

Eternal life and the new birth are inseparably connected. You cannot have the one without the other. There is life in birth, whether in the natural or spiritual realm. In the latter, the life is necessarily eternal. This is on the subjective side. On the objective side we may remark that in John iii., the first mention of “Eternal life” in the Gospel is connected with the heavenly system of things revealed by the Son; whereas new birth is as distinctly related to the earthly order of things.

John (save in one exceptional passage: 1 Epistle ii. 25) treats of Eternal life as in Christ its source, and in believers *now* as a present and enjoyed reality. In John vi., and elsewhere, “life” and “Eternal life” are used interchangeably (vers. 53, 54). Paul, while assuming the believer’s present possession of “Eternal life,” does not develop that aspect of the truth, but rather points to its future enjoyment in a heavenly sphere—to a life with Christ in heaven. The Lord Himself when on earth shewed that *Gentile* millennial saints will have Eternal life (Matt. xxv. 46). Daniel completes the picture by presenting *Jewish* millennial saints in the enjoyment of Eternal life (xii. 2). There are other aspects of this great and interesting theme which, however, we need not now dwell upon.

“Devotedness without intelligence may make a saint active, but activity needs to be guided by the known mind of God in order to be preserved from mistakes.”

CHRIST IN THE LEVITICAL OFFERINGS.

By G. HUCKLESBY.

IV. THE SIN OFFERING (Lev. iv.).

PART I.

HAVING considered "the Sweet Savour" Offerings, we now come to the Offerings for sin, which were divided into two classes, viz., "the Sin Offering," and "the Trespass Offering." There is an intimate connection between the two, at the same time, there is an important difference. The first sets forth the death of Christ meeting our whole need as sinners, both the nature and its fruits; the second prefigures the same Atoning work meeting specific transgressions. Thus the Cross perfectly meets our case, both as to what we *are* and also as to that which we have *done*. Sin is the root, and sins are the fruit produced thereby. The one is the source, like a polluted fountain; the other is the outcome, or the poisonous streams which proceed therefrom. The Word of God clearly teaches, that, as the fallen Children of Adam, we have sin bound up with our very nature, and that the terrible results of the curse have affected our whole being. In a ruined scene we breathe an infected air, and as part of a groaning creation we find that there is a law in our members which is contrary to the law of God. We rejoice in the fact, that, as believers, we have been delivered by the death of Christ from Sin as a *master*, but by a painful experience we prove that sin still *dwells within* us, as is taught in Rom. vii. Although we are not in the flesh as to our standing in Christ before God, we experimentally find that the flesh is in us, and against this the indwelling Holy Spirit wars. This evil principle called "the flesh," would lay claim to, and occupy the throne of, the heart, which the Lord alone should fill.

This spiritual conflict with this internal foe is illustrated in the history of Amalek's opposition to Israel. These two nations were closely related by birth, for Amalek was the grandson of Esau, the brother of Jacob. And it was immediately following Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and their partaking of the water from the smitten rock, that Amalek first appeared to fight against them. In connection with this first proof of Amalek's hatred and opposition to Israel, we read, "Because the hand of Amalek is against the

throne of Jehovah, therefore, Jehovah will have war with Amalek from generation to generation " (see margin of Ex. xvii. 16). Thus, right through Israel's history, we find Amalek opposed to God's people, from his first appearance in Ex. 17, to the last view we have of him in the person of Haman, in the Book of Esther. He may disappear for a while, but again reappears as the relentless foe of Israel. But this is not to continue for ever, for God hath declared, " Amalek was the first nation to war against Israel ; but his latter end shall be, that he perish even to destruction." Thank God, this is the hope of the Israel of God to-day. At our Lord's return, the believer's body of humiliation is to be changed, and fashioned like unto Christ's body of glory, and then that which is born of the flesh, and continues ever the same, will be destroyed.

" When all the ransomed Church of God,
Is saved to sin no more."

Again, we read of this typical people, that " God led them about in the wilderness for forty years, that He might humble them, and that they might *prove what was in their hearts.*" How truly did they manifest the solemn fact that " The flesh profiteth nothing." Alas ! in their history we behold a picture of our own. We, too, have to learn the same humiliating lesson, " that in our flesh dwelleth no good thing." As we go on in the school of grace, and advance in the Divine life we discover our vileness and our worthlessness. It may be by prayerful meditation on the Word of God in the light of the Sanctuary that we perceive the heinousness of sin, and the hideousness of the flesh, and are taught thereby to seek constant grace to walk humbly before the Lord. Or, it may be learned by a sad and bitter experience. How many of the Lord's beloved people there are who, through unwatchfulness, and neglect of the Word of God and prayer, have, like Peter, fallen into the snare of the wicked one, and have had to learn, with broken bones and blinding tears, to distrust self, and to cry, " Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe."

It was when David had been tempted to tarry in Jerusalem, and to lay aside his armour, and to desert his post on the battlefield, that he was overcome by Satan. Yielding to self-indulgence in the palace, the wily and ever watchful foe presented a temptation to the slothful king, which was only too successful, and we see the noble-minded, and heroic David, hurrying down the hill of declen-

sion, until he became guilty of such ignoble acts and such terrible deeds. From those depths of sin into which he had fallen, we hear his penitential cry, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." In his confession, he not only thus condemns his actions, but he passes sentence upon himself. He traces the defiling deeds to their defiled source. The corrupt fruit borne, only proved that the tree was corrupt which had borne them. The benevolent and upright Job could maintain his integrity before man, and hold fast his own righteousness against all the arguments of his three friends, but when brought face to face with God, he was compelled to lay his hand upon his mouth, and say, "Behold I am vile; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." In response to the Bride's request, the Bridegroom brought her into His chambers, and, while gazing into His transcendent countenance, she exclaimed, "I am black." There is no single instance of failure recorded in the Scriptures against the seraphic Isaiah, yet, when he beheld himself in the light of the Throne, he cried, "Woe is me, for I am undone; I am a man of unclean lips." It was not so much a question of conduct as of condition. The fairest and most comely man in all Babylon saw himself in the light of the All-glorious One by the river Hiddekel, and immediately "his comeliness was turned to corruption." Simon Peter discovered that he was in the presence of One Whose eye pierced the depths of the sea, and therefore could read him through and through; then he cried, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." It was when God's "searchlight" was turned in upon the inward parts of Saul of Tarsus, laying bare the innermost recesses of the heart of that "Pharisee of the Pharisees," that he was led to exclaim, "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" He felt that he was bound to that which was corrupt and corrupting, and he yearned for deliverance. As an advanced scholar in the divine school, he wrote, "I am the least of the apostles." As one saved and sanctified by grace, he said, "I am less than the least of all saints"; and when contemplating the infinite mercy bestowed upon him, he declared, "I am the chief of sinners."

As it was with God's people in the past, so is it with them in the present. We have to write "the sentence of death upon ourselves," proving that, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh,"

and to find within, that the Spirit warreth against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit. It is as natural for "the flesh" to do wrong, and for "the old man" to wander from God, as it is for the body to grow weary, and for the new born soul to thirst after God. Sin is always ready to enter into all we do and say. Night and day it is present with us. In public and in private it is always on the alert. It besets us on every hand, and sometimes makes its fiercest attacks when we are engaged in the things of God. What wandering thoughts we sometimes experience while on our knees in prayer! What coldness of heart and lethargy of spirit, we are at times conscious of while in worship! How much of men-pleasing and of self-seeking we find there is in our professed service for God, when we analyse it in the light of the sanctuary, and test it in the divine balances! Seeking the applause of men, and desiring the praise and the honour which come from the world, instead of only seeking that praise and honour which come from God. Thus our very defects become our distresses. We groan, being burdened. The very knowledge we have of Christ's love renders our failure all the more grievous. We find so much in Christ to love and deserving of our undivided affection, and yet we prove in our souls so little response to that love. The truly exercised conscience of the believer is not only affected by those things which are visible to his fellow-creatures, but it makes him mourn over evils which are not even noticed by the natural man. He deplures dulness in duty; a lack of fervour in devotion; base ingratitude for innumerable mercies, and above all, the sin of unbelief by which he is so easily beset, and which is so dishonouring to God. He has to deal with God about secret faults as well as public failures. Sins of ignorance as well as wilful transgression have to be confessed before the mercy-seat. Sins of thought as well as of deed have to be told out into the ear of God. But how is this? What is the secret of it all? The answer is; "It is sin which dwelleth in us." But what is our resource when conscious of this state of things? Again we have to repair to Calvary, and there gaze afresh on the rich and perfect provision which God has made for us in THE SIN OFFERING. There we behold the Holy One offering Himself to God on our behalf. There, amidst the solemnities of the Cross, we see the question of *sin* as well as of *sins* fully gone into and once and for ever settled. He Who alone knew the full meaning of the word "sin," and foresaw its evil consequences, both here and hereafter,

judged and condemned it both root and branch. During that awful darkness, it pleased Jehovah to make that sinless soul an offering for sin, thereby "condemning sin in the flesh." The cry of "it is finished" rang out the death knell of all these types and shadows, and proclaimed the glorious fact that Christ "had made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness." During "the hour" which stands alone in the annals of eternity, He "Who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." "The death of the Cross" has fully satisfied every demand of the Throne. For the sin of Adam, and all the sins of all his children when put together, are but sins of *Creatures*; whereas, in Christ we have the Almighty *Creator*, Whose death is more than an equivalent for them all. The price paid down by the Redeemer goes far above and beyond all the liabilities of the redeemed. The precious priceless blood of Christ is of infinite value.

So that, judicially, we were dealt with in the Person of our Divine Surety. When He died upon the Cross, in God's account we died with Him. It is this enables us to say, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." This delivers us from making light of sin, and for ever closes the door against Antinomianism; for how shall we who have died unto sin live any longer therein? That wondrous death has snapped the iron chain of sin which bound us to a cruel tyrant, and has thrown around our neck a golden chain of love, which for ever binds us to our Divine Emancipator. Being made free from sin, with its galling yoke and tyrannizing power, we are to become the servants of God, having our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. We now enjoy the pardon of our sins. We experience peace instead of pain. Instead of the curse and doom of sin being upon us, we are laden with continual blessings. We are in a position of life instead of one of death. Thus we see some of the rich fruits of that wondrous grace which led God to give His Well-Beloved Son as the expression of His love, a satisfaction to His justice, and an Atonement for our sins.

(To be continued.)

“STAND FAST.”

By S. E. D.

THESSE are practical words for this evil day. Never were they more needed than at the present. Everything seems to be drifting to the final Apostasy. Pleasure-seeking, love of ease, lukewarmness, self-satisfaction, the love of many waxing cold, and worldliness, filling the hearts of professed people of God are the chief characteristics of the day. What a great need to STAND FAST.

The Coming of the Lord draws nigh. The day of testimony will soon be over. In this “little while” let us take heed to a word like this. How blessed to know, amidst all the downgrade of the present day, that everything which our BLESSED LORD has done STANDS FAST (see Psalm cxi.). His Work, His Word, His Redemption, His Covenants are sure. Fast and eternal as His adorable Name they stand, and all the inventions and speculations of men can never alter them.

In view of these things we are exhorted to

(1) “STAND FAST IN THE FAITH” (1 Cor. xvi. 13).

What are we to understand by “the Faith”? I believe it means all that the Spirit has made known and entrusted to our hands concerning Christ and His Church. I think the best instance of standing fast in this particular is given in Rev. iii. 8. Keeping His Word and not denying His Name. The Apostle himself, when about to leave this scene, could say, “I have kept the Faith.” We all know it was a hard fight for him. But the Lord stood by him and depend upon it, no matter how strong the enemy against us, the Lord will stand by us, and, like the Apostle, we shall conquer. Notice there is a reward. “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which The Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day.” Let us then, in view of that reward, “STAND FAST IN THE FAITH.”

(2) “STAND FAST IN LIBERTY” (Gal. v. 1).

Do we enjoy liberty? Liberty from our Sins. Liberty from the World, Liberty in the precious things of God. Let us not allow the world to rob us of it. In John xi. we have a man set at liberty, but where did his liberty take him? Occupation with the blessed Lord Himself at His Table (read John xii. 1-3). If we

are going to enjoy this freedom, let us more and more cultivate a true spirit of happy communion with Himself, not merely in public, but chiefly in our private life in secret. If we enjoyed communion with the Lord in secret, we should have greater liberty in public. The enemy seeks to rob us somehow of this. He seeks to make us worldly and proud, like Demas in 2 Tim. iv. 10. Let us give heed to the blessed Spirit's voice, "Stand Fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ has made us free."

(3) "STAND FAST IN ONE SPIRIT" (Philip. i. 27).

I take this exhortation to mean Unity. Satan has succeeded in some cases in scattering and dividing the people of God. Wherever we go we see the effect of this. What a terrible havoc the enemy has made. But wherever you see a company of God's people in unity one with the other, there you see the Lord working, and souls are being blessed.

How beautiful the words of the poet:—

One Spirit with the Lord,
O blessed wondrous word,
What heavenly light, what power divine,
Doth that sweet word afford.

One Spirit with the Lord,
Jesus, the Glorified,
Esteems the church for which he bled,
His Body and His Bride.

May all the people of God lament and mourn at the state of things around us. Seeking to cultivate a true spirit of repentance, and also of love toward the Lord and toward each other. Then this unity of heart, mind and purpose will be the result.

(4) "STAND FAST IN THE LORD" (Phil. iv. 1).

It has often been remarked that, in Philippians, the Lord Jesus is set forth in Chap. i. as the believer's life; chap. ii., his example; chap. iii., his object; chap. iv., his strength. We need nothing more than these things, but we can do with nothing less. And the more we know of the Lord the more we shall want to know. Every day we live, the more we see the need of standing fast in the Lord.

(5) "STAND FAST AND HOLD THE TRADITIONS WHICH YE HAVE BEEN
TAUGHT WHETHER BY WORD OR OUR EPISTLE"

(2 Thess. ii. 15).

The word in Rev. iii. 11 is as true to-day as when it was written; "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

We have a simple illustration of standing fast in 2 Samuel xxiii. 11-12. Shammah was the man who stood against all the assaults of the enemy and became the victor. A field of lentils may seem a very insignificant thing, yet Shammah realised he was really fighting for God, and though many fled, and forsook their master's interests, yet Shammah stands fast. We may be considered old fashioned and out of date in holding fast to the old truths, but the day will come, when, if we have been faithful for Him and His truth in this day of failure, we shall be abundantly rewarded in that day. May we then know in power and reality what it is to :—

Stand fast in the Faith.. 1 Cor. xvi. 13.
 Stand fast in Liberty .. Gal. v. 1.
 Stand fast in Unity .. Phil. i. 27.
 Stand fast in the Lord .. Phil. iv. 1.
 Stand fast in the Truth 2 Thess. ii. xv.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Ques. L. asks : How do you explain the passage " Ye are come . . . to the spirits of just men made perfect " (Heb. xii. 23) ? Who are referred to ? and in what sense is the word perfect used ? and as applying to the present time ?

Ans. : The two Mounts—Mount Sinai and Mount Zion are put in contrast—the former " which might be touched, and burned," carrying with it the touch death to those who ventured (the ministration of death . . . began with glory " (2 Cor. iii. 7-16)—and Mount Zion, the mount of Royal Grace, began with glory and grace and not with death.

This character of teaching is in keeping with the Hebrews—the writer by the Spirit, shews by these contrasts that Christianity is not the continuation of Judaism, but its contrast ; and that in result Christianity supersedes Judaism.

The following is a short summary :—

1. The word by angels through whom the Law was given (Acts vii. 7-53 ; Gal. iii. 19) is superseded by Christ, Son of God ; First Born in essence, Nature, Majesty and Supremacy ; over all God blessed for evermore ; who first began to unfold and speak of the great salvation (Mark. i. 1-14 ; Heb. ii. 2).

2. Christ the Captain of Salvation, in contrast with Moses, and Joshua, annulling the power of death and delivering those subject to bondage.
3. Christ entering the Heavenly Sanctuary ; opening the way into the Sanctuary by His accomplishment of Redemption, in contrast with Priests and Sacrifices under the Law (chap. 5).
4. The two Covenants (the old ; the new) (chap. viii.).
5. The two Tabernacles (the Earthly ; the Heavenly (chap. ix. 10-14). The two Mediators (15-19). The two Offerings (25-28).
6. The many and continuous Offerings under the Law in contrast with the One Sacrifice in its permanent efficacy and value (chap. x. 1-19).
7. The Cloud of Witnesses : their principles, pathway, patience, endurance and victory, in their witness and warfare, as called of God ; and the Author and Finisher of Faith revealed (chaps. xi.-xii. 3).

From this point the Epistle closes with admonitions, warnings and object lessons as to our responsibility, in the review of the past Dispensation, in the light of the glory of God revealed in the face of the Lord Jesus Christ ; the need for our present continuance steadfastly in the light of the present revelation of glory that excelleth ; and thus, in subjection to, and in the power of, the Holy Spirit to walk outside the camp, clinging to the substance and in spirit anticipating the consummation.

Then we have a final summary of future Glory :

1. Ye are come unto Mount Zion. (1) The city of Royal grace (Ps. lxxviii. 68-70). The abiding Rest of God (Ps. cxxxii. 13-14).
2. *And* to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. (2) The heavenly City, the corresponding centre of heavenly Glory to the earthly one (Hos. ii. 21 ; Rev. xxi.).
3. *And* to an innumerable company of angels : the general assembly. (3) A universal gathering of angels taking in all grades, ranks and orders of these heavenly beings.
4. *And* to the church of the First-born which are written in the heavens. (4) The names of heavenly saints enrolled in heaven, in contrast with Israel who are registered for earth (Luke x. 20).

5. *And* to God the Judge of all. (5) The Sovereign Judge of all as to position, service and reward (Gen. xviii. 25).
6. *And* to the spirits of just men made perfect. (6) The Cloud of Witnesses of chap. xii. 1, who died in faith, "Just men," the distinguishing title of Old Testament worthies; *made perfect* = to complete; consummate in character; finish or fulfil as to hope; spirit, soul, body *in resurrection* which will not be true as a whole of the Christian Assembly who *will not all sleep* (1 Cor. xv. 51; 1 Thes. iv. 15).
7. *And* to Jesus, Mediator of the New Covenant. (7) The Accomplisher of Redemption for all who partake of the heavenly calling (Job xix. 25; Heb. ix.-xii.).
8. *And* to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. (8) Peace through the blood of His Cross (Col. i. 19) *in contrast* with the blood of the brother which called for vengeance (Gen. iv. 9).

It will be seen by a study of the foregoing summary that "the spirits of just men made perfect," are the cloud of witnesses who died in faith not having received the promise; God having provided that the *better thing* shall be made manifest in the present dispensation, and that their consummation shall not be completed without us, the Church of God, the body of Christ here, manifested as the Bride of Christ in glory, when the saints of the Old Testament will be the friends of the Bridegroom, and their joy will be fulfilled (Matt. xi. 11; John iii. 28-29).

The word "perfect" in this passage is found in Heb. ii. 10; v. 9; vii. 19; ix. 9; x. 1; xi. 40; (and only found in four other passages of the New Testament) and a comparison of these scriptures will shew the meaning in its fuller application. It is also interesting to note that the word "better" occurs thirteen times in the Epistle, and much instruction may be gleaned by searching it out in its connections.

G. K.

"May we walk by faith, not by sight or habit, and may the Lord's own light shine more and more from the living pages of His holy Word, for our faith and guidance in all things."

* * * *

"How happy to take, when God is glorified in giving."

THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND.—This was only a difficulty that overtook the disciples in their ordinary path. We have such difficulties every day, although perhaps not exactly similar. And, if we only regarded them in the true light, they are all just what this was—provings of our faith in God from the hand of the Lord Himself. There is no accident in any of them, whether small or great. A bill comes unexpectedly; how are we to meet it? The morning's post brings some disastrous intelligence, plunging us into some unlooked for perplexity; how are we to get out of it? The next knock at our door introduces a claimant whose demands must be met before morning; where and what are our resources? Do we begin, as Philip and Andrew did, to look at our resources? Do we set our thoughts at work to scheme and plan, and toil, in order to meet the difficulty, or do our first thoughts turn to Jesus, who has so often delivered us and brought us, despite all our fears, safely through every cloud, however dark, through every perplexity, however mysterious and trying? Here is the test of our faith. Every such difficulty or trial that flings its shadow across our path during the day, is but God proving us, and saying, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" Reader, in every such event that befalls you, think of this narrative. Take out from it the name of Philip, and substitute your own name in your difficulty, and you will then have that same Jesus speaking to your own heart. And say not within your heart, "Oh, it is impossible! My trial is so severe, my difficulty is so great, that it is not possible to meet it." Say not so. God will make those very five loaves feed five thousand! God will make those very waves at thy feet rush backward, and become a wall to protect thee on thy right hand and on thy left? God will make that very difficulty yield the demand thou needest. God will make those very tears and griefs, and sorrows yield a rich harvest to thy soul. "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."—*Extract.*

"It is a deeply solemn thing to learn truth, for there is not a principle which we profess to have learnt which we shall not have to prove practically."

The Faith and The Flock.

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PRICE—ONE PENNY.

EDITORIALS.

THE PRESENT UNREST.

The thoughts of everyone at the present moment are upon the Coal Strike. As we write, no settlement has been reached. With the political and social aspects of the question we do not deal. There is a still wider and deeper aspect than either. Forces are at work which no mere human power can control. It is well to remind ourselves that though man alone appears upon the stage, the real directors of the drama are behind the scenes. A gigantic game of chess is proceeding. Men are the pieces being moved by other hands, but those hands remain invisible. This is not fatalism, except so far as fatalism is true. Every one who believes Scripture, and has an intelligent understanding of it, must, to some extent, be a fatalist. God has told us in His Word the end from the beginning. Nothing is more clear than that this dispensation is to end with a crash. The mystery of iniquity will work itself out, and the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. But how? Will this new order be silently and gradually evolved from the old? Will humanity bring it to pass? Is it to be the outcome of Socialism? Just the opposite. God is going to put an end to the present course of things by judgment. The stone cut out without hands will smite the image, and man's rule and authority will be utterly broken to pieces. "*The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth*" (Isa. xxiii. 9).

Clearly, then, the end is determined; and in this sense we are fatalists, but in no other. Every part of Scripture bears upon this point. "For yourselves know perfectly," says St. Paul, "that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape" (1 Thess. v. 2-3).

How, then, are the Children of God to regard the events that are now happening? FIRST, *as a renewed call to watchfulness.* "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children

of the day. . . . Therefore let us not sleep as do others ; *but let us watch and be sober.*" Our Lord also emphasised this point, as we saw last month (see Editorials), when He said "*For as a snare shall it come (the day of the Lord) on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. WATCH YE THEREFORE.*"

Second, *as a renewed call to PRAYER.* Our Lord, in the above passage, adds, "*And pray always.*" St. Paul, in the chapter already quoted, exhorts us to "*Pray without ceasing.*" The Apostle Peter, in view of the same crisis, says, "*But the end of all things is at hand : be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.*"

Third : It is a call to sobriety. In our business ; in our home life ; with regard to worldly expectations for our children ; and in respect of all our undertakings, no extravagant ideas should fill our minds. There should be no launching out in commercial enterprise for which there is no necessity or in the furnishing of our houses, or in connection with any worldly prospects whatsoever, but we should practise a severe restraint. In view of the day so near at hand our Lord says, "*Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting.*" "*The time is short,*" says the Apostle Paul, "*it remaineth that . . . they that buy be as though they possessed not, and they that use this world, as not abusing it ; for the fashion of this world passeth away.*" And again, "*Let us who are of the day be sober.*"

Finally, it is a call to remember these other inspired words : "*Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Looking for and hasting (see margin) the coming of the day of God*" (2 Pet. iii. 11-12).

May our walk and our prayers bring about that glorious consummation of which God has "*SPOKEN BY THE MOUTH OF ALL HIS HOLY PROPHETS SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN.*"

In view of the present unrest, it is interesting to think of David's experience as recorded in the third Psalm. It is headed, "*A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.*" What a bitter, bitter experience ! Few men ever drank such deep draughts from the cup of sorrow. It is equally true that very few, if any, ever knew the comforts of God so well. There are two verses, one in Ps. iii. and the other in Ps. iv., which form a striking couplet. Ps. iii. ver. 5 reads, "*I laid me down and slept.*" Ps. iv. 8, "*I will*

both lay me down *in peace*, and sleep." When he is fleeing from Absalom; when his own son seeks his throne, and possibly, his life, there cannot be peace; but the Lord did sustain him. And so he adds, "I awaked, for the Lord sustained me." In the midst of such danger threatening he might never have awaked. But God was near him, and thus he could sleep, and he awaked, for he was safe in Jehovah's keeping. When, however, he has passed through this experience he is able to add, "in peace," to his former utterance. "I will both lay me down *in peace* and sleep; for Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety."

He has had a new experience of God's care. And it is interesting to note the heading of Ps. iv., as well as of Ps. iii. It is "*To the Chief Musician on Neginoth* (stringed instruments). The more varied our experience of God's goodness, the more strings we have on which to praise Him. David, after his experience with Absalom, when his very crown was in jeopardy, is able to praise God as never before. How appropriate is the dedication of the Psalm then, "*To the Chief MUSICIAN on NEGINOTH.*"*

May every fresh trial leave us with a richer experience of God's care.

LIFE'S DEEPER MEANING.

1.

Father, to Thee we look in all our sorrow—
Thou art the Fountain whence our healing flows.
Tho' dark the night—joy cometh with the morrow,
Safely they rest who on Thy love repose.

2.

When fond hopes fail, and skies are dark before us,
And the vain cares that vex our life increase,
Comes with its calm—the thought that Thou art o'er us,
And we grow quiet—folded in Thy peace!

3.

Nought can affright us—on Thy goodness leaning,
Low in the heart, faith singeth yet her song.
Chastened by pain, we learn life's deeper meaning,
And in our weakness Thou dost make us strong.

4.

Patient, O heart—tho' heavy be thy sorrows;
Be not cast down—disquieted in vain—
Yet shalt thou praise Him—when these darkened furrows
Which now He plougheth—wave with golden grain.

*See "An Instrument of Ten Strings." Price sixpence per doz.: to be obtained of the Editor.

LOVE AND LIGHT.

A MESSAGE FOR THE MOMENT.

By PHILIP MAURO.

“God is light.” “God is love.” 1 John i. 5, iv. 8.
 “Walk in love.” “Walk as children of light.” Eph. v. 2, 8.

GOD has made known to the objects of His grace the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, namely, to bring into existence, for His own glory and eternal delight, a family or race of beings answering to Himself. This purpose He formed before the foundation of the world. Every act in the material creation had reference to those whom He had chosen beforehand, and whom in love He had predestinated unto the adoption of children to Himself by (*i.e.* through) Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will (Eph. i. 4, 5).

Very early in the written Word of God this purpose is declared. So soon as the various parts of the material universe had all been prepared and set in order, God announced the object of all these works of wisdom and goodness, saying: “Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth ” (Gen. i. 26).

This verse speaks of a work yet to be done, and of a purpose yet to be accomplished. At the time when the record of that purpose was given through Moses the earth was filled with the ruins of the first human race, and was defiled with its corrupt ways and violent deeds. There was, at that time, no sign and no hope of the existence of such a race of men as described in Genesis i. 26. Human beings, so far from becoming the rulers of creation, were themselves a race of slaves.

The first chapter of Genesis, given by God under such circumstances, amounts, therefore, to a declaration that His purpose should not be defeated by reason of the ruin of the humanity of Adam, “the first man.” God is not one to begin the erection of a tower and not have the means wherewith to finish it. He who works all things after the counsel of His own will cannot be turned aside from His purpose. He has said, “My *counsel* shall stand, and

I will do all My *pleasure* " (Is. xlvi. 10) ; and the " *counsel* of His own will " (which we are now considering) is expressly declared to be " according to His good *pleasure*, which He hath purposed in Himself " (Eph. i. 9, 11).

By many types and shadows in the Old Testament Scriptures the ultimate accomplishment of this eternal purpose of God is foretold, and plentiful indications are therein given (as now clearly perceived in the light of the New Testament) of the means whereby that purpose should be accomplished. Moreover, in the Book of Psalms, in the first of its five divisions, which corresponds to the first Book of Moses, God's eternal purpose with reference to man is again declared in that glorious burst of prophecy contained in the 8th Psalm. The broad setting of that gem of prophecy is the heavens and the earth, with the creatures of earth, air and sea, so that the magnificent scene of Genesis i. is again brought before us. And the central figure thereof is man : " What is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him to have *dominion* over the works of Thy hand. Thou hast put all things under his feet."

Those remarkable words " son of man " convey a hint of the means by which God would carry out His unchanging purpose ; but the meaning of those words was not unveiled until there appeared on earth the One Who announced Himself as the Son of Man, come to seek and to save that which had been lost in Adam's transgression and fall. It is a striking fact that the first time the Lord gave Himself the title of " Son of Man," thereby announcing Himself as the One spoken of in Psalm viii., under whose feet all things were to be placed, He declared Himself to be more destitute than the humblest of His creatures. " The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests ; but the SON OF MAN hath not where to lay His head " (Matt. viii. 20). Such is " the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor " (2 Cor. viii. 9).

We would also notice the reference in Psalm viii. to the new family, which reference occurs in the verse that speaks of the " babes and sucklings." The great and mighty men of the earth are the enemies of the Lord and of His Christ, and have set themselves to defeat His purpose (Ps. ii. 2, 3). Therefore, because of His enemies, God has established strength and perfected praise out of the mouths

of babes and sucklings (for such are His people in their present weakness and dependence), to the end that He may ultimately still the enemy and the avenger (Ps. viii. 2 ; Matt. xxi. 16 ; 1 Cor. i. 27).

We also notice in Psalm viii., in the list of living creatures over which the Son of Man is to have dominion, the significant omission of "creeping things." These apparently are to have no place in the earth as it will be in "the dispensation of the fulness of times" (Eph. i. 10).

Thus the eternal purpose of God was announced by holy men of old, moved by the Holy Spirit ; but the method whereby God would accomplish that purpose was not then made manifest. To us, however, He has "made known the mystery of His will." To us it has been clearly revealed that *by Jesus Christ* God will bring the objects of His love and grace, who have redemption, through Christ's blood, the forgiveness of sins, into the relation of "children to Himself," this being according to the good pleasure of His will, settled before the foundation of the earth was laid (Eph. i. 4-9).

Thus, to them is accorded, even now, the privilege of children, namely, to know what the Father is doing, to see and study the pattern of His work, and to observe its progress.

We know, by the revelation that God has given us, the stage to which His work has been already brought ; for that work is not yet finished. It is a work so vast in scope that it requires ages for its completion. It is the "plan of the ages" (Eph. iii. 11—Gr.). Therefore, "now we see *not yet* all things put under Him." But, as pledge and guarantee of the final accomplishment of God's purpose, we see already crowned with glory and honour JESUS, who for the suffering of death was made for a little while lower than the angels, that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for everything (Heb. ii. 8, 9). The Captain of their salvation having been perfected for the purpose of God through suffering, there remains now only the bringing of "the many sons unto glory," in order to fulfil the eternal purpose which God has purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Then shall creation itself be delivered from the bondage of corruption that is yet in the world through lust, into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God (Rom. viii. 21).

It is not our intention at this time to examine in detail this greatest of all the works of God ; but the foregoing outline is sketched by way of introduction to the thought that we would pass on to the

people of God who, in this eve of the day of consummation of God's purpose, are professedly waiting for His Son to appear the second time, apart from sin, unto that salvation of which we are now speaking.

We have said that God's purpose includes a family of children answering to Himself. He has revealed Himself as Light and Love. These Divine characteristics we may regard as corresponding respectively to "likeness" and "image." Likeness refers to that which is external, that which meets the eye. Many Scriptures declare that God is Light in His outward aspect when He condescends to take bodily form, and the fact is so familiar as to render citation of numerous passages unnecessary. We would only call attention to Ezekiel i. 26, where the prophet attempts, so far as possible in human language, to describe "the appearance of the *likeness* of the glory of the Lord"; and also would recall the "great light," "above the brightness of the sun," which Saul of Tarsus saw on the Damascus road.

On the other hand, "image" refers in general (though not perhaps in every instance) to that which is internal: in other words, to the character. Thus, the Lord Jesus, even when he assumed the "likeness" of sinful men (Rom. viii. 3; Phil. ii. 7) remained always the "*image* of the invisible God" (Col. i. 15). Therefore, we may take the *image* of God to be expressed in the word "love," and the *likeness* of God in the word "light." With this understanding it is possible to see fuller meaning in those passages which tell us that the changing of the sons of God into the "image" of Christ is a *present* work of the Spirit of God, which He carries on while we are occupied in "beholding" Christ. We, beholding, *are being changed into the same image* (2 Cor. iii. 18). We have put on the new man, which *is being renewed* in knowledge *after the image* of Him that created Him (Col. iii. 10). On the other hand, the "likeness" of the sons of God remains unchanged until the coming of the Lord as Saviour. Then, and not till then, will He change our body of humiliation, that it may be fashioned "LIKE *unto His body of glory*" (Phil. iii. 20, 21). "Even now," says the Apostle John, "are we the sons of God, and it doth *not yet appear* what we shall be" (the likeness has not yet been changed), "but when He shall appear we shall be LIKE *Him*" (1 John iii. 2).

Seeing, therefore, that God is light and God is love, it behoves those who have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry,

“ Abba, Father,” and who are truly waiting for the adoption itself (Rom. viii. 15, 23), to *walk in love and in light*. “ Be ye, therefore, followers of God as beloved children, and *walk in love* as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us.” This Scripture brings us face to face with the “ new commandment ” of the Lord, which constituted the most prominent feature of the last words spoken by Him to His disciples. The keeping of this is *the one and only acceptable proof* He demands of their love to Himself; and, moreover, by this all men were to be able to distinguish His disciples (John xiii. 34, 35; xiv. 21, 23, etc.).

How is it, then, with us who know dispensational and other truth, who have discerned the signs of the times, and who testify that the coming of the Lord draweth near? We must be the first to face Him and to give an account of ourselves. For judgment will begin at the house of God. The Lord will reckon first with His own servants, and we all must stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the things done in the body, “ whether good or bad ” (1 Pet. iv. 17; 2 Cor. v. 10). Is it not, therefore, of the highest importance and greatest urgency that we should examine ourselves as to whether we are walking in love, as beloved children of God? Are all our ways and all our dealings and intercourse with other saints characterised by that love which Christ manifested when He gave Himself for us? Have we put away *all* bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, with all malice? Have we been and are we always kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ’s sake, hath forgiven us? If not, of what advantage is it that we have knowledge of “ the mystery of His will.” or even if we had knowledge of “ *all* mysteries ”? Of what avail is all the *light* of which we boast if we walk not in *love*? Will it not serve merely to add to our condemnation?

But granting that we must all confess failure in this, to a greater or less extent, and should accordingly humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, it may need a further question to bring before our own consciences the full extent of our sin. So we would do well to ask *how much thought* have we given to this commandment of the Lord? What *effort* have we made to keep it? To what extent is our failure to keep it due to the infirmity of our nature, and to what extent is it due to sheer neglect and indifference?

This, we believe, is a test question, by which we should unsparingly judge ourselves, that we be not judged of the Lord. He knows what heed we have paid *in our hearts* to this, His last and great commandment. Doubtless the chief obstacle in the way of fulfilling "the law of Christ"—which is, "to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law" (Rom. xiii. 8)—is the love of self. By nature men are "lovers of their own selves," and as to others are "hateful and hating one another" (2 Tim. iii. 2; Tit. iii. 3). Therefore, our first attempts to walk in love would surely be marked by faltering steps and many falls. It is much easier not to try at all. Have we not found it decidedly more congenial to occupy ourselves with objective doctrine, dispensational truth, and the like, than to exercise ourselves about the new commandment of the Lord? But, clearly, the difficulty we find in *practising* the commandment does not excuse us from persisting in the *attempt*. And of this we may be sure, that, as we make the attempt, knowing that we shall certainly fail if we rely upon ourselves, but humbly depending for power to keep the commandment upon Him who gave it, He will meet us with the needed grace. And let us not forget that we have access to a throne of grace where our failures can be owned, mercy for them secured, and grace found for needed help. How often have we resorted to that throne of grace for help to observe this great commandment on which so much depends?

It is to be observed that the statement "God is light" precedes the statement "God is love." God is known as light before He is known as Love. The light of God's Word discovers to man his lost condition before God makes known His great love in giving His only Son to be the Saviour of sinners.

But, in the directions given in Ephesians to the children of God, the order is reversed. "Walk in love" precedes "walk as children of light." The first of these commands is given for regulating our behaviour to members of the household of God. The second relates mainly to our conduct as seen by those who are without. To walk in love is, therefore, the first duty of the child of God; and we may be sure that, IF THAT DUTY BE NEGLECTED, HIS ENTIRE WALK WILL BE IMPERFECT, and the consequences to himself and to others will be serious. Our unbelieving friends and neighbours are very keen observers of our behaviour. They know that the Bible commands love as the first obligation of the Christian; and very often their

excuse for rejecting the Light is that they do not see professing Christians walking in love. Furthermore, the children of God were pre-destined to adoption "in love"; growth into Christ, the Head of the body, is promoted by "holding the truth in love"; it is by the effectual working of *every part* that the body increases to the edifying of itself "in love" (Eph. i. 4, iv. 15, 16); the hearts of the members are to be knit together "in love," which is "the bond of perfectness" (Col. ii. 2, iii. 14). By the light of these Scriptures we may clearly discern what is, undoubtedly, the prime cause of the sad condition of things existing at the present moment between the members of the One Body. It is no exaggeration to say that the prominent characteristic which the children of God exhibit to onlookers is, not the love they bear one towards another, welding and consolidating them into one Body, but the divisions and disputes between the numerous small groups into which they have split up, the subjects of the disputes being usually points of doctrine. Many attempts have been made to reconcile these differences, but with little success. Does not the failure of such efforts tell us that there can be no agreement of the head until there has been an agreement of the heart? To be "like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind," is a state most earnestly to be desired and striven for; but it cannot be attained except in the way pointed out. These are the directions given us: "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory: but in *lowliness of mind* let each esteem other *better* than themselves. Look not every man on his own things (advantage) but every man also on the things of others. Let *this* mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. ii. 2-5).

We firmly believe that there is at this moment nothing that so imperatively claims the attention of the people of God as the subject presented in the foregoing pages. Therefore we venture to make, in closing, some practical suggestions which we would earnestly commend to them.

Let us, *first*, with sorrow of heart and shame of face, make humble confession of the evil state of things existing among us, acknowledging that the cause of it is our neglect of the commandment which the Lord gave us, and by which our love for Himself was to be proved. The example of Nehemiah and Daniel may be profitably studied in this connection (Neh. i. 4-11; Dan. ix. 3-19).

Let us, *secondly*, keep the Lord's words in our thoughts and before our hearts, meditating upon them, and letting our minds rest frequently upon them. Let His words abide in us (John xv. 7). "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col. iii. 16).

Let us, *thirdly*, seek opportunities to manifest special kindness and affection towards those of our fellow-believers with whom we have had any differences (looking carefully for any root of bitterness in ourselves) and mentioning their names specially and frequently when interceding for the saints.

The foregoing suggestions are according to Scripture, and have been tried with encouraging results.

In closing I commend to the reader's attention the following extract from a letter recently received. Speaking of divisions and contentions between saints, the writer of that letter said: "Scripture is most explicit as to the cause of *all strife and division among believers*. 'Are ye not therefore *carnal* and walk as men?' Do we want anything plainer? Is not this the real cause? Yet, strange to say, I have not yet heard one mention of it. If we, as individuals, for, after all, it is an individual matter, are practically 'abiding in Him' and 'walking in the Spirit,' if we make Christ our one Object, present Portion, and blessed Hope, fellowship will be easy. The difficulty would then be *to keep us apart*, and not to get us together."

Surely, the closer we live to Christ, the closer we will be to one another. This is the only oneness He will recognise. It is the only suitable answer to the current schemes for unification by the world's method of organisation.

May our hearts and consciences be exercised about this matter in view of the words of that prayer which came from our Lord's heart and lips just before He suffered for our sins: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us" (John xvii. 20, 21).

"If I separate truth from Christ, I shall lose its integrity."

"The man who knows most of Christ is always the one who is most apprehensive of Satan."

“BEGINNINGS.”

III. THE FIRST MARTYR.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

ABEL was in everyway a contrast to his brother. The one was a farmer ; the other was a shepherd. It is an interesting question : Why was Abel a keeper of sheep ? Animal food was not sanctioned until after the flood (Gen. ix. 3) ; “ Every herb bearing seed, and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding meat ” was the food prescribed for man at his creation (Gen. i. 29). Why, then, should Abel be a keeper of sheep, unless for the purpose of sacrifice ?

But some will ask, how should Abel know that a lamb would be an acceptable offering in the eyes of God ? Of this we may be assured that whatever knowledge he possessed, his brother possessed also. “ *By faith* Abel offered unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain,” and faith is always based upon some revelation from God. We need not go far for this in Abel’s case. Had not the Lord God spoken in the ears of his parents of the Seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent’s head, Himself a sufferer in the performance of His mighty work ? Had not the Lord God also made coats of skins for Adam and his wife before expelling them from the garden for ever ? (Gen. iii. 15-21). Is it too much to suppose that the parents instructed their lads concerning these great principles ? Evidence is not lacking that Adam and his wife both welcomed the testimony of God into their hearts. Why, otherwise, should Adam call his wife’s name Eve, “ because she was the mother of all living,” when as a matter of fact, she was not the mother of anybody ? Speaking of “ life,” at the moment of his expulsion—what was this but faith ? Then observe Eve, when her first-born came, “ I have gotten a man from Jehovah.” Is not this suggestive that the word in Gen. iii. 15 was ringing in her ears, and that in her heart she hoped her son was the promised deliverer ? Doubtless she made a serious mistake as to the person and the time, but her words savour of faith nevertheless.

We thus conclude that both Cain and Abel knew how God should be approached. Both had been instructed that, man being now a fallen creature, he could only have to do with God on the ground

of death. But the one, like many another since, refused to take so humiliating a position; while the other accepted it in childlike faith.

Remark, it was *a lamb* that Abel brought—an animal the very symbol of meekness and submission (Isa. liii. 7). No wild beast could possibly typify Him whose deep delight it was to do the Father's will. Unlike his brother's fruits, Abel's offering did not in anyway represent human effort; the lamb was of God's providing, which the worshipper appropriated in faith. It was a firstling also, reminding us of Him who is the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. viii. 29).

It is noticeable that the blood, of which so much was made in the sacrificial system of Israel at a later date, is not mentioned in connection with Abel's offering, nor indeed anywhere in the book of Genesis in connection with offerings to God. Not the blood, but the fat, is emphasised. The reason is this. It was a question, not so much of remission, as of acceptance. Not for some specific sin was the lamb brought, but as a means of approach to God. The fat represents the excellency. Hence, he who had no excellency in himself, identified himself with a sacrifice which had. His sacrifice being "more excellent" than that of Cain, God accepted it, and Abel also, in virtue of it. God bore testimony to his gifts, and to himself also "that he was righteous." Not innocent, mark, but righteous. Abel "became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." "Righteous Abel" is his title in Matt. xxiii. 35.

This touching story furnishes us with a twofold type of Christ. The lamb upon the altar spoke to God of the sacrificial aspect of Calvary; Abel personally, in that which followed, typified Christ as the martyred witness for the truth. Cain developed into both murderer and liar, the two marks of Satan, according to John viii. 44. Sin against God in the matter of the offering soon led to sin against his neighbour. Nothing so arouses men's hatred as to have their religion impeached. For this reason Moses insisted with Pharaoh that Israel must put three days' journey between themselves and Egypt before they could offer sacrifice unto Jehovah (Ex. viii. 26).

Let it be distinctly noted that Abel was murdered in the interests of religion. His was the first of the religious murders with which earth's history has been stained, and nowhere does the stain lie deeper than in Christendom. Some of God's best wheat has been destroyed in this way (Matt. xiii. 29).

If Abel typifies Christ as the slain witness, Cain represents the Jews who slew Him, though not the Jew only, for all the world was involved in the fearful crime (Acts iv. 27). But Cain was not to be destroyed, accordingly "Jehovah set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him" (Gen. iv. 15). In like manner, the Jew is being preserved by God with a view to another and a better age. He is pleased to regard him as a manslayer rather than as a murderer (Num. xxxv.). The history of the Jew being the history of man, when the former is once more owned of God, universal blessing will be brought in.

We are told in Heb. xi. 4 that Abel, though dead, by his sacrifice, "yet speaketh." It is God's abiding testimony that men may only approach Him on the ground of death. Never were men less disposed to heed the testimony than in our day. The way of Cain is loved, followed, and preached, to the eternal ruin of the soul.

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

CHAPTER I. VERSES 3-5.

By WALTER SCOTT.

"*THAT which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.*" (ver. 3). Verse one is the historical presentation of the Son as the Word of Life—its absolute expression in this world. This special view of Christ is founded on Apostolic testimony and experience. Verse two is a parenthesis in which the life (eternal life), which was displayed in this world is said to be that which was with the Father. Its moral features as love, obedience, devotedness, and every moral excellence were displayed in perfection by Him (the Gospel of John); by us imperfectly (the First Epistle of John).

The story of the four Gospels is positively fascinating, inasmuch as they reveal a world marred and wrecked, through which the One Who was the Word of Life moved. The two great features of the life were light and love. Moral darkness had wrapped itself round the fallen world, while hatred to God stamped its character on the mind of the creature. But the light shone brilliantly in the midst of the darkness, and love revelled and triumphed in the scene and circumstances of man's undying hate to the God of love.

While, therefore, the *Person* is in view in verse one, the *life* itself is the subject of verse two. Now, while these may be distinguished, they must not be separated. "He that hath the Son hath life."

Then verse three connects itself with verse one: "That which we have seen and heard." It is of vital moment to insist upon the marvellous fact that God the Creator, in human flesh and form, trod the streets of Jerusalem and was crucified on Calvary, outside the City walls. The Incarnation and Death of the Lord are *facts*, not *fancies*.

But the stupendous fact of the Incarnation, with its vast moral consequences, was too grand to be crystallised in the Judaic system. God manifest in flesh was a truth, the knowledge of which concerned the Gentile as well as the Jew. The *Knowledge* of God revealed in flesh and tabernacled amongst men could not be confined to the immediate circle of the Apostles and the Disciples of the first Century. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." The pronoun "you" embraces every member of the family of God throughout these Christian times.

The object of the testimony is to create a fellowship: "That ye also may have fellowship with us." The testimony of the Apostles had a two-fold purpose in view: first to form a *unity*; second to establish a *fellowship* (John xvii. 20, 21; 1 John i. 3). Thus we have been brought into touch with the early Church. But this fellowship is one necessarily embracing *all* the children of God, and is in no wise dependent on spiritual growth or attainment or service. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ." It is a present and continuous fellowship. To know the Father and the Son is a character of blessing, peculiar to the Saints of this dispensation. Israel knew *Jehovah*. The patriarchs knew the *Almighty God*. Christians know the *Father*. Into this deep and blessed intimacy we are called, we are in this fellowship. We are privileged to share in the Father's thoughts and counsels respecting His Son (Matt. xi. 27). Then again, as the Son reveals the Father, and pours out His heart into the ear and bosom of the Father, we take part in these communings (John xvii.). The Apostles and we are on equal ground. It is not a fellowship which alone concerns the past. It is *now* with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. The peerless and holy humanity of our

Lord is associated with the sweetest of Divine Names, JESUS. As exalted and glorified and in whom all blessing is centred, the chosen title is CHRIST. The SON sets forth His relation—personal relation to the Father.

To have part in the intimacies of the Father and the Son ; to enter into their respective relations ; their mutual interests and joys, is indeed the filling of the cup of present and eternal joy, as the Apostle says, " that your joy may be full." We have fulness of happiness *now*. We wait for glory, but Divine love has lifted us out of our sins and guilt—freeing us completely from both—and set us down *in peace in the presence of the Father and the Son*, to take part in their respective communings. Herein is fulness of joy. We have all the love now, if not all that love gives. Many of love's gifts await us, but infinitely deeper is the love itself, our present and eternal portion. Herein is fulness of joy (ver. 4).

" This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you that GOD IS LIGHT and in him is no darkness at all " (ver. 5).

In the central words of our text familiarity (not intimacy), is sternly rebuked. The fellowship into which we have been brought, and in which all Christians share, is a holy fellowship. It is a blessed one, but it is also a holy one and has to be guarded. " God is love," and that our souls know right well. But to the general body of the redeemed, the Son Jesus Christ sends through Apostolic medium this first and fundamental truth, not embodied in commandment form, but as a " message," God is light. He is that in His nature, and " in Him is no darkness at all." In us there is both light and darkness, although they never mingle. But in Him darkness could not exist, as the least imperfection or taint or darkness would be the denial of His nature as God. All God's ways and acts proceed from what *He is*. He is light, and all His surroundings partake of the same. " He is light," and " He is *in* the light." Light is His garment (Ps. civ. 2). What God is as light is the measure and standard for men and angels. Compromise on this vital matter is impossible. God must be God, and the standard must be maintained at its highest elevation. Darkness is fundamental ignorance of God. The light makes everything manifest (Eph. v. 13). Everything and every person is in the light or in darkness and this truth is a vital one to every Child of God. May God give us to weigh it !

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY: SINNER, SAINT AND SERVANT.

By R. E.

CONVERSION.

III.

“. . . . Sinners, of whom I am chief.” (1 Tim. i. 15.)

THE three-fold account of Saul's conversion presents one or two very slight difficulties, which are hardly deserving of attention, but, as the Bible is so often charged with contradicting itself, had better be noticed. In Acts ix. 7, we read: "And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man." In Acts xxii. 9, it affirms, "They heard not the voice of Him that spake to me." Acts xxvi. says neither one thing nor the other, but it perhaps furnishes the key to the difficulty. The communication to Saul, we are there told, was made in the Hebrew tongue. Now it is conceivable that the Hebrew tongue was not understood by the men that journeyed with him. The message therefore had no meaning to them. It may be in this sense that the Apostle means, "They heard not the voice." In this connection it is to be noticed that it is Saul who asserts, "they heard not the voice," and his point was to make plain that the voice addressed itself to him, and to no one else. Whether they heard a sound did not for the moment enter into his thoughts. Luke evidently records that they did hear the actual sound.

One other point. In Acts ix. 22 we are told that, when Saul asked, "What shall I do, Lord?" he was directed to go into Damascus, and there it would be told him what he must do. In Paul's address before Agrippa all this is omitted. Instead, we have something not included in the other two records. May not the particular circumstances of Acts xxvi. explain this difference? Paul was hardly likely to occupy Agrippa and the other magnates before him with what had happened at Damascus between Ananias, an unknown Jew, and himself (though seeing the Lord spoke to Ananias, it does furnish important evidence in itself), but would rather dwell upon the commission that had been given him direct from the ascended Christ.

Some reference ought to be made to vers. 5-6, chap. ix., and the variations in the Greek MSS. It is well known that many of the best omit the words, "It is hard for thee to kick against the

pricks. And he trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do ? ” First of all, it may be said, the reading is very abrupt without them. “ I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest. But, rise and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.” But, according to this version, he had not asked what he was to do. Yet as it is expressly stated, “ It shall be told thee what thou must do,” it is conceivable he had interrogated the Lord as to it. Moreover, in Acts xxii. we find Paul expressly stating that he did ask, What shall I do, Lord ? (v. 10). And the MSS. raise no doubts as to the authenticity of this question. While Acts xxvi. 14 not only confirms this, but also supplies the reference to “ kicking against the goads.”

Let us now consider the general bearings of this remarkable incident, apart from their particular relation to St. Paul himself. Leaving aside, for the moment, the inspiration and external authority of the Bible, can there be any reasonable doubt that this conversion actually took place, and in the manner related ? If not, then who can question the supernatural character of Christianity ? The facts to be adduced from the narrative are these :—1. Jesus of Nazareth is an actual person. 2. He was alive. 3. If He had once been put to death, as every testimony declares, then he must have been raised again. 4. He was evidently not in the state and condition in which He had been. For (*a*) no one saw Him but Saul ; (*b*) He spoke from heaven, not from earth ; (*c*) His presence was accompanied by a light so brilliant that it outshone the sun at mid-day. 5. He knew all that was passing. He knew Saul’s errand, and even what was passing in his mind. 6. The effect upon Saul proves it was no ordinary vision. Those who accompanied him fell to the earth, and seem to have heard the voice, though they did not understand the meaning of it. If the narrative is true, all these facts have to be reckoned with. What extraneous evidence have we in support of it ?

First, we have two accounts given by Paul himself, to all intents and purposes endorsing every detail as given by Luke. It may be said, in answer to this, that all three accounts are recorded by Luke. This objection might have some force if these had been private communications by Paul, or a private record by Luke, but they are neither. They were utterances of a most public kind, made before many witnesses, some of whom were of a very exalted

character. Then, secondly, we have the fact, that, not only did the Lord appear to Saul, but on the same day appeared to Ananias, a disciple at Damascus, and communicated the news about Saul. All this follows in the most natural sequence. If such a great and unexpected change had taken place in Saul, certainly others needed to be prepared for it. These are the words of Ananias when he first meets him: "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, *hath sent me*, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." Lastly, there is the incontestable witness of St. Paul's own life and labours. From that moment his whole course was completely changed and he pursued the tenour of his way, without deviation, unto the end. Instead of persecuting the followers of Jesus, he became their companion and helper, and the most gifted exponent of the truth he once sought to stamp out. And all this came to pass without the very smallest pecuniary or personal advantage accruing to himself. Nay, he had to suffer the loss of all things. When we take this into account along with all the rest, and, in addition, that a man of such moral rectitude, which he ever was, and carrying on such disinterested and beneficent service, was not likely to tell a lie, we can arrive at only one conclusion, that the narrative in Acts ix. faithfully represents what actually transpired.

And if so, what overwhelming evidence is furnished in favour of Christianity. A living Person speaks to Saul just as he is about to enter Damascus. His identity with Jesus of Nazareth is unmistakable. It is not a surmise of the Apostle's, but a declaration on the part of the Person Himself. "I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest." So that Jesus is alive from the dead, and His power just as great as anything claimed for Him by those who have given us the record of His ministry on earth. No greater moral or spiritual transformation was ever wrought than that effected in Saul of Tarsus, and no greater manifestation of Divine power and goodness is to be found in any of the gospels than that given on the Damascus road.

The revelation of Christ glorified to the Persecutor, completely coloured, and gave character to, the whole of his after life and ministry, and one cannot pass on without pausing to emphasise this fact. For unless we grasp the outstanding features of Saul's conversion we can have no right apprehension of Christianity itself.

The essence of it all lies in the fact, that, Christ spoke to Saul of Tarsus from heaven. And it is Christ in that place—Christ glorified—which is the key-note of Paul's ministry.

There are three schools of thought in Christendom to-day. One, makes the Incarnation the centre of its teaching ; Christianity is shorn, by this method, of nearly all its distinguishing features. Its root error is, it connects Christ with man after the flesh, instead of seeing that Christianity, as Paul taught it, is our being associated with Christ glorified. There is all the difference in the world between these two systems. The first insists upon the fact that the Incarnation ennobled human life in every department, and supposes that Christianity is an institution for improving the world—enlarging and enriching our life in it. In one word the Incarnation has re-habilitated humanity. The other teaches us to set our affection on things above ; because dead to the world and risen with Christ—our life hid with Christ in God.

Another school of thought makes everything revolve around the Cross. The extreme form of this is the crucifix. The effect of this system upon its adherents is that, while it numbers many devout souls, they are not emancipated. In contrast with this—while giving the Cross its true place as the foundation of everything—the third school looks to Christ beyond death, knows that He could not be where He is unless their sins were put away ; sees in Him the measure of their own acceptance ; and realises that, in the purpose of God, they are already seated in heavenly places in Him, and soon to be with and like Him.

Everything connected with Saul's conversion was calculated to impress upon him this last aspect we have mentioned. He had never known Christ after the flesh : *i.e.*, in connection with Jewish and earthly hopes. He says : " Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more." He knew Him as the Son of God. " Until we all come into the unity of the Faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ." The light from heaven above the brightness of the sun revealed to him the Son of God. And he tells us, he " could not see for the glory of that light." Henceforth he saw all truth in relation to that one transcendent moment. The Nazarene, the Crucified, was the supreme object in the glory of God. If a light brighter than the

midday sun shone upon his path, it shone in connection with the despised, hated, and rejected Prophet of Galilee. Was Paul ever likely to forget it? Especially when that One had found a place for him in His affection and a home for him at His side.

St. Paul tells us, he "could not see for the glory of that light." This was no mere accident. It was intentional, and with a purpose. It centred his interest upon another world—the sphere from which the voice had proceeded and whence this dazzling light had shone. Henceforth for him it was no longer earth but heaven. His eyes were closed to things below that they might be opened upon things above. "When his eyes were opened, he saw no man." One man alone occupied his soul, He Whom men had crucified, now the centre of a new glory for man. What a gulf between this world and heaven! There was, literally, nothing in common. St. Paul's theology, from this moment, had two termini—the Cross and the glory. To understand properly these two points of view is to understand - Christianity.

What did St. Paul understand by the Cross? It meant to him what Christ said it was—the judgment of this world. He saw in it the condemnation of everything—sin, the flesh, and the world; and that it thus became the door of deliverance from "our nature's fall in Adam." As regards sin, he saw that "by a sacrifice for sin (God) condemned sin in the flesh." As regards the flesh, he could say, "I am crucified with Christ," and thus before God he was no longer in the condition of responsibility to which law attached. While, as to the world, he asserts, "Whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Rom. viii. 3; Gal. ii. 20, vi. 14).

He had learned the lesson that Christ so sedulously sought to impress upon His disciples during the last days of His ministry. Over and over again He seeks to impress them with what is about to happen, but they refuse to pay attention. In Mark viii. 31, we read, "And He began to teach them, that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again." Next chapter, ver. 12: "The Son of Man . . . must suffer many things, and be set at naught." Again, a little further on (ver. 31): "For He taught His disciples, and said unto them, The Son of Man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him; and after that He is killed, He shall rise the third day. But they

understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask Him." And then, chap. x. 32: "*And He took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto Him, saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall kill Him; and the third day He shall rise again.*"

Is it any wonder the disciples, before the event, did not understand these words, and were afraid to ask too deeply as to their meaning. How many of us understand their meaning to-day? Has not Christendom, as a whole, for many a century, consistently ignored them? We see and accept one side of the Cross. The side we cannot do without, if we are to have any hope of pardon and heaven. But there is another side. The side which leaves man nothing to boast in, and the whole world convicted of sin. For what was the treatment Christ received, and who were concerned in it? Every form of indignity, culminating in death. Set at naught, mocked, scourged, spit upon, killed. And who did this? The depraved, the outcast, the vile? No, not more than others. If the truth must be told, every class was concerned in it, but especially the religious. For once, all classes were agreed in their hatred and condemnation of God's Son.

But let us notice one word that comes in time and again at the end of the Saviour's recapitulation of what would happen to Him. "The third day He shall rise again." What a reversal of the world's judgment! What a counterblast on God's part! Do we understand the significance of it? All blessing for man must flow from the One man has hated and despised! There can be no hope for man otherwise; for a world that could deal out to God's Son the treatment He received is a doomed world. But, utterly lost in itself, and without a remedy, need it be doomed? The grace that reached Saul on the Damascus road, is the answer.

And to Paul, evermore, the despised and rejected of earth was the centre of all God's counsels—the Lord of glory. The shadow of the Cross rested upon earth and made all below only loss, while the glory of God was to be seen in the face of Jesus Christ. What a scene that was to which Christ had been raised. God, Who had been glorified on the Cross, had now glorified the One Who hung

there, perfect in His obedience and devotedness. How the heart of God must have delighted to honour His Son. Stephen in his dying moments had looked up and seen the glory of God and Jesus; as Saul kept the raiment of them that slew him, how little he knew that Jesus would soon speak from that very glory, and speak to him, the chief of sinners; or that he would be the chosen vessel to tell to every creature under heaven the gospel of the glory of Christ. The fact that Christ could speak to a sinner from that glory was intended to be a revelation of all that God could be to the one that believed. It was no longer law, but grace. The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. "In that face," Paul could have said, "I have learned God's heart to me."

So far our attention has been exclusively occupied with only one reason for Saul's conversion; viz., that in him Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering. There are other aspects, but as these will doubtless come before us later on, only a brief reference is made to them here.

1. Saul was to be "a chosen vessel." The gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto him (Gal. ii. 7). He was the apostle of the Gentiles (Rom. xi. 13). He was in a special way "separated unto the gospel of God." (Rom. i. 1). Christ was revealed to him from heaven as the Son of God, and Paul was taken out from the people (Jews) and from the Gentiles (Acts xxvi. 17).

2. It was necessary that he should see Christ in His heavenly glory in order to be a witness, and proclaim the special truth committed to him. Thus he says, "Am I not an apostle? . . . *Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?*" Ananias says to him, "The Lord that *appeared* unto thee in the way." Further, in Acts xxvi. we have Paul repeating the exact words addressed to him on the occasion: "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee" (1 Cor. i. 9; Acts ix. 17; xxvi. 16).

3. Seeing that Paul was not one of the twelve; that he had never been a follower of Christ when He was on earth; and that some new and important communications were to be made through him, how important it was that he should be arrested in this supernatural way, and have this "heavenly vision," as he terms it, to fall back upon as a support in his special mission, and the peculiar

and often trying position he was called to occupy. It becomes evident from his letter to the Corinthians that his apostleship was challenged, and he is able not only to fall back upon the fact that they (the Corinthians) were the seal of his Apostleship, but upon "visions and revelations of the Lord." Thus, whenever his own position or his teaching was called in question, he could produce his credentials: "Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, Who raised him from the dead." "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. i. 1, 11-12).

Lastly, that conversion, with its marvellous display of divine grace and glory, was necessary for himself. If we think of the position he was to occupy, the character of his service, and the difficulties and privations he was to encounter, we can easily see the necessity for it. The revelation he received at that personal interview made him what he was ever afterward, both as a saint and a servant. The light above the brightness of the sun actually blinded him, but it gave him a new vision. His eyes were closed for the time being to everything they had been accustomed to look upon, that his mind might be exclusively engaged with a new object. When they were opened again, he was in a new world. To use his own words: "Old things had passed away, behold all things had become new." And he knew, likewise, that "all things were of God." It was a light, also, which had completely broken him down. It revealed everything. He was thoroughly manifested before God, and he knew "the terror of the Lord." This made him the preacher he afterwards became. But the voice that accompanied the light did a different work. If he could not see for the glory of the one, his heart was wooed and won completely by the other.

It was for this the Lord appeared unto him in the way, at the time, and in the manner He did. For his own sake, for the sake of the message he was to deliver, and that in him first Jesus Christ might shew forth the whole of His long-suffering as a pattern to believers through all subsequent ages.

"The Devil is never more diabolical than when he appears with the Bible in his hand."

TO HIM WHO LOVES US.

Once we sang for childhood's pleasure,
 " O how He loves " ;
 Sang again in manly measure,
 " O how He loves."
 Yet that sweet refrain awaited,
 Wants that after years created,
 Hearts that brought what lips repeated,
 " O how He loves."

Sing my soul since thou hast known Him,
 " O how He loves,"
 Victor, Saviour, Bridegroom, own Him,
 " O how He loves."
 Sought and found a sinner bringing
 Shame and ruin, helpless clinging,
 Till His riches left thee singing,
 " O how He loves."

All thy joys from Jesus borrow,
 " O how He loves."
 Use His heart in all thy sorrow,
 " O how He loves."
 He Who bore our condemnation,
 Is Himself our expectation,
 Boasting in His great salvation,
 " O how He loves."

When the hopeless pressure seizes,
 " O how He loves."
 Cast thy burden all on Jesus,
 " O how He loves."
 Seek not for a sign or token,
 It is written, He has spoken,
 Never can His word be broken,
 " O how He loves."

Flame of Jah and what can quench it,
 " O how He loves,"
 Chain divine and who can wrench it,
 " O how He loves,"
 Fettered on the arm that freed thee,
 In its grasp to hold and lead thee,
 Love that proved how it doth need thee,
 " O how He loves."

(Song of Sol. 3-6, New Trans.).

God Himself this Kinsman gave us,
 " O how He loves,"
 By His life of strength to save us,
 " O how He loves."
 What though friend or foe endeavour,
 From this rock our faith to sever,
 Trust ye in the Lord for ever.
 " O how He loves."

CHRIST IN THE LEVITICAL OFFERINGS.

By G. HUCKLESBY.

THE SIN OFFERING.

PART II.

LET us look closer at the type in Leviticus iv., as it will reveal to our souls more of the glories of the Antitype. From the Divine directions touching the Sin Offering, we find that whatever

THE POSITION

of the offender against the law of God might be, he was commanded to bring a sacrifice for his sin. Whether it were a priest or one of the congregation ; whether a ruler or one of the people ; whatever the age, rank, position or condition of the transgressor, a Sin Offering *must* be brought. It was imperative. But, then, we also learn that

THE PROVISION

was open to all, both to rich and poor, prince and peasant, telling us of our individual need of the Saviour, and also that a Sacrifice has been provided to meet our need, on the ground of which the grace of God brings salvation to all men.

From ver. 2, we gather that

SINS OF IGNORANCE

require an atonement, but even these were met by the blood of the Sin Offering. Hence, Peter addressed the Jews in Acts iii. 17, saying, " And now brethren, I wot that through *ignorance* ye did it, as did also your rulers." The Apostle Paul also rejoiced in the fact that the blood of Christ had put away those terrible sins which he had *ignorantly* committed when, blinded by unbelief, and urged on by Pharisaic bigotry and zeal, he had persecuted the saints of God. So, too, with ourselves, when we came to God as guilty but penitent sinners, we were assured by the Gospel that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, could, and did, cleanse us from all sin. And as we have made advance in the Divine life, reading carefully the revealed will of God in the Word, what discoveries we have made as to things done by us contrary to God's mind, as well as other things which we ought to have done left undone by us. These also require the atoning blood. This was the case with the returned remnant in Nehemiah's day. As they read, day by day, in the Book

of the law, they became conscious of their true state, by having brought to their knowledge so much which was condemned by that law that they were constrained to take the place of humiliation and confession before the Lord. The Psalmist also says, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from secret faults."

THE VARIOUS GRADES OF SACRIFICES

offered for the Sin Offering remind us of the fact, that, the *higher* the position of the offender, the greater the *gravity* of the sin, for where much is given, much is required. The Lord of all the earth expected far more from a highly privileged Israelite than from a less favoured Gentile. Jehovah looked for much more from a priest in Israel than from one of the common people. To him was entrusted the law of his God, and his lips were to keep knowledge, in order to be an instructor of others. His position being so much higher, his responsibility became so much greater, and the results of his sin would take a much wider range. Consequently, he had to bring a more *costly* sacrifice than those who were in a less favoured position.

If we view the sin of Moses at Horeb from a human standpoint, we might deem it a very small matter. It might seem a very trivial offence for Israel's leader to lose his temper, and to speak unadvisedly with his lips, when tested by man's standard, but not so with God, the Righteous Judge. It was the sin of one upon whom special honour had been conferred. The king in Jeshurun had rebelled against God, and failed to sanctify the Lord before Israel, it thus became a matter of so grave a nature, and was followed by such terrible results. Doubtless, many women in Israel had murmured against the actions of their brothers and relations in the wilderness, but let "Miriam" do so, and it was at once stamped with the mark of God's displeasure, and a special judgment came upon her, for she was the leader of Israel's song. We also read of the congregation "speaking against Moses and Aaron," but when "Korah" does so, the judgment of Heaven descended immediately upon him. He was a Levite, and God will be sanctified in all those that approach Him. This is a Divine principle still. But wherever God sees brokenness of heart and contrition of spirit for sin, the Word of God declares, that, upon the ground of the once-shed blood, "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

There are *three* things which are brought forward very prominently in the Sin Offering, viz., "the blood," "the fat," and "the flesh" of the animal. In vers. 5-7 we have

"THE BLOOD"

mentioned five times. Three different things were done with it. First, it was "sprinkled before the Lord," before the vail of the Sanctuary. This met the Divine claims, and secured their relationship with Jehovah their God. Upon that ground alone could it be possible for the thrice Holy One of Israel to dwell in the midst of a sinful people. Thus our blessed Lord has said, "I ascend unto My God and your God, to My Father and your Father." He has entered Heaven itself by His own blood, which is for ever under the eye of God, and which ever speaks on behalf of His redeemed family. The blood of the Mighty Sin Offering meets all, removes all, and secures all for the believer. The blood was also put upon "the horns of the altar of sweet incense," which was a symbol of our worship in the sanctuary. Upon the ground of that alone can we have access into the Divine presence, and solely upon the ground of this can God accept our praise and thanksgiving, which is often so meagre, and stained with sin. Then, the blood was "poured out at the bottom of the Brazen Altar," on the very ground where the offender stood beside his Sin Offering, and it is this which speaks peace to our conscience, and sets our hearts at rest.

"I stand upon His merit,
I know no other stand,
Not e'en when glory dwelleth,
In Immanuel's land."

In chapter iv. 8-10, we have

"THE FAT"

of the Sin Offering mentioned. This was all removed by the priest and consumed on the altar with the Burnt Offering, thus ascending unto the Lord as a "savour of rest." In this we have shadowed forth the Father's ineffable delight in His beloved Son, even when upon the Cross. As we view Christ as the Sin Offering being "made sin for us," then we see a thrice holy, *Sin-avenging God* hiding His face from Him because imputed sin was upon Him. But even in that death, God, as *Father*, beheld the voluntary surrender of Christ, and the perfect obedience of His dear Son, which brought unspeakable joy to His heart, and eternal glory to His Name. To this our Lord seems to refer when He said, "Therefore doth My

Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again." And again, "But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do." Never was God so abundantly glorified, or the Father so well pleased as when His obedient Son gave Himself up to death, even the death of the Cross.

"THE FLESH"

of the Sin Offering is referred to in vers. 11-12. The body of the animal whose blood was carried within the Sanctuary was *not* burnt upon the Altar, as was the case with the Burnt Offering, but was carried *without* the camp, and was there consumed with fire. In this we behold a type of that which Christ became for us. Where sin had placed the sinner grace brought the Saviour. His love brought Him from that scene of displayed Deity down to the dust of death at Calvary. His deathless love took Him outside the camp to the place of immeasurable distance, impenetrable darkness, and of awful death. In view of that Cross He agonised in prayer until blood mingled with His tears. In anticipation of that hour He cried, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me, nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done." It was the realisation of this that wrung from His innermost being that wail of woe, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" This was the bitterest ingredient in that cup of woe. Man had done his worst, and hell had accomplished its utmost against the Christ of God, but the sharpest pang was to be abandoned by His God. The pains of the Crucifixion, the forsaking of friends, the taunts of men, and the assaults of devils were as nothing in comparison with this. The heaviest blow which fell upon that Sinless Sufferer was the stroke of Divine Justice which descended in response to the cry, "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd." In that tremendous hour, and in that awful scene, Christ stood alone! Absolutely alone! Outside the camp, He was deserted by man and forsaken by God. The sun withheld its light, and the heavens afforded no assistance. In the Garden an Angel had been commissioned from the Throne to strengthen Him, but when upon the Cross, a sin-avenging God hid His face, angelic hosts stood back, and all creation was plunged into an awful silence, while the Incarnate Maker died for man, His creatures', sin. Being made sin for us the Holy One of God was cast out of the Divine Presence, and

laid in the lowest pit. As the orphan-cry of Immanuel was wrung from His breaking heart, the flood-gates of God's long pent-up wrath against sin were withdrawn, and all those angry waves and tempestuous billows went over Him, Who braved that unparalleled storm for us. Then it was that His feet sank in deep mire where there was no standing ; His heart melted in the midst of His bowels, while the hand of Justice was upon Him, and that sin-avenging sword entered into His sinless soul.

No finite mind can ever measure the *distance* of that far-off place which Christ took out of love to us. No creature gaze can ever penetrate that thick *darkness* which enveloped our divine Sin-bearer when thus made sin for us. No human or angelic mind will ever fully fathom the *depths* of suffering into which He sank, when He stooped to raise us up and bring us into the light and love of our Father's presence.

Where His love to us took Him, our love to Him should take us, viz., "outside the camp." But, when He went there it was to be absolutely *alone*, but as we go there it is *not* to be alone, but we go forth *to Him* without the camp bearing His reproach. Thus we learn in the Sin Offering, not only the death of Christ for us, but also

OUR DEATH WITH HIM.

This is what we profess by our baptism. In that simple yet significant act, we confess we are planted together in the likeness of His death, being buried with Him in the waters of baptism. We are henceforth to walk in newness of life. Judicially, we have died with Him ; practically, we are to *reckon* ourselves to have died unto sin and to be alive unto God in Christ Jesus. As such, we are exhorted to take up our cross, and to follow in His steps, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. The blood of the Sin Offering taken inside the veil and sprinkled before and upon the Throne has opened the Holiest to God's believing people, while, in the body of the Sin Offering carried outside the camp, we learn the disciples' place with regard to the religious world to-day. He is permitted to identify himself with his rejected Lord. A place of reproach here, but access to the Holiest there. May the language of our hearts ever be, "Where my Lord the King shall be, whether in death or in life, there shall also Thy servant be."

" Daily dying, daily living,
Knowing only heavenly mirth."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

C.A.E. asks for an explanation of the passage "He died unto sin."
Romans, chap. vi., v. 10.

The full passage reads thus, and it is by common agreement the accepted and better reading, "For in that He has died, he has died to sin once for all, but in that he lives, he lives unto God."

In this chapter the believer is judicially cleared from sin by the death of Christ; Who has died unto sin "once for all."

In chap. vii. the believer is delivered from the righteous requirements of the law (which is holy, just and good) becoming dead to it by the Body of Christ. This holy law could only ask for and exact that which man could never give or fulfil.

Therefore that which man as a sinner could not do in his sinful and fallen state; and in which the law could not help him nor give him power to do, "in that it was weak through the flesh, God has done, having sent His own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

This death is seen in Romans 6, v. 10 "once for all," and, in Hebrews, Christ has been manifested to "put away sin" by the sacrifice of Himself: through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ "once for all" and having offered "one sacrifice" for sins He sat down in perpetuity at the right hand of God (Heb. 9, v. 27, 10, v. 10).

Therefore He was manifested; He offered Himself; He died; "once for all," and will never more take up the question of sin which by the death of Christ is finally and eternally disposed of.

G.K.

"I can never be independent of man until I learn how dependent I am upon God."

* * * *

"Faith rests in God for the present, and waits on God for the future."

* * * *

"Do not scold people out of error, but love them into truth."

“NOT FAR OFF.”*

A REVIEW.

WE can very heartily recommend the above book to our readers. Its perusal will leave a deeper impression than ever that—

“’Tis not far off the hour
When Christ will claim His own,
We soon shall hear that voice of power,
The Lord Himself shall come.”

The writer shows how, from every point of view, the Coming of the Lord has indeed drawn nigh. The Mustard Tree of the Parable has grown to its full dimensions and shelters every kind of evil; the Leaven of false teaching is developed to the utmost; the times Christ predicted would come, have come; while the evil doctrines foreshadowed by St. Paul are around us on every hand. The fact is, every feature of the last days is present. All this is illustrated and enforced in the above book, by quotations from Scripture and current writings, in a most striking and convincing way.

R.E.

“Nothing short of Him Who is our First Cause will suffice for our last end.”

* * * *

“You may talk as you please, but the Scriptures make it clear that this dispensation is going to end with a smash.”

* * * *

“Moses was a trained warrior when first seen in public by his brethren (Acts vii. 22). He had to receive training as a shepherd before being permitted to “deliver them.”

David was a shepherd when anointed King. He had to receive training as a warrior before wearing the crown (Ps. lxxviii. 71).”

If any reader possesses a copy of “Some Thoughts on Prayer,” published by A. S. Rouse about seven years ago, or back numbers of “Simple Testimony” in which the articles originally appeared, will he or she kindly communicate with the Editor of this Magazine.

* To be obtained of the Author: Rev. R. Middleton, Norwich. Price 1s. 2d. Post Free.

The Faith and The Flock.

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SALVATION—A GIFT, OR REWARD?

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS TO MEN.

By WILLIAM TAYLOR.

IS Salvation a gift or a reward? That is the subject for our consideration to-day. Some of you are occasionally called to act as jurymen in a court of law. It may be the case is an important one. To the prisoner whose fate is in your hands, your decision is perhaps a matter of life and death. How do you act? You consider not only the speeches of counsel, pleading for or against the prisoner, and the Judge's summing up, but you weigh up the evidence still more carefully, and you return your verdict in accordance with that evidence.

Now the question which you have to weigh up in your minds to-day is more vital than any that can be settled in a court of law; it is a question of eternal life or death, and therefore merits your gravest consideration.

I might plead with you on behalf of the case which I present, but I forbear; please consider only the evidence that is put before you and form your conclusion on that alone.

On no subject has there been more controversy, or greater diversity of opinion, than on the question whether Salvation is bestowed by God apart from, or because of, human merit. Some stoutly maintain one thing and some another. Salvation by grace alone is not, for instance, as you know, one of the articles of the Roman Catholic Church, whose contention that the portal of the Church is the gateway to Heaven, and that good works are an essential preliminary to Salvation, is too well known to need elaboration. On this point, therefore, we will take only one quotation from a Roman Catholic writer to show how emphatic is the view entertained.

"The system of justification by Grace through Faith (he says) is radically and fundamentally monstrous, immoral, heretical and anti-Christian."

That is one side of the subject. On the other side, could anything be terser than the words of Cowper?

What is all righteousness that men devise?

What—but a sordid bargain for the skies?

But Christ as soon would abdicate His own

As stoop from heaven to sell the proud a throne.'

Nor is it Roman Catholics alone who object to the view that Salvation is "unmerited and unsought." Ask the Ritualist of another communion the meaning of his ritualistic practices, and you will find that they are not unconnected with a search after a salvation which he hopes some day to possess, but of which he is not yet in actual possession. Come nearer to our own circle. You will find among professing Christians in the Anglican and "Free" Churches many worthy people who have their doubts on the subject. While not holding with our Roman Catholic Friend, that the doctrine of "Salvation a gift" is "monstrous and immoral," they cannot—they dare not—they would think it presumptuous to say they are the recipients of Eternal Life, given outright by virtue of what Christ has done for the sinner. Then, again, there is another class of person, who is not fully persuaded in his own mind, who fears that the gift of Eternal Life is not eternal after all—a sort of week-end convert, who is quite sure of salvation on a Sunday, doubts whether he is saved on a Tuesday, and is quite sure he is not on a Thursday.

WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE ?

As I have said, you must weigh the evidence, and here it is in brief. What did the Lord Jesus come to teach? His great theme was that God is a Giver—the Giver of life; the Giver of sunshine and rain and food to the unjust, as well as to the just; the Giver of that greatest of all gifts—His well-beloved Son for the Salvation of men. Here is the evidence of "Salvation a Gift" from His own lips. You remember the incident of His interview at the well with the woman of Samaria? What does He say to her when she expresses surprise at His request for a drink of water?

"If thou knewest the GIFT OF GOD, and Who it is that saith to thee 'Give Me to drink,' thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water."

Does not that evidence appeal to you—the Living Water of Salvation offered as a free gift to a woman who certainly did not merit it? Or, recall His emphatic statement in the tenth of John, "I give unto them Eternal Life," and His prayer in the 17th of John, "Thou hast given Him power over all flesh that He should give Eternal Life to as many as Thou hast given Him." If further evidence is needed, take the words of Paul in Rom. vi. 23: "The Gift of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord"—emphasised in his Letter to the Ephesians, who were in no sort of doubt as to

their salvation: "For by grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the Gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast." Bear in mind also, in coming to your decision, these two other sayings of Paul:—

"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of Grace, but of debt; but to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 4-5).

"A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ . . . for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. ii. 16)

You will find no ambiguity in passages like those. No—the evidence is as clear as noonday that God will not barter His Salvation for some consideration received, any more than would Elisha on God's behalf, when, replying to Naaman's offer of a reward, he emphatically said "As the Lord liveth I will receive none." On the other hand, all this evidence goes to prove that God gives His Salvation as freely as He gives the air we breathe. Our concern is to take these statements at their face value, to interpret them as simply as Martin Luther did, when in a letter to one of his friends, he says:—

"Learn to despair of thyself, and to sing this hymn to the Lord: 'Lord Jesus, Thou art my righteousness, and I am Thy sin; Thou hast taken what was mine, Thou hast given me what was Thine. Thou didst become what Thou wert not, to make me what I was not.'"

WHO ARE THE RECIPIENTS?

The gift, then, is of grace. And who are the recipients? Worthy men, pure men, righteous men? On this point again there can be no conflict of trustworthy testimony. Did not Jesus say that He "came not to call the righteous but sinners"? Was not His Salvation bestowed on a thief hanging between life and death on the Cross, and on Magdalenes and Prodigals? Not to multiply quotations, let us take one only from Paul's testimony:—

"Scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

ASSURANCE OF ETERNAL LIFE.

The first point established, we will now consider whether a man can have absolute assurance of eternal life. Here again, the evidence is unmistakably clear. Do you suppose that the Jailer at Philippi had any doubt when, in reply to his question, "What must I do to be saved?" he was given the simple message, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved"? Surely not—

the record is that "he believed with all his house." Do you suppose that the disciples could have any hesitation in believing the word of Jesus when they heard Him say, "He that . . . believeth . . . hath everlasting life, shall never perish, is passed from death unto life"? Would they fear Divine judgment after Jesus had explicitly declared that "He that believeth is not condemned"? words which find an echo in Rom. viii. : "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." "We have," said Paul—and never did he more clearly interpret the intention of Christ—"we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins," and he rejoiced in the knowledge that He "hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love." Peter too, was conscious that he was "begotten again unto a living hope, to an inheritance undefiled, that fadeth not away"; whilst John assured those to whom he wrote that "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life . . . These things have I written unto you . . . that ye may know that ye have eternal life." Don't suppose that these are isolated passages taken out of their context, and therefore capable of another meaning than that which the verses imply. You will find nothing in the context which will justify you in coming to any conclusion other than that the words mean exactly what they say.

SOME OBJECTIONS EXAMINED.

"But," some may reply, "you are now putting before us evidence on one side of the question only. Are we not told that 'we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, when our destiny will be settled once for all'? Was not Paul afraid that he might in the end become a castaway? And how does your contention fit in with what James says, when he asks what it profits a man though he 'say he hath faith and have not works'? James even asks if faith can save him, and asserts that 'by works a man is justified and not by faith only.' What do you make of that?"

Let us look at these passages to see whether any of them throws doubt on the Gospel of "Salvation a Gift." To whom is the remark addressed that "we" must appear before the Judgment seat of Christ? To those only who are already saved, "to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus . . . saints . . . called to the fellowship of Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. i. 2-9). They are, he

says, building upon the foundation already laid—building up works, not for salvation, but for a reward which only those who are saved will receive. At the judgment seat, “the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.” “But,” you may answer, “suppose the man’s work does not stand the test? Surely he will be lost.” Not at all. All who appear before that tribunal are saved by grace, not because of their works, good, bad, or indifferent. “If any man’s work shall be burned he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire” (iii. 15). Could anything be clearer than that? Do not let us confuse the judgment of Christ acceptors with judgment of Christ rejectors. The judgment of believers (for reward) takes place at the judgment seat of Christ; the judgment of the unsaved at the great white throne. The judgment of believers is first in point of time, for “do you not know,” says Paul “that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?” (1 Cor. v. 2-3) and no one would suppose that the saints would be fitted to take part in those great judgment scenes until they had been judged themselves. But there is no scriptural warrant for the notion that our destiny is settled at the judgment seat—it is settled now, in “the accepted time and the day of salvation.” What will be decided then will be the extent of reward to be bestowed on the child of God for work done since his acceptance of Christ.

Now, let us look at difficulty No. 2—Paul’s fear that he may become “a castaway.” The expression occurs in 1 Cor. ix., where Paul is still speaking of the reward in view of the Judgment seat of Christ. In the arena, he says, the man who wins receives the prize; the man who loses receives none. The reward given to the successful runner is “a corruptible crown”; we who are Christ’s strive for an incorruptible crown. Some will obtain it, others will not. In other words, the work of some will be approved; the work of others disapproved. As for Paul, his aim was so to run that he should not become “a castaway”—that is, should not miss the prize on which he has set his heart. You will notice in the Revised version that the word “castaway” is more correctly translated “disapproved,” thus more clearly completing the simile of the runner who had failed to obtain the crown. But no one with any spiritual insight could suppose that Paul is in doubt as to his salvation. To imagine that Paul was running the race to obtain Eternal Life is to

make nonsense of the analogy, and to contradict all that he had taught. The man in the arena ran not, of course, to obtain life—if he was not a living man, how could he run? So in the case of Paul, he ran to obtain the incorruptible crown because he was already in possession of “the gift of God . . . Eternal Life.”

As for difficulty No. 3, the solution is so obvious that we may dismiss it in a few words. Suppose a man tells you he is saved, that he has “faith.” He has been a drunkard, and is still a drunkard, a thief, and persists in his thieving; a liar, and in spite of the change which he says has taken place, you cannot trust his word. Of course, you agree with James that such a faith cannot save a man. It is a spurious substitute for faith, and James argues that there cannot be justification for a man if he does not possess the real thing. Every sensible man believes that. And how quick the world is to put to the proof the man who professes to be saved. There was an illustration of this the other day. A rumour got about that P—— was “converted.” Shortly afterwards, one of P——’s workmates came to ask him if the news was true. He said it was. “Can’t you see for yourself? Wasn’t I a drunkard? Now I am a sober man. Wasn’t I in rags? Now I have a good suit of clothes.” His mate was thankful to hear it. “No doubt,” he said, “you will want to do the thing that is right now.” “True enough,” said P—— “Then,” his mate added, “you will want to repay me that sovereign I lent you some time ago!” “Well,” replied P——, “it is like this, you see: The Lord has pardoned all my transgressions, and I look upon that as one of them.” The man who lent the money took a different view, and I think you will all agree that he was justified in doubting the reality of P’s “conversion” until the money had been repaid. Salvation changes a man’s ideals, and the world expects to see the change. If a man is truly born again, he is a new creature—old things are passed away, all things are become new. You don’t judge a man by what he says he is, but by what he does. “He that saith ‘I know Him’ and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him.” That is the plain truth of the matter. If a man has faith in Christ,

“Works will follow spontaneous,
Even as day does the sun, for Christian works are no more than
Animate Love and Faith, as flowers are the animate springtide.”

Works then are the outward and visible sign of a living faith in the soul, justifying to the world the claim that a man is born of

God. But let us put things in their proper order—first, Life, then works; Eternal Life as a gift; works the outcome of Life. “Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness”—he was justified by faith. The proof of his faith was that he “offered Isaac on the altar”—and he was justified by works (James ii. 21-3). Righteousness was not imputed to him because of the works, but because of his faith. His faith brought life to the soul; his works the approval of God and a rich reward. If there are no works there is manifestly no faith, therefore, a man’s justification must necessarily be through his works. But let us be very clear on this point—we do not work to obtain life, but because we have it. True, we work out our salvation, but we know to begin with it is “our own” (Phil. ii. 12); and if we do it “with fear and trembling” we are conscious that God is working in us “to will and to do of His good pleasure.” And it is with no fear of judgment to come that we work it out. “Fear,” to quote good old Tegner again, “is the virtue of slaves; but the heart that loveth is willing.” Or, as another puts it:—

“The free-born Christian has no chains to prove,
Or, if a chain, the golden one of Love.
No fear attends to quench his glowing fires,
What fear he feels his gratitude inspires.

* * * * *

Thought, word and deed his liberty evince,
His freedom is the freedom of a prince.”

WHAT IS THE VERDICT ?

Now that you have heard the evidence, nothing remains but that you should return your verdict. Give it honestly and fearlessly. Act as promptly as the jury men did in a case which was recently tried in an Assize Court. The hearing occupied the attention of the jury for a week, but so clear was the evidence that they gave their decision in a few moments. If you find—and surely you can come to no other conclusion—that the evidence in favour of “Salvation a Gift” is conclusive and unimpeachable, say so. Your verdict, however, imposes on you a great responsibility. Either you must accept this great gift of Eternal Life, or reject it, to your soul’s eternal ruin. If you return a verdict in favour of “Salvation a reward” you must do so in face of clearest evidence to the contrary, and to earn that reward you impose upon yourself a task which you will one day discover to your cost to have been too great for mortal man.

THE ETERNAL CHRIST OF SCRIPTURE.

By WILLIAM LUFF.

II.

The Eternal Christ of Scripture is spoken of as distinct from ordinary men both in His Person and work.

1. "There is no man that sinneth not" (1 Kings viii. 46).
"In Him is no sin" (1 John iii. 5).
2. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*." (John i. 18).
3. "And he saw that *there was* no man, and wondered that *there was* no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him" (Isa. lix. 16).
"He poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. liii. 12).
4. "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *Him*" (Matt. xi. 27).
5. "All men have come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 25).
Yet Christ said: "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do" (John xvii. 4).
6. "And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. . . .
And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne" (Rev. v. 3-7).

The Eternal Christ of Scripture is spoken of as co-ordinate with the Father.

1. HATED with the Father: "He that hateth Me, hateth my Father also" (John xv. 23).

2. KNOWN with the Father : " And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent " (John xvii. 3).
 " Then said they unto Him, Where is Thy Father ? Jesus answered, Ye neither know Me, nor My Father : if ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also " (John viii. 19).
 " These things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me " (John xvi. 3).
 " If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also : and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him. Philip saith unto Him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip ? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father ; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father ? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me ? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself : but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. Believe Me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in Me : or else believe Me for the very works' sake " (John xiv. 7-11).
3. BELIEVED IN with the Father : " Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me " (John xii. 44).
 " Ye believe in God : believe also in Me " (John xiv. 1).
4. SEEN with the Father : " And he that seeth Me seeth Him that sent Me " (John xii. 45).
 " Now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father " (John xv. 24).
5. HONOURED with the Father : " That all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him " (John v. 23).
6. SALVATION ascribed to both : " And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb " (Rev vii. 10).
7. ENTHRONED together, for we read of " the throne of God and of the Lamb " (Rev. xxii. 1).

8. WORSHIP associated with both: "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever" (Rev. v. 13).
"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it" (Rev. xxi. 22).
9. LIGHT associated with both, for "the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev. xxi. 23).
10. THE CHURCH is in both. "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians *which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Thess. i. 1).
11. GRACE is from both. "Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. i. 2).
"To Timothy, *my* dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord" (2 Tim. i. 2).
12. FELLOWSHIP is with both. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ" (1 John i. 3).
13. THE COMING is associated with both, for we are "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit. ii. 13).

The Eternal Christ of Scripture is spoken of as equal with God the Father.

1. In life. "For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself" (John v. 26).
2. In knowledge. "As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father" (John x. 15).
3. In quickening power. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them*; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will" (John v. 21).
4. In possessions. "All things that the Father hath are Mine" (John xvi. 15). "All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine" (xvii. 10).

The Eternal Christ of Scripture receives the same titles as the Father.

1. The Everlasting Father. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his

shoulder : and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace " (Isa. ix. 6).

2. The I am. " And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM : and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you " (Ex. iii. 14).
Jesus Christ said, " Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was I am " (John viii. 58).
3. The Lord. " Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The same word as is used in ver. 9, " And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them : and they were sore afraid " ; and ver. 23 : " As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord " (Luke ii. 11).

The same Scriptures apply to the Eternal Christ and the Eternal God.

1. " I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear " (Isa. xlv. 23).
" At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow " (Phil. ii. 10).
2. " O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known *me*. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off " (Ps. cxxxix. 2).
" And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts ? " (Matt. ix. 4).
3. " And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind : for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts " (1 Chron. xxviii. 9).
" All the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts : and I will give unto every one of you according to your works " (Rev. ii. 23).
4. " Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called ; I *am* he ; I *am* the first, I also *am* the last " (Isa. xlvi. 12).
" And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not ; I am the first and the last " (Rev. i. 17).

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY : SINNER, SAINT AND SERVANT.

By R. E.

"Less than the least of all Saints."

"I am crucified with Christ ; nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me " (Gal. ii. 21).

A CRITIC in reviewing a recent Biography said, " We want to know, not what a man did, but what he was." The importance of this can scarcely be questioned. Before therefore proceeding to speak of the Apostle Paul's service, it may be fitting to see what effect the truths he proclaimed had first of all upon himself. He was not one of those preachers who take shelter under the aphorism, " Do as I say, but not as I do." On the contrary, his watchword ever was, " Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ."

With regard to certain characteristics, it is a little difficult to determine whether they belong to him as a saint, as a man, or as a servant. Suffering, for instance, may be most intimately connected with saintship, yet a good deal of the Apostle's suffering arose directly out of his service. While it also disclosed the kind of man he was. We are now, however, more directly concerned with his saintship. The other aspects will be treated later.

We may well test an individual's saintship by the way he bears himself under suffering. And as one of the first things said about St. Paul was, " I will shew him how great things he must *suffer* for My Name's sake," we will give this aspect our first consideration.

Was Paul to suffer because he had caused suffering to so many others ? In God's governmental ways there may have been a very close connection ; and the matter is worth pondering. " Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap " is universally true both of saint and sinner, though time and manner in relation to it may differ. With the child of God it may be turned to good account. Through our very failures and sins the very highest and best may be reached, by the grace of God. This is no argument for doing evil that good may come. But St. Paul could regard his sufferings from a higher standpoint. As he says in writing to the Colossians, " Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that

which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body's sake, which is the Church." (Col. i. 24). He suffered on behalf of the Church he had once persecuted.

The place which suffering has in the present economy is remarkable. The question is so often asked, Why should there be any suffering at all? Could not God have prevented it? Of course He could, but the very fact that He did not, proves that good is to come of it, and our wisdom is to seek the benefit that may accrue, and not to repine. Are not our Lord's words with regard to Saul, "I will shew him how great things he must *suffer*," in keeping with this? Not "how great things he must do," as we should have thought. It surely teaches us that suffering is higher than service. Higher because it demands higher qualities, and not only demands, but produces them.

What were those sufferings to which Christ referred? They included *physical* sufferings. The Apostle was stoned, beaten, imprisoned. On the occasion of the stoning at Lystra, the attack was so severe that they "drew him out of the city supposing he had been dead." Apparently this was a solitary instance (though never likely to be forgotten) as in 2 Cor. xi. we have the record, "Once was I stoned." At Philippi he was beaten. To this he refers in writing to his beloved converts at Thessalonica, when he says, "We were shamefully entreated at Philippi." Where also, as we know, he was imprisoned. Yet how completely he rose above all this; his only anxiety seeming to be lest Satan should use it to distress and discourage those who had recently turned to Christ. "That no man should be moved by these afflictions," he writes, "for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto" (1 Thess. ii. 2; and iii. 3). And again, he says, in writing to the Corinthians, "*For we would not brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead; Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in Whom we trust that He will yet deliver us*" (2 Cor. i. 8-10). Whatever happened to Paul, he knew it was God's work, and he trusted, not in himself, but in God Who raiseth the dead. And it was at this very time God was using him so mightily (Acts xix. 8-20).

Far from complaining of his lot, he sees in all these experiences only a more urgent reason for trusting God, and thus obtaining a deeper experience of His delivering power and mercy. Another experience these sufferings gave him: "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." And this was not only the Apostle's gain, but it brought consolation and salvation to the saints, enabling them, through his example, to bear the same sufferings.

"The sentence (or answer) of death in ourselves." Had St. Paul been trusting in his own powers, or expecting a good time with plenty of *éclat*, these afflictions would have disconcerted him; but he had the answer of death. That is, a man who anticipates death, having fully made up his mind that he may be called to lay down his life, considers any injury short of this as something quite endurable. An Army veteran in America was introduced to an audience as having lost two arms and one leg in the war. When he rose to speak, he said, "He had not lost anything. Before the war began he gave himself entirely to his country, so that all he had left at the end was all clear gain." This illustration may help us to understand the valuable section of autobiography we have in the following words: "*We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live, are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.*" He viewed himself as delivered unto death, and in spite of all the pressure that came upon him—"Troubled on every side"; "Perplexed"; "Persecuted"; "Cast down"; he is enabled to regard it all as a "light affliction which is but for a moment," and which was working out for him "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Is not this the very essence of saintship, that the life of Jesus should be manifest in our mortal body?

St. Paul returns again to his sufferings in chap. xi. What a catalogue he there gives. "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils

in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren ; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." And then, as if all this had not been enough : " Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." Where else shall we look for such a piece of autobiography ? It seems simply miraculous that one single lifetime could comprehend so many vicissitudes, and one single man could bear them. Men had died under these beatings. Paul endured eight ordeals of this kind ; and, in addition, stoning, shipwreck, toilsome and dangerous marches, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness. Are we to regard him as something superhuman ? This would be a mistake. If we did so, we should suppose him to be something different to what he was ; and we should, on the other hand, miss the lesson there is in it for ourselves. St. Paul was liable to everything to which we are subject ; and the expression, " In weariness and painfulness," tells us this. He wore no armour of proof that made him impervious to all assault ; no charm that rendered him insensible to pain. What, then, sustained him ? How was he enabled to endure so much ? Why was he never discomfited ? It was all the result of the grace given to him. This is the explanation ; and has it not deep instruction for us ? For it means, that, what enabled Paul to endure, is at our disposal likewise. Thus, he writes to fellow believers in this very same epistle in an earlier chapter, " God is able to make all grace abound toward you ; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." Let us remember, then, the grace that made Paul what he was, and not forget that the same grace is at our disposal.

The " thorn in the flesh " may surely be regarded as some form of physical suffering or weakness. What it was precisely is not disclosed, but the Apostle likens it to being impaled on a stake ; and not only so, but Satan evidently used it as an avenue of attack.

It is usually taken to be an affection of the eyes. And this supposition finds support from such references as are contained in Gal. iv. 13-15, and vi. 11. In the former passage he refers to their willingness to have plucked out their own eyes and have given them to him ; while the latter passage should read, " Ye see in

what large letters I have written unto you ” ; both passages seeming to indicate that his eyesight was defective. This, of course may have been the case. But even so, it does not prove that the “ thorn in the flesh ” was an affection of the eyes ; and we cannot forbear giving another view. Sir R. Anderson, in his recent book, *The Lord from Heaven*, connects the “ thorn in the flesh ” with the stoning at Lystra. One important link in the argument is that the “ thorn in the flesh ” is distinctly associated with the revelations spoken of just before (2 Cor. xii.) and those revelations synchronise with the Lystra incident. “ One more clue is needed to guide us to a conclusion here. In Corinth his speech was deemed “ contemptible,” whereas in his earlier ministry he had ranked as “ the chief speaker ” . . . “ What then, is the explanation of the seeming paradox ? How natural that the stoning should have caused some facial paralysis, or some still more distressing affection which destroyed all control of his features, and made him an object of derision to the hostile or ill-conditioned members of every audience he addressed.” A footnote adds : “ It is said that such an affliction would affect the sufferer in different degrees at different times. Bloomfield cites authorities for the conjecture that the trouble was ‘ a paralytic and hypochondriac affection which occasioned a distortion of countenance and other distressing effects.’ ”

It might be thought that this devoted servant had enough to suffer already, but the accumulated load only brought him fuller tokens of that grace which was able to support him under every burden, and instead of being crushed, we hear him saying, “ *Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*”

What a saint ! If he was stoned—receiving deadly missiles in return for his message of love and goodwill, his poor body battered, when he had sought only to bring balm to others’ wounds—he still continued to proclaim mercy full and free ; and he thought not of himself, but how it might affect his spiritual children ; if he had to despair even of life, he only trusted the more in God Who raiseth the dead ; and he experienced the consolation of Christ, which proved sweeter than his afflictions were painful ; while he rejoiced in the fact that others received gain. He accepted being delivered up to death—that is, he was prepared for it and faced it almost daily—that the life of Jesus might be made the more manifest ;

and could regard it as working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory ; while the experience he had of the grace of Christ was so full and so sufficient, that, could he have had the offer of parting with the " thorn " and being deprived of the grace, he would not have hesitated for a moment, but would have said, " Let me keep the ' thorn ' and retain the grace."

(To be continued).

" BEGINNINGS."

IV. THE FIRST CITY.

By W. W. FEREDAY

FROM a garden to a city was a great stride ; indeed it marked a revolution in human affairs. It is surely significant that this development took place in connection with the line of Cain. The steps which led up to it are of the deepest interest. They are recorded in Gen. iv.

When Cain departed from the presence of the Lord after the murder of Abel his brother, he fixed his home in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. Nod means " vagabond," and it exactly described Cain's new circumstances. He is the standing type of Israel (but not of Israel only)—responsible before God for the blood of the Lord Jesus ; and, in consequence, fugitives and vagabonds in a scene which otherwise would be filled with blessing for them. In his place of banishment Cain begat a son, to whom he gave the name of Enoch, which means " dedicated." What was intended by this soon became apparent, for the father presently built a city, and called it after his son. Enoch was thus dedicated to the world, with his name stamped indelibly upon this doomed scene by his father's building operations. Turning over just one page of our Bible we meet with another Enoch, this time in the line of Seth, and of him we read, " he was not ; for God took him " (Gen. v. 24). The one man was thus dedicated to the world, and the other to God. The latter suitably has heaven as his abiding portion.

Immediately after the notice of the world's first city we have recorded the rise of men's varied industries. Jabal was the father of such as dwell in tents and keep cattle ; Jubal of those who

handle the harp and organ, and Tubal-cain was the first worker in brass and iron. It would seem as if Cain's family, having lost God, would now get the utmost out of the present world. The city Enoch thus soon resounded with the strains of music, and with the industrious clang of the smith. Comforts and accomplishments gave character to it. It became, as men would say, the centre of light and learning; and the great commercial depot of the human family. But God had no place there; it was a city of which *He* was *not* the builder and maker.

Not only did business and pleasure mark Cain's family and city, far graver things soon manifested themselves. Thus we have Lamech taking to himself two wives; then, we hear him telling them in poetic language how he had slain someone. Corruption and violence—the two well-known forms of human evil (Gen. vi. 11).

The whole story of man's cities is told out in these brief sketches from the pen of the Spirit of God. Vast concentrations of men, whatever the conveniences and comforts connected with them, are necessarily sinks of evil, man being a fallen creature. The excellent and the noble that earth's cities contain are hopelessly overshadowed by the appalling evil which gives character to the whole. All the streams of human iniquity meet in one foul pool in the city of man's designing, and the larger the city the fouler the pool.

The old Mosaic record in Gen. iv. is of the greatest possible value as shewing us the beginning of "the world" as we now know it. Its religious, social and commercial history are all foreshadowed in the few incidents divinely written in this chapter. It is no marvel that the apostle tells us: "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John ii. 16).

Yet God has from the outset entertained the thought of a city for man. Out of harmony with the course of things in Adam's world, Abraham and others looked for the city of which the architect and builder is God. Not here, but above, is that city found—"the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. xi. 10, xii. 22). There holiness and peace prevail; there too will be realised that fellowship which a city may suggest—all the fruit of redeeming love. To that sacred centre God will shortly bring the willing feet of all His beloved people. Earth's cities, with all their monuments

of human pride will come to nought when God arises to "shake terribly the earth"; God's city will abide for ever. Happy the man who has part therein!

Cain's line breaks off abruptly with Tubal-cain. This name means "flowing from Cain." Seven generations having run their course we thus come upon another Cain. The Spirit of God adds no more; a certain moral stamp marks the whole of that evil line.

Gen. iv. closes with another son born to Adam. His wife called his name Seth ("appointed"), saying, "God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." Seth thus took the place of the dead one, and so becomes the type of Christ risen. In Him all blessing is centred for those who believe in His name, and in Him a new resurrection world of light and love is opened up for those whom grace calls and separates from man's doomed scene. May we in spirit live and move there even while walking here.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS

GIVEN AT BOSCOMBE, ON 5th MARCH, 1912.

By R. ELLIOTT.

2 CORINTHIANS, CHAP. III., 6 TO IV. 6.

GOD AS CREATOR, LAWGIVER AND SAVIOUR.

WE have been hearing about God. As you very well know, in Luke xv. we really have the Father, Son and Holy Spirit brought before us in the activities of Divine Grace, and I want to continue that subject for a little while and speak to you further about God.

One might ask the question, "How can a creature do it? Is it not presumption?" Well, God has graciously given us the material, and in this passage that I have read you have God presented in three ways. You have Him first of all in connection with Creation—"God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness." Then you have Him in connection with Law: remember it spoke of the ministration of death—and then you have Him in connection with Grace—"The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Now, dear friends, we need to know God in those three ways, and we are losers if we come short in regard to either. I cannot gain a full knowledge of God, it is true, from Creation, and I cannot gain a full knowledge of God from Sinai, but I can learn something of God from both, but I must come to the last to get a full knowledge of Him, because there I reach the glory—all that God is in His nature—the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

What do I learn first of all of God in connection with Creation? I wish we would sometimes remind ourselves that we are living in God's world. I speak now, of course, of the earth. It is *God's* earth. People sometimes travel hundreds of miles to see human masterpieces—some picture that the artist has put his whole soul into. I say I can any day turn, without travelling a hundred miles, and see that into which God has put Himself—a blade of grass, the song of a bird, the very light that enables me to see anything. How often we forget that, do we not? Man has covered this earth with so much of his own handiwork that it sometimes seems to blot out of our recollection that we stand upon the earth that God Himself has made; and what a wonderful, perfect, complete creation it is, so far as it goes.

Now, here it mentions God in connection with Light. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness." As we all know, that was the first thing that God did in connection with bringing this material universe into order as the residence of man. Darkness was upon the face of the deep, and this great, majestic and inscrutable, almighty Being we call by the name of God had only to say, "Let there be light," and there was light. The value of knowing God in this connection is that we get an idea of God's greatness, and that is good for us. Man is apt to get so occupied with himself that he begins to think that he is great, but when the Psalmist beholds the Works of God in creation he breaks out with the exclamation, "O Lord my God, Thou art very great." Are we in the habit of doing that, of contemplating God in His Works and then exclaiming as the Psalmist did, "Thou art very great"? I believe, dear friends, if we were to make this a practice we should sometimes address God a little differently in our prayers. Have you ever noticed how the translators of our Bible address King James in the preface? "Most High and Mighty Prince James," and then his titles are enumerated. We sometimes rush into the

presence of God without thinking of what is due to Him, of His titles and His greatness ; and we rush out of His presence sometimes quite as hurriedly. Perhaps converse with Nature in connection with the One who brought all these things into existence would help us in that respect.

“ God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts.” Connecting God as Creator with the God of Grace, and so insisting upon this fact, that there is only one God. The marginal reading is even stronger. In the margin it reads: “ God who caused the light to shine out of darkness is *He* Who hath shined in our hearts.”

I might turn you to several Scriptures in support of the contention that we need to think of God in connection with His works, but time is very brief. You will, for instance, remember how God, in dealing with Job, called Job's attention to the works of Nature. His first question to Job was, “ Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth ? ” You are making such a noise, you are finding fault with the Almighty, you are questioning His dealings with you, where were you when God laid the foundations of the earth ? And what is the end of this Divine argument with Job ? Job says, “ I am vile.” He learns his nothingness. Oh, let us go out sometimes, dear friends, and look up at the starry heavens and think of God ; and say to ourselves, That is the God Who made me, and that is the God with whom I have to do.

I pass on to speak of God in connection with Law ; and we are justified in speaking of God in these three connections because, as you remember, the Apostle Paul in Romans v. makes this division of time. One distinct period of time is from Adam to Moses—in other words, from the Creation to the giving of the Law. The giving of the Law was a distinct intervention on God's part in connection with man. It was a wonderful moment when God said, “ Let us make man in our image ”—a consultation about the creation of man. It was not a less wonderful moment when God comes into His own world and tells man what he expects of him.

And *how* does God come ? Why, if you notice, God comes in a way to terrify man, to fill him with fear. Now, that was not the case in connection with Adam. Adam appears to have been—if one may put it in that way—Adam appears to have been on the

most familiar terms with God. There was only one command, and we read, they "heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." But there is nothing of that kind when you come to Sinai. The mountain was altogether on a smoke when God came down. There was a flame of fire, there were the thunderings and lightnings, there was the trumpet waxing louder and louder, until Moses himself said, "I exceedingly fear and quake."

Do we need anything of that sort? I believe we do. The Apostle Paul, in the very next chapter to the one we have read, says, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord." Do we know much about the terror of the Lord in these days? Not very much. Why? Because these days are lawless days. Man thinks that he can do what he pleases, and he disregards God, because he has never stood in spirit at the foot of Mount Sinai and seen the flame, and seen that God is a consuming fire, and heard "the sound of the trumpet and the voice of words, which voice they that heard entreated that it should not be spoken to them any more." The Apostle Paul had entered into an experience of that kind on the road to Damascus. When the light shone upon him he fell to the ground. There was more than that, it is true, but Paul had to be utterly broken down, and I believe that this is the effect that God desires with us.

Now turn to Exodus xx. Our brother has been—and rightly—speaking to us about the father greeting the returning son with kisses (Luke xv.); but I will tell you, dear friends, what will make us appreciate the kissing. First of all to hear in our soul the reverberations of Sinai; to hear what God's righteous demands are upon us, and to find out that we cannot meet them, and then to go on to discover the provision for us in the gospel.

What was the reason of God coming to the people of Israel in this fashion? You will perhaps have asked, Why did God come in this particular form, why was God so terrible? In Exodus xx. ver. 19 the people say to Moses, "Speak thou with us and we will hear, but let not God speak with us lest we die." Have we ever realised that we have to do with this God? Look at the effect of the law upon the people. What does Moses say? "Fear not"—because God had no intention of doing them the slightest harm even when He gives His law—"Fear not for God is come to prove

you, and that His fear may be before your faces that ye sin not." His *fear*: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." This is why God came to them as He did. We may be quite sure the Government of God is not something we can trifle with. God comes here with His demands, He comes in His judicial character, and He says to His people, "That is what I expect you to be." Could they answer to God's demands? No! And is this the last word on God's part? Blessed be His Name, it is not.

And that brings me to the third thing that I just want to say a word or two about—"The Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." How different that is. In 2 Cor. iii. it speaks of the ministration of death written and engraven in stones. What a difference between stones and a face. When God set forth His demands upon man, He wrote them upon stone. When God wants us to know Him; to know Him in all that He is, to know all that He is pleased to be to us now, He sets Himself forth in a face. The face of Jesus Christ.

Dear friends, you have got to look into a face now. You have got to see your God in a face. Have you seen Him? Have you seen Him in the face of Jesus Christ? You say, "I like to go into the fields: to look up at the stars." But you will never discover your God, in all his fulness, there. You will see His greatness, His wisdom, His skill, but you won't really get to know Him completely. You may say, "Sometimes I think of God's requirements of me, of His demands as a Law Giver." Yes, but that does not reveal what God can be to you. That only tells us what He once expected His people to be to Him.

But in the face of Jesus Christ I learn two things. I learn that in Jesus Christ I have found One Who has met every demand of God that I could not meet. That He is One Who came forth to satisfy God and to give God all that He needed and to meet every demand, and to meet it for me. May I ask you, have you really seen Christ in that way?

Now it is the ministration of righteousness, not the ministration of death. That is, God is ministering righteousness to us through the Lord Jesus Christ, and I have to do with One now whose glory I see in the face of Jesus Christ.

But I see that glory vindicated by Him, I see that glory maintained by Him, maintained by Him on my behalf. I see that glory

at the Cross, Christ stepping into my place and bearing the curse for me, and do not I learn God there?

“Inscribed upon the Cross we see,
In shining letters ‘God is love.’
The Lamb who took our sins away
Has brought us mercy from above.”

In the Old Testament Christ was ever in the background, because every type and shadow spoke of One who would come and meet every demand—and that is why Christ is spoken of as the Spirit of Scripture.

But what else do I learn of God as I look into the face of Jesus Christ? *I learn all that God can be to me now.* I learn what has been brought before us from Luke xv. I learn that God can be to me everything that His heart delights to be because of what Christ has been to Him.

Is it not wonderful, beloved friends? I can think, first of all, of what Christ has been to Him in death upon the Cross when He offered Himself up, and I can say, That is the measure of what God can be to me. The parable in Luke xv. is really only one parable. It is sometimes said there is not any atonement in the parable of the Prodigal Son. But you have got it in the first part—the Shepherd going out to seek the lost sheep—Christ coming down to die. In the second part, you have the Holy Spirit, and in the third part you have the two combined; and the reason the Father—a picture of God, of course—can receive the returning prodigal in such a lavish way is because of what He has found in the death of Christ Who came to seek the lost.

We see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And what are we to understand by the Glory of God? All that God is, His righteousness, His justice, His grace, His love, I learn them all in that Face. Think of it. And whose face? An Angel’s face? No! Moses’ face? No! I could not look upon Moses’ face because he comes with demands which I could never meet—but the face of Jesus Christ—One Who has met every demand and now reveals the heart of God.

May we know what it is, not only to look upon the face of Nature, not only to think of the Law and God’s demands, but may you and I know what it is to look upon the face of Jesus Christ

and then there is perfect liberty. When God gave the Law it meant bondage because there was no power in that Law to enable the people to conform to its demand.

Some Christians say, "I do not feel that I have got the strength to be a Christian. I have not the ability to be what God wants me to be." But it does not require any ability or strength to look, to behold; and that is the point here. "We all, with open face *beholding* as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

I would like someone here to-night to carry away that thought. It is not a question of your ability now, it is not a question of what you have got to do, you simply have to look upon One Who has done all—done it all so that God has been glorified—simply to behold the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ; and what is the effect? We are changed. Changed by beholding. Have you not often *tried* to be different? Have you not said to yourself, "I wish I were different to what I am"? Perhaps you have been looking in the wrong direction. You have been looking at yourself. God does not say that you will be changed if you look at yourself. But you will be changed if you look at Christ.

Gaze there, dear friends. Look there as often as you like. As Murray McCheyne used to say, "For every look you take of yourself take a hundred looks at Christ." You will find there all you want for time and eternity.

THE CENTRAL AMERICAN MISSION.

(The following extract from a letter received from St. Louis gives information of the above work, and we shall be glad if any of our readers feel led to send help. The Secretary is Mr. A. C. Gaebelein, 80, Second Street, New York City, U.S.A.)

Extract from letter :—

"The paper which comes to us so regularly from your press, and which brings the message so unfailingly to the hearts of its readers, has given me courage to write you in behalf of another field of the Lord's work, in the hope that it may interest you and the readers of *The Faith and the Flock*. I speak of THE CENTRAL AMERICAN MISSION, organised some years ago, under the direction of our brother, C. I. Scofield.

The missionaries have struggled a long time against the prejudices of Popery, and the terrible superstitions encouraged by the priests. The Lord has blessed their efforts. In each case the Mission House has become the centre of an earnest group of converts. But the work has grown beyond the means of those who have faithfully contributed to the support of the mission.

" In Guatemala City, for instance, the quarters for the schooling of scores of children are so inadequate that the latter are exposed to the inclemencies of the weather at all seasons. The need of medical equipment, especially of a hospital, is particularly great. The ignorance and degradation of the people is appalling. Home life is unknown. Roman Catholicism has given them no standards of morality, has inculcated no sense of the sacredness of the home. The missionaries are confronted with the most primitive problems of civilisation.

" I am enclosing the last Bulletin published by the Organisation, from which you can gather enough to realise how great is the need in each of the five Republics. The greatest work has been accomplished in Guatemala, where an actual hold upon the people has been gained, at least on the Spanish speaking peoples. There are a million native Indians, speaking some nineteen dialects of their own language, which have never been mastered by any white person. One or two Indians, capable of understanding a few Spanish phrases, heard the gospel and were saved. But what a very small beginning !

" Can you not mention the good work done for Him, Who has redeemed us, and give those who read your paper the opportunity of aiding the faithful missionaries by prayer and by contributions to the funds ? It is no extravagant organisation with highly salaried secretaries and expensive offices. Every penny contributed goes directly to the field where it supports the actual workers."

God never permits " poor " men to do His work. This statement may startle some : yet it is true.

He can use men who are poor as to property, position, wealth, education, or personal qualities, but it is only those who are " rich in faith " (Jas. ii. 5) that He considers fit for His service.

Anyone " rich in faith " is never " poor."

A PRAYER FOR THE PRESENT TIME.

O GOD our Father, the only living and true God, Who hast given us the knowledge of Thyself, through Jesus Christ our Lord, we humbly beseech Thee to hear our prayer; that as Thou hast told us in Thy Word to wait for Thy Son from heaven, and promised that He should appear the second time unto salvation, setting before us the hope of being caught up to meet Him in the air, so Thou wouldest grant to us the fulfilment of the same in this our time. Thy Church has tarried long; men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth, and all creation sighs to be renewed. Hear us, then, we beseech Thee: And inasmuch as it has pleased Thee in these last days to awaken afresh the desire for our Lord's return, so Thou wouldest speedily grant the accomplishment of these expectations; for Thine own glory, that Thy will may be done on earth as it is in Heaven. O bid the One Thou hast made strong for Thyself rise from off Thy throne, and take to Himself the Church He loves; let His enemies be made His footstool; and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of Thy Christ. Speak the mighty word that shall bring all Thy promises to pass; that which Thou hast promised by the mouth of all Thy holy prophets since the world began, is ever present to our thoughts; the promise left us by our Lord, "In My Father's house are many mansions I will come again and receive you unto Myself" is ever upon our hearts; and remembering that Thy word exhorts us to say "Come," we do, with hearts and voices blended, re-echo that cry, which has already gone up from the Spirit and the Bride, and make it our own, "Amen, Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Day by day do Thou help us to live in expectation of its fulfilment; and to Father, Son and Holy Ghost—one God—we would ascribe all praise and adoration; dominion and glory, now and ever, Amen.

Ten lepers prayed with "loud" voices feeling their need of mercy. Only *one* out of that number "glorified God with a loud voice" for the answer to his prayer.

* * * *

We require the "whole armour of God" to overcome "sons of Belial" (2 Sam. xxviii. 6-7) as well as the devil (Eph. vi. 2).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Ques. W.B. asks some questions about the Kingdom :
(1) *What is the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven ? Are they the same ?*

Ans. : They are the same *Kingdom*. But the first expression denotes its origin and character, and distinguishes it from the Kingdoms established by man. The second expression is in contrast to *earth*, and denotes that heaven is the seat of authority and administration. The heavens do rule, was a truth that even Nebuchadnezzar had to learn.

As to what the Kingdom is, its main idea is that of *power*. Christ said, "There be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the Kingdom of God come with *power*." St. Paul wrote : "The Kingdom of God is not in word but in *power*." If we look at earthly kingdoms we can learn this. A kingdom is an ordered state where there is rule and where laws are enforced ; where foes within and without can be repressed or repelled. For this, the one thing needful is power. Our Lord, in His ministry on earth, introduced the Kingdom. It consisted in the exercise of power and authority committed to Him by God for the overthrow of every evil that afflicted man (Luke ix. 43 ; Acts x. 38). This was manifest to everybody. At the present time, the Kingdom is in *mystery*. There is not that manifest power nor is there the presence of the King. But the thought of the Kingdom is the same. It is still *power*. "The Kingdom of God is . . . righteous, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." The power of the Holy Ghost maintains, on the one hand, the rule of Christ in the believer's life, and enables him, on the other, to subdue and overcome all evil whether within or without ; and the consequence is peace and joy.

(2) *Do the Beatitudes and Matt. v. vi. and vii. apply to Christians ?*
ANS. : In principle, we think they do. But an absolutely literal interpretation would gender bondage. Circumstances alter cases, as we see by a reference to Luke xxii. 35-8.

(3) *Is "The Gospel of the Kingdom" preached to us, and (is it) what we understand as the general term "gospel" ?* ANS. : St. Paul preached the Kingdom of God (Acts xx. 25) ; and in that aspect the Kingdom is preached to-day. There are other aspects of the Kingdom which may, for the time being, be in abeyance. A study

of the two epistles to the Thessalonians along with the account of the Apostle Paul's visit to Thessalonica, as recorded in Acts xvii., will reveal the fact that he most certainly made the Kingdom very prominent in his preaching. On the other hand, it must be remembered the gospel of the grace of God is a wider term, revealing as it does, not only what meets all the sinner's needs, but the place he now has before God according to Luke xv. and Eph. i., etc.

(4) *Do the 13th and 14th verses of Matt. xxiv. apply to us?*

Ans. : We think not. They refer particularly to the time of the end after the Church is taken, and during the reign of Antichrist. They refer to the Jewish remnant in the land, passing through the great tribulation, and looking to be delivered out of it.

We hope to publish an article next month on the Kingdom.

Ques. Y.Z. asks for an explanation of John xx. 23.

Ans. : It must be borne in mind that these words are not addressed exclusively to the Apostles. Luke xxiv. 33 informs us that when the two returned from Emmaus they "found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them." John xx. 19 tells us "the disciples were assembled." And Christ had said earlier to Mary Magdalene, "Go to My brethren"; a term applicable to all believers.

Nor must we confound the words, "Whosoever sins ye remit," with those in Matt. xviii. 18 as to binding and loosing. There it is in connection with assembly administration; whereas here it is in connection with being sent out with the gospel. Moreover, it is important to note another distinction. In the former passage, binding takes precedence. It is binding and loosing. In the latter it is remitting and retaining. The order is reversed.

These observations will help us to understand the true intent of the passage. The power to remit and retain is not conferred upon any sacerdotal caste. The words were addressed to disciples. To suppose that any to-day have some special power, apart from other believers, to pronounce absolution, is to arrogate to a particular class within the Church functions that belong to all.

This will become clearer if we consider the next point. To whom were the disciples being sent? Our Lord says, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." Was not our Lord sent to the world? God so loved *the world* that He gave His only begotten Son—and therefore the disciples are being equally

sent to the world. In other words, to those outside the Church. Now priests, so-called, to-day, pronounce absolution inside the Church. The absolution here spoken of in John xx. 23 is to those who have professed to believe the gospel. The whole Church has this prerogative—not merely a section of it. For where was forgiveness of sins known except in the Church, and who had a message of pardon to those outside except members of the Church? And we find from the context that the Holy Ghost was given for this purpose (ver. 22). No doubt we see something of what is meant by our Lord's injunction here, in what occurred to Saul of Tarsus after his conversion. Ananias—an ordinary believer be it noted, and Saul the future Apostle—Ananias says to him, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." In the normal condition of things it was what members of the Church had the individual right to do. No doubt things have sadly declined, and the power and presence of the Holy Ghost is little known, yet the prerogative contained in John xx. 23 has never been cancelled. This passage is connected then, not with binding and loosing the sins of those inside, but with remitting the sins of those outside, in order that they may be brought in, and be outwardly identified with the Church and with Christ. Yet such forgiveness must not be confounded with eternal forgiveness as between God and the soul. This is never committed to man. The remission spoken of in John xx. 23 is governmental and conditional (Cf. 1 Kings ii. 8-9, 36-46, and Matt. xviii. 21-35.).

"LET."

Let not your heart be troubled
Let God's peace rule therein,
 And in your mortal bodies,
 Oh *let* there reign no sin.

With boldness theretore *let* us
 Come to the throne of grace,
 And "Looking unto Jesus,"
 So *let* us run the race.

Without dissimulation
Let love at all times be,
Let who names Christ's Name depart
 From all iniquity.

Oh, *let* us follow after
 The things that make for peace.
 And for his good, to edify,
Let each his neighbour please.

"If ye shall ask anything in My name
I will do it."—JOHN XIV. 14.

In the hour of trouble
Whither shall we flee?
Human refuge failing,
Lord, we turn to Thee;
When well-nigh despairing
Any hope can be;
Eyes with weeping blinded
Lift we still to Thee.

In Thy name, if pleading,
Two of us agree;
Though it tarry—waiting—
We receive from Thee.
Precious Name of Jesus,
Name invincible,
All we ask God gives us,
If we do His will.—J. M. F.

"Being *knit* together in love." How closely *interwoven* should the concerns of one heart be with another! How should the threads of one heart intertwine themselves with those of another! How should they sustain each other and depend one upon another, so interwoven in love, as to present to view the knitted workmanship of a divine hand! Such was our Lord's desire: "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." And again: "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another."

"Being *knit* together in love!" How does such a term bind believers' hearts in one? No sorrow felt by one, that does not meet with sympathy in the heart of another. No wound inflicted on one, that does not pierce the heart of another. No grief shading the brow of one, that does not fling its shadow over another. No smile of joy lighting up the countenance of one, that is not reflected in the countenance of another. This is what it is to be "*knit* together in love."—(Extract).

The Book of Proverbs tells what all classes of men will experience.

The Book of Psalms tells what all classes of men have experienced.

REPRINTS.

Faith and its Foundation. By W. W. Fereday. The author says: "The edition (first) having long since run out, and many having expressed the hope that they (the papers) might be re-printed, a new edition (with a few slight corrections) is now issued." Price Sixpence, to be obtained of the Author, 35, New Road, Uttoxeter, Staffs.

The Great Betrayal. By Russell Elliott. Second impression, completing 6,000. With preface. Deals with the reception of Mr. R. J. Campbell by the Congregationalists, last October in Nottingham. One aged Congregational minister—ninety years of age—has written: "Thank you most warmly for the . . . pamphlet. I desire to endorse every word of it . . . I feel profoundest sorrow and shame at what you rightly call 'The Great Betrayal.'" See further remarks in preface.

Will our readers re-order and circulate as widely as possible, and thus help to preserve the people of God from such daring blasphemies on the one hand, and the total indifference manifested by the Congregational leaders on the other. (Morgan & Scott, Price 2d., 1s. 6d. per doz.).

Some Thoughts on Prayer.—Through the kindness of several of our readers we have received copies of this book, and the notice which appeared last month is therefore withdrawn.

MARK IV., 35.

Why should I fear disaster,
 From winds or waves or tide;
 Since Thou, my Lord and Master,
 Dost in the ship abide?
 Gennesaret's sea may thunder,
 Its spray the shore may hide;
 Tho' unbelief may wonder,
 I'll reach the other side.

No storm can wreck the vessel
 That bears the Son of God;
 Nor ought disturb the shelter
 Of one washed in His blood.
 So, 'twas Himself that bade me
 Launch on the stormy tide,
 And He will surely bring me
 Safe to the other side.—R. DARLEY.

The Faith and The Flock.

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PRICE—ONE PENNY.

EDITORIALS.

THE CRY THAT BROUGHT HELP.

“Sir, come down ere my child die.” (John iv. 49).

THE last thing the Lord Jesus Christ sought was notoriety. He deprecated being regarded as a mere wonder worker. So we read: “When He was in Jerusalem . . . many believed in His Name, *when they saw the miracles which He did*, BUT JESUS DID NOT COMMIT HIMSELF UNTO THEM.” So, too, when Nicodemus came making much of miracles, Christ meets him point blank with the doctrine of the new birth (John ii. 23-5, iii. 1-3). And when this nobleman, of whom we read that his son was sick at Capernaum, came and besought the Lord to come down and heal his son, Jesus meets him with the declaration, “*Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.*” Why this apparent rebuff?

The fact is, we are all liable to mistake the means for the end; and, in glorifying the means, miss the end. Miracles in themselves were not an end: taken alone they were of comparatively small account. Even if a man was healed, the effect did not go beyond this life, nor did it necessarily produce any moral revolution in the subject of it. In fact, miracles might become positively injurious. They filled people for the time being with wonder and excitement, and gave them something to talk about. As a consequence, if people looked only on the surface, and sought nothing beyond the extraordinary physical phenomenon, they were nothing bettered, and even in danger of becoming blinded to deeper truths. For operations, however miraculous, in the physical sphere do not of themselves produce any moral or spiritual change. Judas probably saw as many miracles as any man that ever lived.

Our Lord, of course, was perfectly alive to this fact; and as He saw people hankering after displays of this sort, He felt called upon to rebuke it. He does so in the case before us. “Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.” And this immediately reveals something deeper in the heart of this nobleman than a mere craving for signs and wonders. He was a father. His child was at the point of death. He saw in Jesus One Who could come to his aid, and from his agonised heart there bursts the cry, “Sir, come down ere my child die.” This cry of need met with an immediate response: “Go thy way, thy son liveth.”

In all this we have a very beautiful illustration of the way in which spiritual help and blessing always come. There must be a felt need, first of all ; and that felt need produces a cry from the very depths of the soul which brings the longed for blessing. The reason why blessing is so often deferred—why so many have never experienced any spiritual blessing—is because they have little or no sense of need and consequently have never put up a really heart-felt cry to God to meet it.

Amidst all the pathetic incidents in connection with the loss of the Titanic, the most touching, probably, was, not the wreck of that superb steamer ; not that the splendour of that floating palace was all broken up in a few hours and disappeared never to be seen any more ; nor was it the departure of the boats from the ship, with its attendant risk and privation ; nor even the last farewells between those who were parted, for many did not seem to realise that it was final, but it was the despairing cry that went up from the hundreds that were thrown into the water when the vessel sank. A sense of need produced a cry which those who heard it will never forget.

This is how it is described : “ For *three hours* cries of anguish were heard, like some vast choir singing a death song. At moments the cries of terror were lulled, and we thought it was all over, but the next instant they were renewed in still keener accents of despair.” Another description says : “ When the lights went out and the vessel slid below the water an immense clamour filled the air with one supreme cry for help. Then there fell on our ears the most appalling noise that human beings ever heard—the cries of hundreds of our fellow beings struggling in the icy water, crying for help with a cry that we knew could not be answered.”

What was it produced these agonising appeals, but a sense of need ? Have we to wait for such circumstances before any sense of need overtakes us ? If we only knew the true character of sin and its doom : if we could but look into our hearts and see the possibilities of evil there ; if the warnings and instructions of the Bible were only attended to, there is enough in all this to make us cry to God with an urgency and importunity as great as any voiced from the ocean on the occasion referred to. That cry in the vast majority of cases met with no response, They were beyond the power of human aid. Indeed help had to be definitely refused. “ Some on a raft,” we are told, “ had to refuse to permit any others to get aboard ; this was the most pathetic and

horrible scene of all." They sank back only to perish. It is not so as regards the matter of eternal salvation. When that cry of the father, "Come down ere my child die," reached the ear of the Saviour, there was no delay; no putting off; and the response was as sufficient as it was immediate: "Go thy way; thy son liveth." It is such an answer as that we may all have with regard to the need of our souls. Have you felt your need? Have you realised your danger? God tells us what it is. Listen to what He says: "*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.*" By no efforts of his own can he enter it. No works, no good intentions, no religious observances can give him entrance there: only faith. "He that *believeth* on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that *believeth* not the Son shall not see life; *but the wrath of God abideth on him.*" "SUBJECT TO THE JUDGMENT OF GOD," is written over the entire human race. Is not this enough to make a man cry out? The calamity which overtook the Titanic led some men to pray who had not done so for many a year. This is how one describes it: "So we passed the night with waves passing over and burying the raft deep in the water. We prayed through all the weary night, and there never was a moment when our prayers did not rise above the waves. Men who seemed long ago to have forgotten how to address the Creator recalled the prayers of their childhood, and murmured them over and over. Together we said the Lord's Prayer again and again."

Will you not pray about your soul? If unsaved, you are in imminent danger. Do not put it off by saying, you see and feel none. Who saw and felt any danger when the Titanic left Southampton? Who saw and felt any danger as they danced and played cards that fatal Sunday night? Danger does not depend upon whether we see or feel it. Our eternal destiny depends simply and solely upon what God says.

When the father heard this message from the lips of Christ, what did he do? We read, "The man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way." This was faith. The first thing was a confession of need and a cry for help. The next is the exercise of faith. This is the way we become possessed of salvation. Faith has this distinguishing characteristic, it accepts the word of God without further evidence. "Go thy way; thy son liveth," this was all the father had. Christ did not accompany him: did not grant him His visible presence. Neither was

there any evidence to the senses that any change had taken place in the child. The bare word of Christ was all. But it was enough. It is always enough for faith. For if the *word* of a person is not to be believed, nothing is to be believed. So that our salvation is bound up with the very truth as to God Himself. For, all He asks of us, to-day, is faith in His word. God tells us what we have done—"All have sinned"—He tells us how to be saved—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

"The man believed the word that Jesus had spoken," and he proved that he did: "*He went his way.*" He had not to wait long before his faith was confirmed. "And as he was now going down his servants met him and told him, saying, thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend, and they said unto him, yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was *at the same hour* in the which Jesus said unto him, thy son liveth: and himself believed and his whole house."

Is not this same One worthy of *our* trust? This nobleman, without resting upon feelings or evidences of any kind, believed the word that Jesus had spoken. That word came exactly true. There was no misplaced confidence. With regard to the Titanic it has been said, "Much useless sacrifice of life would have been avoided but for the blind faith in the unsinkableness of the ship." Strange how man will trust man, though so often proved untrustworthy, but is slow to trust God. Thousands and millions have proved Christ trustworthy. "Rock of Ages" is His Name: and

Jesus our everlasting tower

Mocks at the angry tempest's roar."

No wonder it was said that at a certain service held in connection with the shipwreck and the loss of so many lives, and which opened with the hymn "Rock of Ages," "it appeared as if the familiar words were sung with a new meaning." Reader, has it any real meaning to you? or is it only a "favourite hymn?" Are *you* hidden safe within that only shelter for the lost sons of Adam? The Titanic's voyage and disastrous end is but an epitome of the world of which we form part, and the race to which we belong. All that luxury could devise and wealth provide in the way of an ocean steamer was gathered within that comparatively narrow compass. Men of different nationalities were there; different stations in life; different employments; different creeds. The various relationships of life

were represented ; and there were persons of all ages. It was a concentrated picture of the world ; for all classes were included, from the poor man up to the millionaire. And what chiefly characterised the whole ? The craze for pleasure and amusement ; time with its transitory pursuits filled the minds of nearly all on board. In brief, is not that the world ? And there goes that ship ; brilliantly lighted ; with music and dancing ; with card playing—albeit it was Sunday. No thought of danger, much less that for the majority the sands in the hour glass had well nigh run out. Reader, you were not on that ship, and you may well thank God you were not, but you are in the world it represents, a world hurrying on to a doom quite as sudden and overwhelming. Where are you ? is it not time you took your bearings ? There is danger ahead. If on that fatal Sunday night, when the first warning had been given as to the proximity of ice, the ship had been stopped, all would have been well. Let the language of Ps. xxxii. be yours : “I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. For this shall every one that is Godly pray unto Thee in a time when Thou mayest be found ; surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him ” (vers. 5-6).

The following particulars with reference to Mr. Philip Mauro and the survivors of the s.s. “Titanic” will be read with interest :

Mr. E. G. Mauger, of Plainfield, N.J., writes :—

“Probably you are not aware that our brother, Mr. Philip Mauro, was on board the “Carpathia” when she rescued the survivors from the ill-fated “Titanic.” We had him with us at our prayer meeting the evening before he sailed, and a very happy season of fellowship we had together, but how little any of us thought what an experience was lying before him during the next few days ! When we found the “Carpathia” was returning to New York, Mr. J. wrote him. I enclose copy of his reply.”

Copy of Postal received from Mr. Philip Mauro, April 19th, 1912.

“DEAR BROTHER,

We sailed last Thursday for Italy, but now we are hurrying back with the survivors of the “Titanic,” man’s latest and greatest achievement in ship building.

You have read all the incidents of this harrowing event, and I want to tell you that the opportunities this opened for giving the testimony of the Lord have been *simply marvellous*. God is accomplishing His purpose and is speaking to many souls. I know you will be glad to hear this (though I cannot write details which would fill a volume) and to join in prayer that the word given out to these grief stricken people may be effectual to accomplishing all the good pleasure of His will.

Yours in Him,

(Signed) PHILIP MAURO.

P.S.—Hearty thanks for letter—cannot accept. We leave again to-morrow. Have not had clothes off since Monday.”

CHRIST IN THE LEVITICAL OFFERINGS.

By G. HUCKLESBY.

THE TRESPASS OFFERING (Lev. v.).

WE now come to the last of these five Offerings, viz., the Trespass Offering, which yet presents another aspect of that "wondrous Cross," which God alone can fully understand, and in which faith is determined alone to glory. In the Burnt Offering, we see that which *we ought to have done*, but in which we had so sadly failed. Instead of being governed by God's will, we had acted in self-will and rebellion against God. No awakened soul can seriously consider the claims that God has upon the service of His creatures, without discovering that such insubjection and disobedience must have consigned us to an eternal hell, had it not been for Him, Who has perfectly done God's will, and glorified Him here below. In the Meat Offering, we are reminded of that which *we ought to have been*, but alas! We were far from being it. Self was the

"SUN OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM."

We were doing our own will, and seeking our own pleasure. There was no fear of God before our eyes, or love to God in our hearts. And this only deepens the consciousness of our terrible guilt before God, and the fearful condemnation, which must have been ours, had it not been for the holy life, the unblemished character, and the perfect obedience, even unto death, of Him Who undertook our case. We gaze upon the Peace Offering and discover *that* which *we ought to have had*, but possessed it not. We had not peace with God, and we were entire strangers to fellowship with Him. There was nothing in common between ourselves as guilty rebels and that Holy Being Who dwells in light unapproachable by man. For, "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all." He is surrounded by all the majesty and purity of Heaven. The Seraphims in His presence, cry, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts," while we have to take the place of leprous sinners, and cry,

"UNCLEAN! UNCLEAN!"

As such, we must have been driven to dark despair, had not God so graciously turned our eyes to Calvary, to see Christ making peace by the blood of His Cross. And as we have learned in some measure the completeness of our ruin, and prove by experience *what we are*, that the flesh within us is utterly corrupt, we might

be led to give up our case as hopeless, were it not for that mighty Sacrifice of the great Sin Offering in which our sins and ourselves have been forever judged. Then again, as we contemplate our past life, and think of that which *we have done*, calling to mind our many and our mighty sins, we should feel ourselves ready to be cast out for ever from God's presence, were it not for the DIVINE TRESPASS OFFERING, which we have now to consider.

The Trespass Offering sets forth, in figure, the death of Christ, making expiation for our sins, and thus removing for ever from the believer all his iniquities. The first thing which the Holy Ghost does in the heart is to convict of sin. He charges home sin to the conscience, and declares that

ALL ARE GUILTY SINNERS

under the righteous judgment of God. He reveals the solemn fact that to die in that state is to be cast out where hope and mercy can never come. The conscience thus awakened, and real anxiety of soul produced, there ascends from the contrite heart the cry, "What must I do to be saved?" Thus it says in connection with the Trespass Offering, "When he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing:" there must be definite confession. Then the same blessed Spirit turns the tear-dimmed eye of that penitent soul to the cross, and there reveals to faith's vision God's remedy for sin, the sinner's perfect plea before God. "And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord" (ver. 6). Burdened with sin, and laden with iniquity, he hears the Saviour's voice, saying, "Come unto Me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." With clarion note the joyful sound falls upon the ear, "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." We learn that our Divine Surety was "delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Believing the glad message, the Holy Spirit applies with power and assurance to our hearts the truth, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." And oh! how divinely sweet is that little, yet comprehensive word, "all." Sins of omission and of commission; sins of thought, word, and deed; sins of childhood and of youth; sins of manhood and of hoary head; all our sins against God and against man, all, all are cleansed and put away for ever. Our dark past is under the blood, and we now stand before God,

“ JUSTIFIED FROM ALL THINGS.”

The Trespass offering was divided into two parts, viz., trespasses against God, as mentioned in Chap. v. 15, and trespasses against man, as stated in Chap. vi. 2. These two phases of the Trespass Offering correspond with the two divisions of God's law given at Sinai, the contents of which were summarised by our Lord, “ Supreme love to God, and perfect love to man.” Tested by this standard every mouth is closed at the Divine bar, and the whole world becomes guilty before God. Thus the prodigal said, “ I have sinned against *Heaven* and before *thee*.” He was conscious that his sin had two aspects. First and primarily, it was against Heaven, and then against his father. So with sin. If I wrong my neighbour, that wrong action not only injures him, but it also violates the latter part of God's law, which commands me to love my neighbour as myself ; it therefore becomes a sin against God. As far as my action injures my fellow creature, he may and can forgive it, but the sin which rises from earth to heaven,

GOD ALONE CAN FORGIVE.

In connection with “ the trespass against God,” special reference is made of “ sin through ignorance,” whereas, this is omitted in the trespass against man. God only knows what befits His holy presence, and what is due to Himself. My conscience cannot grasp all the ways in which I may offend Him, or how very far short I come of His glory. But on the other hand, I can more readily comprehend the claims of my neighbour, for the injunction is “ all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets.” Hence, in reference to the former, we have need to pray, “ Who can understand his errors ? Cleanse Thou me from secret faults.”

Let me point out certain things in connection with the Trespass Offering. In chapter vii. 4, we have

CONVICTION.

We have already seen that God, by His Spirit through the Word, convicts the sinner of his sins. “ As Nathan pointed his finger at the guilty David, and said, “ Thou art the man ! ” so the Holy Spirit by Peter's word at Pentecost wrought conviction in the hearts and consciences of his hearers, until they were compelled to cry out, “ Men and brethren, what shall we do ? ” It is so still. “ All

have sinned and come short of the glory of God," so death has passed upon all men, because all have sinned. In verse 5, we have

CONFESSION.

We have no true sense of guilt unless it leads to confession. Directly Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man," that moment David made an honest confession of his sin, by saying, "I have sinned against the Lord."..In his deep sorrow, he cried, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned." He had sinned against his own soul, against Uriah, and against his own people Israel, but the one overwhelming thought which possessed his mind was, "I have sinned against Thee." The sin against man was swallowed up in the thought that his sin was specially and primarily against such a good and beneficent Creator.

In the touching incident, where our Lord "looked upon Peter," that tender look broke his heart, and he went out and wept bitterly. The Divine record declares that "he thought thereon;" and the recollection of the past filled his eyes with tears of sorrow and genuine grief. And so we read in 1 John i. 8, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." God is faithful to His Word, and just in His action in so doing. But the sense of guilt and confession would not of themselves be sufficient; and so in ver. 6, we have

SUBSTITUTION,

which is the only way by which God can clear the guilty. It is the only ground on which a just God can justify the ungodly. But, because Christ hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, and because "He was wounded for our transgressions, and was bruised for our iniquities," God is now just, the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, clearing the believer from every charge, and accounting him righteous in His sight. In ver. 10, we have

FORGIVENESS.

"And it shall be forgiven him," are the words pronounced on the ground of conviction, confession and sacrifice (ver.10). The Blood of Christ thus becomes the righteous basis of Divine pardon, and the Word of God gives assurance of forgiveness, hence the Divine testimony, "Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." "In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." And again, "I write unto you,

little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His Name's sake."

In Chap. vii. 3, we have

ACCEPTANCE.

The "fat" of the Trespass Offering was burned on the altar with the Burnt Offering, and thus arose "a sweet savour unto the Lord." So with the Antitype. Christ bore the penalty, paid the price, endured the curse, exhausted the punishment. Then it was that God raised Him from the dead, and glorified Him as the Representative of His people. Christ was accepted for us in death and in judgment, and now we are accepted in Him in life and glory. Christ having borne all that I had deserved as a sinner, and having rendered all that I owed as a creature (and infinitely more), I now stand before God "Accepted in the Beloved."

And lastly, we have in Chap. v. 16 and vi. 5,

THE ADDITION

which was made to the Trespass Offering. Neither God nor man must be a loser by a trespass. Instead of receiving the ordinary "tithes," or "tenths," just double that amount was added, viz., "a fifth," so that both God and the wronged Israelite were gainers by the wrong committed. And this is blessedly true concerning man's ruin and Christ's redemption. The glory of God as man's Redeemer far surpasses and outshines His glory as man's Creator. The joy and bliss of the Father's House altogether outweigh, and entirely eclipse, the joys and delights of an earthly paradise. Thus, as in Samson's riddle, the eater is made to yield meat, and the strong sweetness. As we gaze upon ruined man, and a blasted creature, apparently the enemy has triumphed, and as we behold the Son of God crucified through weakness hanging on a rugged tree, we might be tempted to think, that, His mission here was an entire failure.

But the Cross is the solution of the great problem, By it, God is gathering deeper joys, reaping a richer harvest, and acquiring brighter glories than He ever could have done from an unfallen race, and an unmarred creation.

Even so with God's redeemed ones. They enjoy a closer communion, they are raised to a higher position, they experience deeper joys, and possess far brighter glories than ever Adam enjoyed in Eden. Out of all the wreck and ruin wrought by the

devourer, God, in His infinite wisdom, boundless love, and by His almighty power, is now forming that which is to be His grand "masterpiece" throughout the vast fields of creation, and through all eternal ages. Ere long, the Church, which is now being formed by the Holy Ghost upon earth, will be seen glorified by the side of Christ, and wondering worlds exclaim, as they gaze upon the heavenly bride by the side of the glorious Bridegroom, "What hath God wrought?"

And all this weight of bliss and magnificence of glory flows out of that wondrous Cross. A glorified Church, a redeemed creation, the new heavens and new earth, will be the rich fruit and the glorious harvest of Christ's redemptive toil. Surely, as we gaze back at that stupendous work, and learn something now of that momentous transaction, we have again, and yet again to say, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." As we look up and see that wounded Man upon the Throne, we are afresh constrained to lay ourselves at His feet, and yield all we have and are to Him. And as we look forward to the marvellous outcome of it all, we are constrained to cry, "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his Counsellor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to Whom be glory for ever. Amen."

"Time spent with God, tells in work done for God."

* * * *

"No service done for God, to please Him, is small: none is great that He does not appoint and of which He does not approve."

* * * *

"It is not 'Well done, successful servant,' but 'Well done, good and faithful servant' (Matt. xxv. 21) that will come from the Master's lips on a coming day. Let us obey."

* * * *

"There is not a difficulty that has arisen, is arising, or will arise, but the Lord has anticipated it, and provided for it. His wisdom anticipated it; His power provided for it."

Luke XV., 2.

My heart is filled with thankfulness,
 My mouth is filled with songs of praise,
 For Christ the Lord my righteousness
 Hath taught me now His glorious ways.
 No more in ignorance and guilt
 And fear of judgment's awful doom,
 I know Thy precious blood was spilt,
 That "Whosoever will may come."
 I came to Thee my blessed Lord,
 Hearing Thy tender, loving call;
 "Come lab'ring one," so saith the Word,
 "And thou shalt find sweet rest from all."
 And coming Thou hast given me rest,
 The Father's welcome I have known,
 His loving kiss, the ring, the best,
 All, all are mine thro' Christ alone.
 No more a prodigal astray
 From Father's love and Father's care;
 No more in hunger, far away,
 I'm now at home and feasting there.
 The music and the dancing mine:
 The company, the mirth, the joy:
 The Father's smile, the grace divine,
 Rest, peace and love without alloy.

R. DARLEY.

*Isaiah LIII., 11.**Romans VIII.*

Was I remembered, Lord, by Thee,
 The object of Thy care,
 While suffering, bleeding on the tree,
 O! was I thought of there?
 For by Thy "knowledge," gracious Lord,
 Many to justify,
 Thou didst Thy precious Blood afford,
 For each one bleed and die.
 Was I engraven on Thine heart?
 Was I so cherished there?
 That Thou didst *then* Thy life impart
 For ever *me* to share?
 When "*It is finished*" Thou didst say,
 In agonies and woe;
 Were all *my* sins *then* wash'd away
 That made Thee suffer so?
 Thy foreknown ones are called by Thee
 And also justified;
 Then, if I hear Thou callest *me*
 Because for me He died.
 And now in Heaven Thou art the same,
 In everlasting love;
 Thou callest each of us by name
 To dwell with Thee above.
 For by Thy "knowledge" Lord I see
 Eternal was Thy plan;
 Chosen in Christ and loved by Thee
 Before the world began.—ANNA McCOURT.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD: ITS PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE ASPECTS.*

"Waited for the Kingdom of God" (Luke xxiii. 51).

"The Kingdom of God is among you" (Luke xvii. 21).

"Of His Kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke ii. 33).

IN the gospels we find a general expectation of a Kingdom. This is what the people of God looked for. It was predicted of the Lord Jesus at His birth that He should "reign over the house of Jacob for ever ; and of His Kingdom there shall be no end." We find that our Lord preached the Kingdom of God, and this was not so much to awaken expectations as to satisfy expectations already there. He said to His disciples, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." To shew how prevalent was this idea of the Kingdom it is only necessary to quote such passages as the following : "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God," the circumstances under which this statement was made shewing that it was the thought uppermost in the minds of many. So also this : "He (Christ) was demanded of the Pharisees, when the Kingdom of God should come." Again, "Because they thought that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear." Even the dying thief said, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom." And of Joseph of Arimathea (a very different man) it is said, "Who also himself waited for the Kingdom of God." (Luke xiv. 15, xvii. 20, xix. 11, xxiii. 42 and 51).

What had given rise to this expectation, and on what foundation did it rest ? It is to be noticed that these expectations were found within the nation of Israel. We have no record of God ever having spoken of a Kingdom except to the descendents of Abraham. The first allusion to this Kingdom is in Exodus xix. 6. There we read, "And ye shall be unto Me a Kingdom of Priests and an holy nation." Then it is, when the people undertook to be obedient, God establishes His Kingdom and promulgates His laws. It was a theocracy. This is why God said, the people had rejected Him when they desired a King, in the time of Samuel. It is at this time the Kingdom takes more definite shape : "Samuel told the people the manner of the Kingdom" (1 Sam. x. 25). But it is in David's day the thought of the Kingdom becomes specially prominent, and promises as to its perpetual character are given (see Ps. lxxxix. 4, 29, 35-7).

* See also Answers to Questions in May.

The thought of the King and the Kingdom runs all through the Psalms. "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion" (Ps. ii. 6). Here is the promise, too, that the King should be God's Son. In Ps. lxxii. 21, which is said to be "A Psalm for Solomon," we get the glory, splendour and power of the Kingdom described, as well as the universal homage which shall be paid to the King. With such expectations as these passages were calculated to awaken—and they might be multiplied indefinitely—is it any wonder if every godly Jew longed for its establishment, especially as everything indicated the supremacy of Israel. How much in keeping with these expectations were the words which fell from the lips of the angel who announced the birth of Jesus: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His Kingdom there shall be no end."

In accordance with these words, we find Christ promulgating the laws of His Kingdom, and from a mountain, just as God had done from Mount Sinai (Matt. v.-vii). We find also the burden of His message was: "The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark i. 15).

It is evident, however, that our Lord did not fulfil all the Old Testament predictions of the Kingdom. He neither delivered Israel from their enemies, nor did He ever occupy a throne. That form of the Kingdom yet remains to be fulfilled. Yet the Kingdom was there. Our Lord said, "The Kingdom of God is among you." In what sense were these words true? The question can be answered in His own words. "If I with the finger of God cast out demons, no doubt the Kingdom of God is come unto you." He overcame all the powers of darkness and all the ills with which man was oppressed (Luke xi. 20-2). For Israel had other foes beside the Romans—foes common to all mankind. The glory and dominion of Israel will come, but a greater work must be accomplished first. A spiritual Kingdom must be set up, far more extensive and more glorious than anything promised in connection with what is material and temporal.

The form the Kingdom took, then, when our Lord was present on earth was the exercise of a power which overbore all the opposition that confronted man. God interfered on man's behalf to deliver him from Satan, disease and death. It is summed up in the well known

words of Peter, in the house of Cornelius: "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost *and with power*: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil: for God was with Him" (Acts x. 38). Thus a Kingdom was set up in opposition to Satan's; his authority was disputed and set aside: so that it can now be said of all who truly accept Christ: "Who hath delivered us from the power (or authority) of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love." If such enemies could be overthrown, what enemy is there that can dispute the manifest setting up of the Kingdom eventually?

Let us now consider the present aspect of the Kingdom, at which we have already hinted. First, however, let us enquire as to what the true idea of the Kingdom is; as a solution of this point will assist us to form a clear conception of all three aspects we have before us.

The fundamental idea of a Kingdom, whether earthly or heavenly, *is a sphere where power is in exercise to maintain rule and authority, and to repress and repel every enemy.* A Kingdom cannot exist without power. It may exist without a great many other things, but power is essential. One or two quotations from Scripture will make it evident that this element dominates the thought of the Kingdom. Our Lord said to His disciples, in view of what was about to take place on the Mount of Transfiguration, "There be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the Kingdom of God come with *power*" (Mark ix. 1). Here our Lord distinctly speaks of power in connection with the Kingdom. And the greatness of that power is implied by His reference to death. Why does Christ preface His allusion to the Kingdom by a reference to death? Because death is the greatest power we know anything about—all have to bow to it. But there will be the exercise of a greater power in the Kingdom. The Kingdom will set aside death's dominion. And as a presage of this, the future ruler of that Kingdom could say, "There be some . . . which shall not taste of death," proving that He had power over death, for He could hold it back until a certain event had transpired, while in the Kingdom itself "He will swallow up death in victory," for the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death (Cf. Isa. xxv. 6-8 and 1. Cor. xv. 24-6). Referring to the transfiguration—which as we have already seen was a vision of the Kingdom—Peter speaks of

it as "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And the Apostle Paul referring to the Kingdom in its present aspect, says, "The Kingdom of God is not in word but in *power*."

The form this power takes at the present time is the power of the Holy Ghost. The question put to our Lord just ere He ascended to heaven, was: "Wilt Thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?" The time for that had not come, and was kept secret. But the present form of the Kingdom is indicated in the words, "But ye shall receive *power*, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." In keeping with this we find stated in Rom. xiv. 17, "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

A word ought to be said as to what leads up to this. The Kingdom is now in mystery, for the simple reason that the Ruler is absent and the Holy Ghost is invisible. In Matt. xiii. referring to the Kingdom we find our Lord likening Himself to a sower sowing seed, and He tells us the seed is the word. Speaking of the Kingdom in John iii. we learn that no one can enter the Kingdom except as born of water and of the Spirit. These passages clearly give us two elements in connection with the Kingdom—the word and the Holy Spirit. The word when received in the power of the Spirit produces two results in the soul: repentance and subjection to Christ as Lord. The one who has passed through this process has entered the Kingdom; and as a consequence (if obedient to the laws and requirements of that Kingdom) he finds a power on his behalf enabling him to triumph over all the power of evil, within and without. It is just this the Apostle means when he speaks of the Kingdom of God as "righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Righteousness first, because righteousness means subjection, as being the opposite of sin, which is lawlessness. In one word, righteousness means owning Christ's supremacy, *i.e.*, confessing Him Lord; and admitting His claims. Then, when we do that, all the power of the Holy Ghost is at our disposal; and as a consequence there follow peace and joy. This is the Kingdom in its present aspect. The soul is under the rule of Christ.*

A word as to the future aspect of the Kingdom. It will one day be set up in visible power and glory. This the Old Testament predicts in passages too numerous to quote, and the New Testament

* In the foregoing remarks we are of course assuming our Lord's death and the work of Atonement.

confirms (Cf. Ps. ii., xlv., lxxii. ; Isa. ii., xi. and xxv. ; Luke ii. 32-3 ; 1 Cor. xv. 24-7 ; Rev. xi. 15). In every case, whether past, present or future, the main feature of the Kingdom is power—power to repress evil and maintain the good—power to overturn every other Kingdom, and assert its own sway. “ The power of the Lord was present to heal them,” we read in Luke v. with regard to the Kingdom as represented in and by our Lord when here on earth. And again, “ They were all amazed at the mighty power of God ” (Ch. ix. 43). And with regard to the present aspect we have seen already that, though in mystery, the thought of power is still associated with it, though now it is probably purely spiritual. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that the past and present aspects exhaust all that is to be said, or expected, with reference to the subject before us. There is to be a future Kingdom differing in form from all that has gone before—just as the present aspect differs from the past, so the future will be distinguished from either.

What form, then, will it take ? *It will be visible and universal.* We are not concerned now with differentiating between the Kingdom in its relation to Israel, and the Kingdom of the Son of Man, or, again, the Kingdom of the Father. The subject is here treated only in a general way. As a matter of fact, one thought is common to all : it is the exercise of rule, authority and power : and moreover the Kingdom is scarcely ever mentioned in connection with Israel, but we get references which involve the wider Kingdom of the Son of Man ; and the Millennial Kingdom reaches on to that which is eternal.

There will be the forcible subjugation of evil and of Satan. Satan will be bound a thousand years. The good will be upheld and maintained by power. It will be a reign of righteousness. Evil of every kind will be suppressed. “ *And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob ; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths : for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem* ” (Isa. ii. 3). In the next verse we find that war will be abolished. In Isa. xi. 9 we are told that nothing shall hurt nor destroy in all God’s holy mountain. There shall be, not only peace between man and man, but over all the face of creation, the savage beast and the domesticated animal shall herd together, even a child shall not be afraid of the venom of the serpent. Another feature will be, that “ the knowledge of the Lord

shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." From that Kingdom, too, death and tears will be gone, as well as the covering that is cast over all people (Isa. xxv. 6-8). God will be known, and good will prevail.

These passages must be taken literally. To apply a forced spiritual interpretation—to suppose that they are finding their fulfilment in the preaching and reception of the gospel in our own day is not only unnecessary, and entirely unwarrantable—not only falsifies every passage—because we see nothing in the present state of things at all corresponding therewith—but, worst of all, it throws the whole plan and purpose of God to the winds, and reduces Scripture to a mass of confusion. All these passages we have quoted, and many more that could be cited, refer to the actual Kingdom yet to be established on this very earth.

How will it be introduced? The Bible unhesitatingly asserts it will be introduced by the overthrow of every other Kingdom, and the present order of things. Only one passage can be quoted at length. Daniel, interpreting the meaning of the image which the King had seen in his dream, says: "*And in the days of these Kings shall the God of Heaven set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed . . . it shall break in pieces and consume all these Kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.*" This was signified by the stone cut out without hands smiting the image on its feet, and scattering it to the winds (Dan. ii. 44-5; see also Ps. ii. 4-12; xlv. 3-6; cx. 1-6; Isa. ii. 10-19; xi. 4; Rev. xv. 4, xvi. 14, xvii. 14, xix. 11-21).

Will any true children of God be excluded from the Kingdom? There is a doctrine abroad which asserts that some will. It is said that they only who have arrived at a standard of holiness, known to God alone, will have a place in the Millennium. This doctrine (which, sad to say, is put forward by some otherwise godly men), is a flat contradiction of the plain teaching of God's Word. John iii. tells us we enter the Kingdom by new birth. Born of water and of the Spirit is the one and only requirement. 1 Cor. xv. 23 says, "They that are Christ's at His coming": making no distinction between saints whatever: and this evidently in view of the Kingdom referred to in the next verse. The chapter goes on to unfold the glorious truth as to resurrection, without so much as a hint at any separation amongst those who are the Lord's. Indeed the language employed expressly precludes such an idea. It speaks of the resurrection of the "*dead*" (ver. 42); it emphatically declares,

" We shall *all* be changed." And this view is confirmed by 1 Thess. iv. 13-18, where terms are used applicable to all true children of God : " Them which are asleep " ; " Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him " ; " We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord " ; " The dead in Christ." In all these passages—passages which go to the root of the whole matter—there is not so much even as a suggestion or a hint, that our entrance into the Kingdom depends upon the attainment of an undefined standard of holiness. Nay, this assertion destroys the meaning and force of these glorious verities by casting a cloud of uncertainty over them. For how can we comfort one another concerning them which are asleep if their future blessedness depends upon the progress they made, and we do not even know the standard which it was necessary to reach ? We deplore the fact that any should seem to countenance such a serious departure from the truth of the gospel as this, and we pray that those under the influence of this teaching may mercifully be delivered from such delusions.

Before closing this article, perhaps one word may be said as to the distinction between the Kingdom and the Church. It is a distinction of idea, and not of persons. The same persons are in both. The same means of access apply to both. This is true, whether we think of the two as a sphere of profession or in connection with the impartation of divine life. Although the Church is not mentioned in John iii., only the Kingdom, yet what puts you in the one equally gives you a place in the other. Faith and new birth are necessary for entrance to either, and give access to both.

The difference, then, is one of idea. And the distinctions are clear ; though it would be absurd to suppose that a line could at all times and in all connections be drawn between the two, and it could be said the Kingdom is on this side and the Church on that. We have seen that the fundamental idea of the Kingdom is power : and, consequently, salvation—deliverance from every enemy within and without. It is difficult to state the truth as to the Church quite so succinctly, but it is perhaps best expressed by the term *sanctuary*. The two ideas seem brought together in Ps. cxiv. 1-2, " When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language : Judah was His *sanctuary*, and Israel His *dominion*." Sanctuary, here, expresses more the idea of the Church : dominion, more the idea of the Kingdom. The Book of Numbers reveals, that, when Israel encamped in the desert all their forces were ranged

around the tabernacle. Had any enemy approached, the idea of the Kingdom would have become prominent. When Israel worshipped, when they approached God in connection with His dwelling place, the idea of the Church becomes prominent. We are, of course, using this only by way of illustration. It can at best only give us a rough and incomplete idea. But still, it does give some idea.

The two main ideas in connection with the Church are the Body and the House. The Body speaks of our special relationship to Christ: as the House, the Church is the habitation of God through the Spirit. Christ as the Head of the Body energizes, nourishes and cherishes it. In the House, God dwells. As a *holy* priesthood we offer up spiritual sacrifices: and as a *royal* priesthood we manifest His character to the world.

These remarks will indicate *some* of the distinctive features respectively of the Kingdom and the Church. Doubtless we learn Kingdom truth first (though we never leave it behind), for until we have reached a place of deliverance and security for ourselves we are not prepared to think much about what more immediately concerns those high and holy privileges which flow from our relationship to the Father and to Christ.

R. E.

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

CHAPTER i, Verses 6-10.

By WALTER SCOTT.

HUMAN PRETENSION: DIVINE REALITY.

THE *intimate* character of the fellowship into which, with the Apostles and early Church, we have been brought is signified in verse three, while its *holy* nature is declared in verse five. But we are confronted on every hand with a lifeless and powerless profession. Human pretension in bearing the Christian name without either a corresponding state within, or godly ways without, was present in Apostolic times, and even more so now, hence Christian profession is put to the test. The Apostle thoroughly exposes all mere lip acknowledgment of fellowship with God. The claim to be a Christian is uncompromisingly dealt with.

“If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth” (ver. 6). Darkness signifies *fundamental ignorance of God*. Now if a man walks in darkness in

moral blindness of God, lives a life of alienation from God, who is light, and yet says, "I am in fellowship with Him," is there not an impassable gulf between that man and God? You cannot live in the light and in the darkness at the same time. You are either in the one or the other. The profession of being a Christian while ignorant of God as a Saviour, makes that profession a *lie*, and such "do not the truth." The truth as in Jesus is that believers have put off the old man, and put on the new which is "after the image of Him that created Him" (Col. iii. 10). If, then, the new man is created after the moral likeness of God's very nature, how can one do the truth in whom the new man does not exist? The life of a mere professor is not only a lie, but the truth is not there, either subjectively in the soul, or actively in the life; this latter is the point in the declaration, "and do not the truth"—the truth is, "that sphere of conduct which is in harmony with God, whose nature is light."

The Apostle then proceeds to state three essential truths of Christianity; in other words the true Christian position in contrast to all that is false, however loud or seemingly pious the pretension. "*But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin*" (ver. 7). The "if" does not imply doubt or uncertainty, rather the reverse. It is a strong way of putting the case. All children of God walk in the light, but all do not walk in practical accord with it. The question is not *how* you walk, but *where* you walk. The light is the perfect revelation of God in grace as light and love. God is not only light in essential nature, but the sphere in which He dwells, in which He acts and lives, the circumstances surrounding Him are in absolute accord with His nature. It is here we walk in fellowship with God. He and we are in the *same* unclouded light. The second statement in this wonderful verse is, "we have fellowship one with another"; not we with God but believer with believer. Every child of God is a partaker of the divine nature. Having the same nature we delight together in the same circle of divine and heavenly truths and blessings. This fellowship embraces the whole family of God. Ecclesiastism cannot ruin it. The fellowship exists unimpaired through time and change. Practical fellowship in service, and at the Lord's Table may be unjustly denied, but the fellowship here spoken of is in the light and cannot be denied to any one of the Lord's people. Thus the heart

of the child of God in England is knit to the heart of the Christian in the solitudes of Africa in eternal and unbreakable bonds. The third divine statement of our Christian position is, "the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all (or every) sin." This is not the cleansing of the evil nature, which is condemned (Rom. viii. 3), not cleansed. Acts of sin are in question, sins, not sin in the nature. Death and the nature; blood and sins are the respective correspondencies. The passage does not assert that the blood is ever and always cleansing the believer; *that* is done once, and its efficacy is eternal (Heb. x. 14). "Perfected for ever." "No more conscience of sins" (Heb. x. 2) disposes once and for all of the theological figment that the blood of Christ is continually cleansing the believer. The blood cleanseth, not cleansing: that is, the character of the blood is declared. It cleanseth, as we say, sugar sweetens, poison kills. The essential character or quality is declared. Thus then, the three distinguishing features of the Christian position are (1) we walk in the light; (2) have fellowship one with another, and (3) the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from every sin.

But next, the question of in-dwelling sin—sin in the nature—is raised. On this much ignorance prevails. Sin in the life is open to all observers, but sin in the nature can only be known fully to God. Forgiveness applies to acts, to positive offences. The nature from which these acts proceed is a judged and condemned thing, and to which forgiveness is never applied. On this point many are self-deceived. "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (ver. 8). No protestation on your part of a sinless condition is likely to deceive any one. People are keen observers of life and conduct, and know full well that every inconsistency springs from within. But *you* may be self-deceived. "The truth is not in us"; that is the innate badness of the flesh viewed morally is not recognised. Its true character is not owned. The truth is viewed objectively in verse 6, and subjectively in verse 8.

But if we have sinned—not are sinning as a present and continuous habit—confession brings forgiveness. "If we confess our sins," not if we ask forgiveness. *We* confess; He forgives. Confession is not an easy matter, it is solemn conscience work and should never be done in a slipshod way. To detail our sins in the presence of God, keeps the soul tender and ensures an ever abiding communion with God Himself. How full is the divine answer to our confession, "He is faithful (to His *word*) and just (to the *Sacrifice*) to forgive us

our sins." But what about these unrighteous acts of ours? For this takes account of every act done against God, and against others. "And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"—from every single deed of an unrighteous character.

Then for the third time we have the repetition of the formula, "If we say" (ver. 10). "If we say that we have not sinned we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us." Scripture never supposes a believer going on in a course of sin, or sinning, hence the *past* tense here used, the *present* tense when sin, *i.e.*, the fallen nature, is in question (ver. 8). It is a truly awful case here supposed, "we have not sinned." God's word declares again and again, "All have sinned" (Rom. iii. 23). Man is born in sin (Ps. li. 5). "His word is not in us." How could it be in the heart of a man who makes such a flagrant and open denial of the truth—"I have not sinned." Verily, he has, and so too every member of the human race. It will help in the exposition of these remarkable verses to observe that the statements are abstract in character. "If *we* say" includes Apostles as well as others. The abstract nature of these statements in no wise detracts from their moral force and *application*.

"Having cast our burden upon God, we must leave it absolutely with Him, and not again touch it with a single finger tip."

* * * *

"It is a great thing to be always free and fresh, and simple in heart, and ready to be in the hand of the Lord to do what He may appoint."

* * * *

"There is nothing like the Cross, it is the meeting of the perfect sin of man with the perfect love of God."

* * * *

"The saints in glory shall be intimately near the Lord, speaking face to face, without fear or suspicion, for their title is signed as with His own hand."

* * * *

"There can be no real Christian character but that which is of God, and nothing is of God that violates the principles of His Word, and does not follow in the footsteps of Christ."

* * * *

"Our hearts are made for God, this poor empty world is too small to fill them."

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY :

The SAINT.

By R. E.

"Less than the least of all Saints."

"I am crucified with Christ ; nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me " (Gal. ii. 21).

SURELY no one was ever brought into greater straits or put to severer tests than the Apostle of the Gentiles. The Lord's words, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My Name's sake" were indeed fulfilled. How thankful we ought to be that these sufferings are delineated with his own pen, and that it was so ordered. There is something so perfectly human about the record ; and yet divinely-human—if one may coin such a phrase—for all is under the evident control of the Holy Spirit, and all subservient to one end—not the glory of Paul, but the glory of the grace of God.

What soul depths are struck in this autobiographical record, and what experiences are opened out ! He is let down the wall in a basket and escapes the governor's hands at Damascus, and he is caught up to the third heaven : he hears unspeakable words, whether in the body or out of the body he cannot tell, and, again, he is in the body with the agonising sense of impalement, through "a thorn in the flesh" ; he receives revelations calculated to exalt him above measure, and he is soon after conscious of infirmities that humble him in the dust ; his thrice repeated prayer cannot be granted, yet he receives such an enduement of power as to make these very infirmities an occasion for glorying ; he is weak, and yet he is strong ; he is acquainted with reproaches, necessities, persecutions, distresses, but at the same time he can say, "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds."

We were saying just now it was the grace of God that made Saul what he became, and that the qualities he exhibited of endurance and fortitude were not to be attributed to some superlative energy or super-human endowment which he possessed in the ordinary course of nature. If this last had been true, he would have been useless as an object lesson to us. The truth is, that, in him we are seeing, as already intimated, an exhibition of the grace that is at our own disposal. The grace which Christ speaks of as sufficient

for him, he passes on to every Christian at the close of the epistle* in words so well known, commonly called the benediction: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ . . . be with you all."

Nowhere is that grace more conspicuous than in the record we are now considering (ch. xii.). It was not the abundance of the revelations that made Paul what he was.† As a matter of fact, they only made his need of grace all the greater. Grace, in this aspect of it, is Another's power working through us. The visions vouchsafed to the Apostle, the unspeakable words he had heard, would tend to give him confidence in his own sufficiency. The thorn in the flesh produced an opposite effect, and made him feel his need of Another's help.

It was this grace which made Paul the saint he was. Paul had heard words in Paradise that were impossible to utter—they, possibly, had no relation to this life—these other words have. This grace could be felt, and it could be seen. What was the effect? St. Paul tells us, "Therefore," he says, "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong." This was something superior to stoicism. It was on a higher level altogether. Stoicism inculcated a stolid indifference; it tried to assume that one thing was as good as another. Paul says, "I take pleasure." He actually gloried in the very things which the ordinary man tries with all his might to escape. The more of reproach and necessity, the more of Christ.

Surely the erstwhile persecutor not only became Paul the Apostle, but was indeed Paul *the saint*, and, perhaps his saintship never shines with more brilliant lustre and is never more conspicuous than as we see him here.

But the *physical* sufferings of the Apostle do not by any means exhaust the catalogue. These were principally at the hands of the Jews and the men of this world. Under them his spirit was never cowed or embittered. In the prison at Philippi he prayed and sang praises to God. There were, however, other sufferings

NOTE.—* 2 Corinthians.

† It is important to observe the distinction between what is commonly called gift, and grace. A man may know a great deal of the Bible and be able to impart instruction to others, and yet be very deficient in the grace spoken of above. He may be puffed up by his gift, hard, censorious and deficient in faith and love.

which affected his *spirit* far more. He was *neglected, misunderstood and misjudged*. To the Corinthians, his own converts, he has to write, "I ought to have been commended of you ; for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest Apostles, though I be nothing." Evidently they had placed others before him, though he alone was their spiritual father ; as he tells them in his first epistle, " In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." Their preference for others may have been occasioned by the Apostle's personal appearance. Evidently he refers to this when he says, " Do ye look on things after the outward appearance. . . . For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." It would appear also that in pursuing the plan of preaching the gospel to them freely, he had rather lowered himself in their estimation than otherwise. " Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely ? " he asks. And as regards those they were exalting and making much of, he says, " For ye suffer if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face."

Yet, in spite of this unmannerly and ungrateful treatment, the love of this saint of God never wanes, nor does his concern as to their spiritual welfare abate. A few references to the two epistles he addressed to them will manifest how deep was his piety ; how true and real his love ; and how absolutely free he kept himself from any feeling of resentment.

What can be finer than this, written to those who despised him, and were judging him ? (see 1 Cor. iv. 3) : "*Now YE are full, now YE are rich, YE have reigned as kings without US ; and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you. For I think that God has set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death ; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ ; we are weak, but ye are strong ; ye are honorable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place ; and labour, working with our own hands : being reviled, we bless ; being persecuted, we suffer it ; being defamed we entreat ; we are made as the filth of the world, and are as the offscouring of all things unto this day. I write not these things to shame you, but as my BELOVED sons I warn*

you" (1 Cor. iv. 8-14). Here was one who had seen the Lord in the way, and received a special commission from Him, made to suffer every indignity and hardship, yet beneath the recital of this catalogue of ills (one of which would be too much for some of us) there is not one word of complaint, but an undercurrent of triumph. And even those who were adding to his sufferings he can still address as his "beloved sons." It is, indeed, to these very people he addresses his eulogy on love (Ch. xiii.), of which at that moment he was a living exhibition.

In the second Epistle to the Corinthians he tells them, "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you." How much these few words reveal! There is nothing simulated. All this deep feeling was perfectly genuine, and sprang from what he was as a man, a saint and a servant. He could feel intensely for those who seemed to be drifting away and were becoming diverted from the true goal, while his service, far from being perfunctory or mechanical, sprang from a love that bathed his whole nature in its glow. In Chap. vi. (2 Cor.) we have this bit of autobiography which bears upon the point now under consideration. Speaking of himself as a minister of Christ he can say, "By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned." Let us hear him once more (Ch. xii. 14): "*Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you . . . and I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.*" Is not such a love as this the supreme test of saintship? What power must have wrought in the heart of Saul of Tarsus to have changed him from a bitter persecutor into such a saint. "The love of Christ constraineth us" is his own, and the only, explanation—the love that revealed itself in that personal interview on the Damascus road.

It was the power of this love working in him that enabled St. Paul to rejoice in his sufferings. "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you," he writes to the Colossians, "and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body's sake, which is the Church." How interesting are these autobiographical references. We learn from such a statement as this that these sufferings had a deeper meaning than what was merely

personal to himself. What a significance he here attaches to them—they were nothing less than a filling up of the afflictions of Christ for His Body's sake. What a halo of glory this must have cast round every pang and pain the Apostle endured on this account. In writing to Timothy he refers to the "persecutions, afflictions, which came upon me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured; but out of them all the Lord delivered me." What a marvellously interesting autobiography would have been given to us had the Apostle recounted all the details of these deliverances; but they are purposely left unrecorded, that, in the pages of the Bible, God, and not man, may supremely occupy us. It is enough for us that he was delivered, and the same Lord lives still to deliver us.

(To be continued.)

"THE ENTRANCE OF THY WORD GIVETH LIGHT."

By J. B.

THE above words are strikingly exemplified in Luke 24. It is one of the many features which make the chapter so instructive and attractive.

The Lord's sufferings and death threw the disciples into sorrow and disappointment; such a finish (or what appeared to them a finish), was so opposite to their expectations and hopes. The Lord had plainly made known to them, that, suffering and death awaited Him at Jerusalem from the hands of the rulers. He had also told them that He had come to give His life a ransom for many; and upon the very eve of doing so, they received from His hands the bread, with the words, "This is My body given for you." Nevertheless, when His death occurred they were plunged into sadness and disappointment.

They were in this state on the day of His rising again. That day should have been waited for in the joyful assurance all was not lost, for had He not said "The third day I shall rise again?" They ultimately were delivered from their distressing condition by the truth, but they reached this along a road they need not have come, and, had they been guided by the Word, would not have come.

It is just this that comes out in the Chapter.

We have, first, the women : then the two going to Emmaus ; and then the eleven with others at Jerusalem. Each company has a particular question. The women were perplexed because " they found not the body." The two going to Emmaus were sad because their expectations had not been fulfilled. The eleven and those with them " were terrified and affrighted " at the Lord's sudden appearance. The Word removes the particular difficulty, and meets at the same time the condition of sadness in which the whole company of the disciples were. To follow each case to the point of light and deliverance affords much instruction, because some of the details are suggestive of that which is important for the believer to-day.

The women had witnessed the closing events of the Cross, and followed the Lord's body to the tomb, " Beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid " (touching attention) ; then returned home, and prepared spices and ointments. All this displays love and devotedness, but not the sway of the truth. " The third day I shall rise again." The heart is engaged, but not an enlightened understanding, and one feels that the labour of love, and the spices and ointment were so much loss. To love is the first of all important things, according to 1 Corinthians, 13, but, in our exercise of it, we need the guidance of the truth. So " early in the morning " they come to the tomb to finish their self imposed task, but, instead of doing it, they stood within the tomb " much perplexed," because they " found not the body of the Lord Jesus." Its absence they could not account for. They could if they had only remembered, " The third day I shall rise again."

How different would have been their experience had they remembered, and had been guided by the truth. How painful, and, in one sense, unneedful are some of the experiences through which we pass on account of our ignorance, and through forgetting the truth. The truth sets free, and subjection to it keeps free : but this freedom is often not enjoyed. But where there is real love for Christ and devotedness, even though mingled with wrong thoughts and views, the Lord in His goodness waits upon such to instruct in the truth. Hence we find " Two men stood by in shining garments " to free them from their perplexity. " Why seek ye the living among the dead " ? introduces a rather searching question : it was calculated to cause reflection and exercise, for the women should have known that the body would not be in the tomb on the third day for they had been told, " The third day I shall rise again." They are

told emphatically, "He is not here, but is risen." "Remember how He spake unto you . . . saying, the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." The Lord had acted according to His word, hence the absence of the body. The women had not been governed by it, hence their perplexity.

The women remembered His word. They perceived doubtless that the testimony of the two men was according to it. The difficulty was removed. The reason for the absence of the body was clear. Their perplexity is removed. Probably they cared little that their spices and ointments were not required now they knew Jesus was alive. They loved Him too well for that ; nevertheless their experience had not been happy, and they had suffered loss, which they could have escaped had they remembered His word and been guided by it.

The case of the two disciples brings out something deeper. The sufferings and the death of Christ had disappointed their hopes and expectations. They expected Christ to restore Israel. As they journeyed to Emmaus "They talked together of all things which had happened." They "communed together and reasoned," but they could get no light. Their standpoint was wrong. They were viewing what had happened to their Lord from the point of their expectations, and not in the light of the Word. True indeed, Christ will deliver Israel, the Word is plain concerning it, therefore "We trusted" was right so far, and the Christ was the proper one to confide in. Every instructed believer to-day knows that to deliver Israel is His future work, and that He will do it, and that the hopes of Israel are at the present time in his safe keeping. The disciples, trust then was rightly placed. But there were other truths which they ought to have known, and had they known them and had been swayed by them, they would have escaped the disappointment and sadness which they suffered.

As they "Communed together . . . Jesus drew near and went with them." They did not know Him. He purposely kept them in ignorance because He intended to show them from the Word that the things which had happened to Him, so perplexing to them, were just the things which had to occur to fulfil the Scriptures concerning Himself. It would have interfered with His purpose if He had allowed them to identify Him at the first, through their senses, and in that way obtain deliverance from their sad condition.

But to have the Word brought home to them, and to perceive in its light the meaning of the sufferings and death of Jesus, was to be set free from the darkness in which they were, and to learn the competency of the word to rescue from imaginations and false expectations. The importance of this cannot be over-rated. In view of this, Jesus in the first place drew from them the cause of their sadness by two questions: "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another as ye walk and are sad"? and "What things"? Note, "and are sad," as showing that He marked their state. Doubtless He wished them to know this that they may feel that behind His questions there was sympathy. Why did He ask, seeing that He knew? Because, it seems to me, that disclosures on our part make us more amenable, and to instruct us in his patient grace, in which He so willingly listens to the story of our sorrows and their causes. He listened to them as they told Him of Himself—"a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people," and of His condemnation and death. Then of their confidence and expectations in Him as the one "which should have redeemed Israel"; of the testimony of the women, "that He was alive," and of those who went to the sepulchre and found what the women said was even so: "but Him they saw not." It was a story of facts. First, of a powerful life, the might of which has been displayed in word and deed. This had they seen, and it had established Jesus in their souls as a prophet, and they had accepted Christ as the Messiah. Having done so, they thought of, and looked for a national redemption of Israel; an earthly kingdom, with Israel in supremacy under Messiah. Their minds constantly revolved round that idea, though more than once Jesus told them that shame awaited Him at Jerusalem, not earthly glory such as they had before their minds.

Now, as before suggested, they were right in receiving Jesus as the Messiah, for He was, and is, Jehovah's Christ: and their confidence in Him was not misplaced as the redeemer of Israel, for he is Jehovah's servant to bring Israel again unto Him (Isaiah xlix. 5, first clause). But they made a mistake in building upon this hope, and allowing themselves to be swayed by anticipations as to the "How and the When" Christ would do what they looked for on Israel's behalf: and in not taking heed to the word which spoke of Jesus' suffering and death. They saw the expected Deliverer delivered up to the very Gentile power (from which they hoped to

see Israel emancipated) to be condemned to death," and that too by "the Chief Priests and our rulers." They witnessed the mighty One in word and deed "led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before its shearers, so he opened not his mouth." This they did not understand. Having through ignorance or forgetfulness, or both, missed the guidance of the Word, they could not avoid the consequences of their mistake. They were under its delusion as they travelled to Emmaus. "They communed and reasoned," but to no purpose. Mere reasoning is futile for clearing away mist and shadow, when God's ways result in that which is opposite to our cherished hopes and expectations. But faith in the written word, which carries with it understanding, is effectual in dispersing the shadows and the mists, for "The entrance of thy word giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple."

(*To be continued.*)

"There is no hour which is more profitably spent than that in which the Christian is alone with God over His Word, pondering upon God's thoughts in God's presence. A book learned, and a Spirit-taught, Christian are very distinct."

* * * *

"We look back to the Cross as the foundation of peace *with* God, we look up to the throne as the ground on which the peace of God garrisons our minds."

* * * *

"People who are following Christ never make a fuss or much show about it. It is quiet, steady, blessed work. Keep heart and eye on Christ, and all is well."

* * * *

"Watchfulness without prayer is presumption, and prayer without watchfulness is mockery. Watch and Pray and continue therein."

* * * *

"It is much harder to believe that I am without strength than that I am ungodly, conscience tells me that I am a *sinner*, but I must have my *will* broken before I know that I have no strength."

* * * *

"The world is an immense system kept up by Satan to blind the eyes of men, and to keep them away from God."

The Faith and The Flock.

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THE "TITANIC" CATASTROPHE.*

ITS LESSONS.

By PHILIP MAURO.

"The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low. . . . And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures."—Isa. ii. 11, 12, 15, 16.

IT fell to the lot of the writer and one of his family, through a disarrangement of their own plans, to take passage on the steamer *Carpathia*, sailing from New York, bound for Genoa, on April 11, 1912. In the early morning of Monday, the 15th, a few moments past midnight, a brief message was received by wireless telegraph to the effect that the *Titanic* had collided with an iceberg, and asking assistance. The story of the rescue of the *Titanic* survivors has been read, in all its details, more widely probably than the story of any similar event in the history of mankind. Therefore we need not repeat the incidents that became very familiar to us during the four days when we were in company with the survivors, and which we heard from the lips of many. During those days (and nights) we were called upon to witness harrowing scenes, to hear heart-breaking tales, and to view abject human misery upon a scale so vast as to make a deep and lasting impression. In view of the things thus seen and heard, it was natural we should have been led to ponder deeply and frequently the lessons which, through this great tragedy, God would teach, both to sinners and to saints. Some suggestions as to the more prominent of those lessons are here offered; and surely it behoves the people of God to give heed thereto, so that their benefit may not be lost. . . .

In pursuing this object, we should inquire at the outset the reason why the sinking of the steamship *Titanic* caused such an unprecedented commotion throughout the whole world; for certainly no similar event in the history of the human race has attracted

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so much attention in all lands. Not even the great earthquake at Messina and Reggio, involving the loss of an hundredfold more lives, made so wide and deep an impression, or caused so much public comment and discussion.

Obviously the explanation does not lie in the number of those who perished—which was approximately sixteen hundred. About a hundred thousand human beings die every day, and little notice is taken of it. Nor is the explanation found in the fact that they died a violent death. Fully sixteen hundred human beings meet a violent death every day in the year, and the fact attracts but little attention. Nor is the extraordinary commotion caused by this event attributable to the amount of suffering endured by the survivors. It was doubtless the greatest cargo of human misery ever brought to port that was landed from the *Carpathia* the night of her arrival in New York ; but the freight of grief and sorrow and suffering that she carried was but as a drop in a bucket to that already existing in that great city. The everyday suffering and distress in New York city far exceeds, in extent and intensity, that of the survivors of the *Titanic* ; yet there is no outburst of public sympathy, no spasm of generous giving for its relief, no dense crowds awaiting information of the state of the sufferers.

The explanation we are seeking lies outside all the circumstances that would naturally call forth the sympathy and appeal to the generous sentiments of human beings. It must be admitted that the very extraordinary and widespread interest in this particular human tragedy was due chiefly to the fact that the *Titanic* was the biggest and best-advertised thing on earth.

The greatest, the costliest, the most lavishly appointed, the best-advertised vessel ever built by man started, amidst a burst of enthusiastic acclamation to demonstrate man's mastery of the seas, to prove his ability to furnish upon the ocean-voyage every luxury of the hotel, the club, and the drawing-room, and to make a new " record." And a record she truly did make, but what a different one from that which her builders and owners had planned ! The eyes of the world were fixed upon that proud vessel as they never before have been fixed upon any work of man. Every one felt an added sense of personal importance as he read of her huge size, her wonderful and luxurious appointments, the enormous power of her engines, the smoking-rooms, the card-rooms, the tea-rooms,

the gymnasium, the swimming pool, etc. For did not this magnificent creation of human genius and human skill fitly represent the marvellous progress of mankind? And did it not embody a promise and prophecy of the approaching day when man's long struggle for supremacy over the adverse forces of nature and the difficulties of his "environment" shall be crowned with complete success?

The veteran commander of the doomed vessel, of whom all speak in terms of highest praise, and who doubtless was thoroughly skilled in the art of navigation, is reported to have said, just before embarking upon his last trip, that, thanks to modern inventions (water-tight compartments, wireless telegraph, etc.), *the day of great marine catastrophes was past*: and having uttered that remark, he straightway sailed the most perfect embodiment of modern ideas in naval architecture into the greatest of all marine catastrophes in the annals of the human race.

To those who think superficially about such things, the modern inventions, which have been called forth for the purpose of satisfying the modern madness for size and speed, have tended to make conditions of travel safer by land and sea. But in reality they do but tend to increase the risks; for they tempt men to take greater chances than they otherwise would or could take, and thus invite greater calamities. The world's opinion of the *Titanic* was in a sense correct. That stupendous and elaborate structure did fitly represent the ultimate development of the scientific civilisation of "man's day"; but more than that, its swift and utter overthrow is an epitome, a miniature, of the greater shipwreck that is coming in the fast-approaching day when the Lord shall arise to shake terribly the earth.

And so, in a still, calm, starlit night, with sea as smooth as the surface of a lake, while everything within and around tended to produce a sense of security, the *Titanic* met an obstruction in her path, her proud career was suddenly ended, her great mass rent in twain by the very steam-power that propelled her; and she sank, a pitifully helpless thing, to unfathomable depths.

One of the most conspicuous facts connected with this disaster is that the *size and speed* of the vessel were what caused its destruction. A mass of 45,000 tons, propelled at a speed of twenty-one

miles an hour, generates a momentum of which the mind of man can form no adequate conception. Such a mass moving at such a speed cannot be checked or turned aside quickly enough to avert collision with an object ahead, in the time available after such object has been sighted, on a moonless night. In fact, the swerving of the vessel after the iceberg was sighted seems to have had the effect of turning her side to the blow, and thus causing greater damage than would have resulted from a direct impact. A smaller and slower vessel is much more easily managed, and, moreover, suffers less from collision with another floating object. Thus it was the vessel itself that wrought its own destruction, and that *after ample and repeated warnings*.

Here we have a most pertinent lesson, in view of the headlong rush of modern society. The "world" in its course is gathering both mass and speed. Those who are managing its affairs, and those who have their portion in it and their hopes upon it, are proud of its *bigness* and of the *rapidity* with which it is moving. But as little do they think of the certain doom to which the world is rushing as did the occupants of the great boat think of the object that was lying in their path.

Moreover, abundant warnings had been given; and the warnings were acknowledged politely, with "thanks," and—*ignored!* Is it not precisely so with those who put their confidence in our modern high-speeded, high-powered, high-g geared civilisation? The warnings are given, they are understood, they are received with courtesy, and they are ignored. During those four days on the return trip of the *Carpathia* one often heard the remark that men were attempting too much and going too fast. The danger is recognised; but the speed is nevertheless constantly on the increase.

The fate of those who remained on the vessel—some because they believed, until *too late*, that there was no danger, and many because there were *not enough lifeboats for all the passengers*—furnishes a striking illustration of the truth of Scripture that *in Adam all die*. The eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell were not slain because they were sinners above all men that dwell in Jerusalem (Luke xiii. 4). Therefore, we may not suppose that those who perished in the placid sea that quiet, starlit night were any more sinful than other people. Moreover, we know not how many may have called on the Name of the Lord in that last hour

who never had truly done so before, and found His mercy awaiting them. Doubtless, those whose lives were cut off that night were an average company of people, containing the usual varieties of temper, disposition, and manner of life. The reason why they died was simply that they had nothing between them and the waters of death but a human device. The *Titanic* was, indeed, the perfection of human contrivance, ingenuity, and workmanship. It was supposedly "unsinkable" by reason of the water-tight compartments. Nevertheless, *all* who had nothing to sustain them but the massive hull of that great vessel went down to death. Whether their social standing was high or low, whether their characters were good or bad, whether they were rich or poor, whether educated or ignorant, whether first class or third class, whether captain on the bridge or stoker in the depths of the hold, all met the *same fate*. "In Adam *all* die." There were men on that boat of enormous wealth: it availed nothing. There were men of great intelligence: it was of no service in that hour. There were men of high character: it did not save them. There were men who controlled the resources of the world, so far as men can control them: they were no better off than the poor immigrant. The reason why they perished was simply—that they had *only the Titanic to sustain them*.

What a clear lesson may be read here by those who are trusting in their own works, or powers, or goodness, or in anyone or anything but the crucified and risen Son of God! Just as, in the sphere of the physical, human contrivances—water-tight compartments and the like—are wholly unavailing to keep out the waters of the sea when an accident such as we are discussing occurs, so in the sphere of the spiritual, when the hour for judgment comes, it will be found that human strength, human goodness, human ingenuity avail nothing against the waters of death. From death's power there is but *one way* of escape, and that is through Him who, being God over all and blessed for evermore, nevertheless became a partaker of flesh and blood, that *by death* He might destroy him who has the power of death, that is the Devil.

On the other hand, those who were saved were not saved because they were any better or more deserving than their fellow-passengers who perished. They were not saved for their strength, or culture, or wealth, or goodness. The reason why they were brought up in safety out of the great deep was simply because they

were *in the lifeboat*. Again it mattered not what the character may have been, nor what the past life may have been ; the fact that they were *in the lifeboat* was what made them safe. Precisely so, those who are spiritually saved are not saved because of their good character or good deeds, but simply because they trusted in God's Lifeboat, Christ Jesus, as it is written, "In Christ shall *all* be made alive."

Here we have a wonderful illustration of the two spheres—the sphere of the living, "in Christ," and the sphere of the dying, "in Adam." It would be hard for one who judged only by appearances to realise that those who were on the decks of the mighty vessel and had beneath them its massive hull, were really the perishing ones, while those in the narrow, frail-looking, and uncomfortable life-boats were being borne to a place of safety. Yet so it was.

We ask attention to the fact that those two spheres of *life* and *death* existed *for a while* side by side. During that critical time it was possible for a passenger, who was aware of his danger and had confidence in the lifeboat, to take a place in it. But the time came when there was a final separation between the living and the dying ; and *after that moment* there was no more passing out of death into life.

So it is with the world and its passengers. So long as the wrath of God, long justly due, is withheld, there is yet opportunity for those who are in jeopardy to put themselves in the place of safety. It requires but a step of faith to reach God's Lifeboat, Christ Jesus, who yet waits to *save* those whom He must otherwise *judge* for refusing the offer of the gospel.

Another fact to be noticed is that, when the rescued ones took places in the lifeboats, all distinctions that previously existed disappeared. There were no first, second, and third classes in the lifeboat. The person of wealth and culture had no advantage over the poor emigrant. There was but one way of safety, and that was *the same for all*. When the rescued ones reached the deck of the *Carpathia*, the first class passengers could in some cases hardly be distinguished from those of the steerage.

Just so with the salvation of God. The danger that confronts human beings is a *common* danger, and the salvation that God has provided, and that He offers to them, is a "common salvation"

(Jude iii.). "For there is no difference; for all have sinned and (do) come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 22-23). In God's Lifeboat all distinctions disappear. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 28).

Another very striking and characteristic fact, a fact that assumed great prominence in view of the disaster, was the comparatively trifling attention paid, in the construction of the great vessel, to the means for saving the lives of its passengers in the case of such an event as did actually happen. We understand that the cost of the vessel and its superb appointments was more than two million pounds, whereas the amount invested in lifeboats was insignificant. Two million pounds for magnificence and luxury; and probably not two hundred pounds for lifeboats! Just so it is with the people of the world. Everything is spent for that which ministers to pride, carnal ease, and the vainglory of life, while the means of safety are neglected. When visitors inspected the *Titanic* before her departure from land, they were shown, and they marvelled at, the sumptuous furnishings and decorations, the spacious saloons, the great stair-cases, the gymnasium equipped with every device for agreeable exercise, the many and varied arrangements that had been contrived to furnish amusement and entertainment during the last few hours of the lifetime of the *only passengers* that were ever to embark upon that prodigy of extravagance and pretentiousness. But which of them paid the slightest attention to the humble lifeboats? Those unobtrusive objects were ignored as not worthy of notice. Besides, they were for use only in case of danger, and people do not wish to be reminded of danger. Many of the things of the world are devised for the very purpose of preventing those who are in it from thinking of their peril. Moreover, has not the inventive genius of man thought to make the sailing of the seas almost perfectly safe? Did not the captain say that the day of great disasters at sea is over? Why, then, give any attention to the lifeboat?

But when the hour of danger came, that which had been passed by without a look became the object of supreme interest and importance—the only thing, indeed, in all that great vessel that was of the slightest value. Of what avail were the wonderful things upon which pains and money had been lavished, and which excited

admiration and astonishment? What could the gymnasium, or the elevators, or the swimming pool do for the threatened passengers? Nothing, and less than nothing. The great ship, and all that was in it, was not worth a farthing. All the vast sums of money that had been expended for the costly appointments had been spent for nought. Absolutely the only thing that was of any value in that hour of peril was the lifeboat; and *its* value was beyond all computation. . . .

There are two other lessons that have been much impressed upon the writer's mind in reflecting upon this great catastrophe; and these lessons, which are specially for believers, will now be stated with brevity.

First. Those who know the gospel of God's grace should be stimulated to increased diligence in imparting that knowledge to others. . . . We have reason for believing that there is, at this time, in view of portentous happenings in the world, whereof *all* thoughtful people are taking notice, an exceptional opportunity for quietly introducing the subject of the gospel in the course of ordinary conversations. We know of great results that have been brought about in this way. . . .

Second. The message of the last of the Apostles of Christ is specially appropriate for our day; and we would particularly ask the prayerful attention of the entire family of God, "little children, young men, and fathers," to this command: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of *the Father* is not in him" (1 John ii. 15). . . .

Therefore let us, who confess ourselves to be strangers and pilgrims on the earth, submit our hearts to be searched by the Word and Spirit of God, lest we be cherishing, unknown to ourselves, some secret attachments and affections for the great world and its "things." Our life is not there. It is hid with Christ in God. Let us, then, set our affections on things above, not on things on the earth, however attractive and seemingly harmless they may be. (Col. iii. 1-4).

"In reasoning with unbelievers, answer their conscience, not their questions, as the Lord did when one asked Him, "are there many that be saved?" He said, 'Strive to enter in *yourself*.'"

REMARKS ON OPEN-AIR PREACHING.

By H. D. WOOLLEY.

IMPORTANCE OF OUT-DOOR PREACHING.

I REMEMBER a conversation in Scotland a good many years ago in the course of which it was remarked that the people were forsaking places of worship and would not come in. The question was asked, what is to be done? With youthful zeal I answered: "Go out to them as Christ did. How often was the blue sky the roof of the building He preached in, and the grass did duty for the pews."

The thought I thus expressed came to me then with power; and now the day has become so much darker, and the Lord's coming is evidently so near at hand, one sees yet more the urgent need there is to carry out in *this* sense the commission of the risen Saviour: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." It seems to me we cannot lay too much stress on that command "Go!" It is not said, "Let them come into your buildings and ordinary services, and if they will not, so much the worse for them," but, "Go to them: seek them where they are."

Not, of course, that buildings are not very proper and desirable in their place. Especially is this so in a climate like ours—although to their honour, the zeal of the Salvation Army has carried them above even this difficulty. We remember that the Lord and the Apostles made frequent use of the synagogues. Still, it was in the open air that the great Apostle to the Gentiles first uttered in Europe the blessed truths of the Gospel (Acts xvi. 13). And in later centuries, on a many a hill side and in many a plain, Columba, Aidan and other missionaries announced the Glad Tidings to our heathen forefathers. The Reformation was fruitful in producing mighty open-air preachers. Great work was done by those earnest men whom Wycliffe sent out over the land, and it was to the outside—not the inside—of a church door that the intrepid Luther nailed his famous "Theses," and by that act nailed his colours—or rather his Master's colours—to the mast.

Then nearer our day, all England was aroused by the trumpet calls of such spiritual giants as Wesley, Whitfield, and Rowland Hill. Would there were such giants to-day! Nevertheless it is obvious

if so much good has been effected by the strenuous exercise in the open air of five talents, the same good, though in a smaller way, will follow the similar faithful use of one talent.

So surely as the Servant, in Luke 14, and the Servants, in Matthew 22, were bidden to go into the "highways" to find guests for the Feast, so surely earnest open-air evangelisation is a sign that the Holy Spirit is working, and without Him all preaching is in vain.

I suppose the most eminent evangelist of this kind that England or America has ever seen was George Whitfield, and therefore words of his on the subject will be timely and valuable. He said: "The fields are open in America as they were in England. I do not believe the Gospel will ever win its way among the people until there is a renewal of out-door preaching. DIRECTLY WE BEGAN IN THE OPEN-AIR GOD Poured OUT HIS BLESSING. The Command is "Go!"

A FEW PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

If diligent prayer should precede in-door preaching, there should be at least as much waiting on God before a like service outside—especially in view of its greater needs and difficulties.

And all whose hearts are in the work do well to show fellowship in a practical way by their presence and active co-operation. The larger the ring the better. Good singing is most important, and a well-played instrument is a great help.

Let us not think that anything will do for the open-air. I submit there should be no waiting on one another, and that the speaking should not be left open indiscriminately. How often a grand opportunity has been lost for want of some competent, responsible leader.

Certainly faith will count upon the Spirit's guidance, but since "God is not the Author of confusion," disorder or leaving things to hap-hazard would neither point to that guidance nor evidence true dependence. All admit that in-door Gospel Services should be subject to wise and Godly pre-arrangement, and no intelligent person ever suggests that this shuts out the Holy Spirit. Why then should the opposite practice be advocated out of doors? And if it be said there is a difference between in-door and out-door meetings of this description, surely the difference lies in this—that, the latter are far less easy, and consequently call for more care.

Should one who has had little or no experience in public speaking wish, with the leader's approval, to say a few words, it will be wiser to tell shortly what he has found Christ to be to his own soul, and not to attempt a discourse. But if any think that on these occasions they are unreasonably passed by, the field is large, and it will be open to them to strike out individually in some other spot or at some other time.

It hardly becomes a tyro like myself to offer these suggestions, but I venture to add here the immense need there is that all who speak should be consciously in the power of Divine Love. Then there will not be the scolding voice that makes hard hearts harder. It should be made most evident from the whole tone that men and women are *not being sought for any cause, place or denomination*, but solely for Christ Himself, and for their own highest good. As far as possible controversial points should be avoided and the positive truth preached, no listener having just cause to consider himself insulted by any remark made. "Be courteous." "Honour all men." "He that winneth souls is *wise*." And as the glory of God is the greatest thing of all, His Word should be read with due reverence, and every man's head should be uncovered at prayer.

ONE CONCLUDING WORD.

The conviction impresses itself increasingly upon the writer that the Gospel Service should not stand alone, but be part of a whole—I mean that it should be preceded and followed up by persistent, patient, and systematic house to house visitation in the neighbourhood. One fears tract distributing work has largely fallen out, and yet in these days when poison is diligently left at every door, there never was so much need for putting into the hands of the people at their very homes sound, sensible Christian Literature.

The LORD pronounced the children of this world wiser in their generation than we Christians are. Why should we not copy their wisdom just here? When a candidate puts up for Parliament he is *not satisfied with the big meeting at the Town Hall*; he addresses the people out of doors in various parts, and knows where to catch the men in the dinner hour. Not only so, but his many helpers canvass at every house, and with such perfect organisation that their work and time are laid out to the best advantage, their efforts never being relaxed until the last vote has been recorded.

Never had Conservative or Liberal such a cause to plead as we have, and oh! what tremendous issues are at stake. Political canvassers seek entrance for a fellow mortal into a Parliament of years or months. *We* herald the return and honour the Name of One who is about to wield the sceptre of the universe. They tell the people what good things their candidate will do for them if only he gets in. *We* claim their choice for One Who has already laid down His life for them and is waiting to bless them with everlasting good. Shall we be less in earnest than our political friends? Let us be up and doing, and never relax until the Day of Grace is over, the last choice made, the number of the elect completed, and our labours on earth exchanged for the rest of heaven and for the glorious services of our Saviour's manifested Kingdom! Because the time is short, may it be ours to "redeem" it. "The King's business requireth haste."

"Therefore, my beloved bretheren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

"BEGINNINGS."

V. THE FIRST PROPHET.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

GENESIS v. is one of the most solemn chapters in Holy Scripture.

It is a chapter of death. Eight times over we read of one and another that "he died." The wreck of all things here as the fruit of sin is thus brought vividly before us. Remarkably, right in the middle of this dismal catalogue of dying men, we read of one who did not die. "He was not; for God took him."

The man thus signalised by God's grace was Enoch—the first prophet. A few words as to this term, so often misunderstood. The common notion is that a prophet was a foreteller of things to come. But this will not do. Many passages in which the word "prophet" is found are altogether unexplainable upon this principle. Concerning Abraham, Jehovah said to Abimelech: "He is a prophet" (Gen. xx. 7); the same is said of all the patriarchs: Ps. cv. 15. Yet it was not given to them (generally speaking) to foretell the future. When Moses demurred with Jehovah about going before Pharaoh, he was told, "Aaron thy brother shall be thy

prophet"; and again, "he shall be thy spokesman unto the people" (Ex. iv. 16; vii. 1). Here we get the divine thought. The prophet was God's spokesman to the people; he was rather a "forthteller" than a "foreteller." This exactly explains the words of the woman of Samaria to the Lord Jesus: "Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet" (John iv. 19). He had so manifestly spoken to her from God, and had so laid bare her heart that she could not but say this to the Saviour. But while a prophet was thus not necessarily a herald of coming events, we shall find that Enoch did speak of things which have not had their complete fulfilment to this hour.

There are three things told us concerning Enoch in as many passages of Scripture. In Gen. v. 22, 24 we have his walk; in Jude 14-15 his testimony; and in Heb. xi. 5 his translation.

Let us consider his walk first. It is described thus: "Enoch walked with God," and this is twice repeated. To walk with God a man must be born of God, for flesh is absolutely incapable of entering into that which is divine. Nothing could be more decisive than the language of Rom. viii. 7-8: "the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Never was Satan more opposed to this humbling truth than at the present hour. In one way or another men's minds are filled with the thought that there is some good thing in flesh. Scripture speaks otherwise. To so religious a person as Nicodemus the Son of God emphatically declared that a man can neither see nor enter into the Kingdom of God apart from new birth by water and the Spirit" (John iii.).

There seems to be a suggestion in Gen. v. 22 that the dawn of the new life in Enoch synchronised with the birth of his son Methuselah. One can easily understand how this might be. Births and deaths are alike solemn family events, capable of being used by the Spirit of God to direct the heart to things eternal. Accordingly we read, "Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah; and Enoch walked with God *after he begat* Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters" (Gen. v. 21-22).

To "walk with" implies companionship. If you saw me going down the street in conversation with anyone, the suggestion would be that I appreciate his society. God values this in His people

more than anything else. It was here that Mary shone, in our Lord's day. It was not that He did not prize the hearty service of Martha, but He prized yet more Mary's delight in sitting at His feet listening to His word. Enoch is the first man of whom it is distinctly recorded that "he pleased God." While others were occupied with making for themselves a name and a place here, building their city and perfecting their crafts, "Enoch walked with God." The presence of God and communion with Him was more to his heart than anything a sin-cursed earth could give. How is it with us? We should know God better than Enoch. The Only-begotten Son having come into the world, and returned into His glory after accomplishing redemption, God is now fully revealed. The Father's name is declared. Our privileges are immensely beyond anything that could be known by Enoch. But are our hearts as responsive as his?

"Walk," moreover, means progress. He who sets out to walk in any given direction terminates his journey at some point in advance of that from which he started. What progress are we making in our souls? Some of us have had the knowledge of God many years, but what advance have we made therein? "I long to make spiritual progress," says one; "how can I do so?" What do you read, dear exercised soul? This is a reading age; everyone does something in the reading line. But with what do we fill our minds? The literature to which we devote ourselves forms us in a considerable degree. What kind of story do our book-cases or magazine racks tell? The profitless, if not positively pernicious stuff with which some believers feed their minds is sufficient of itself to explain the lack of progress which so many deplore.

Then how do we spend our leisure? It was once remarked: "Tell me how you spend your holiday, and I'll tell you the kind of Christian you are." Is our vacation time a season when we neglect more than usually prayer and meditation upon the Word, and the privileges of Christian fellowship? Is it a season when we put the flesh and its desires altogether in the forefront of our arrangements? Let us consider these suggestions, they may help us to see why our progress in the things of God is so feeble.

Enoch "before his translation had this testimony, that he pleased God" (Heb. xi. 5). And why should not we be equally sensible of the divine approval? "Beloved, if our heart condemn

us not, then have we confidence toward God " (1 John iii. 21). How many of us are going about with a condemning heart ?

The man who walked with God had a testimony committed to him. We find it in Jude 14-15: " Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." The man who values communion with God is sure to have His mind revealed to Him, for God loves to communicate His thoughts to His own. Enoch's prophecy, though it had a partial fulfilment in the flood, looks on to the day of the Lord. Indeed, all prophecy converges on that day. It would be a mistake to read any prophecy and endeavour to find an exhaustive accomplishment in events that have already taken place.

It is important to observe the use made of Enoch's utterance by the Spirit of God in Jude. He does not apply it to the world, but to the professing Church. This short epistle has for its theme the introduction, development, and judgment of evil in Christendom. " The ungodly amongst them " means wicked men amongst Christians. How many in our day, in pulpit and press, are saying " hard speeches against Him ! " The essential Deity and spotless humanity of the Saviour treated as matters to be trifled with, His every miracle denied, and His veracity impeached ! When divine long-suffering reaches its limit, the stroke of God will fall un-sparingly upon these appalling evils.

The witness was himself affected by his testimony. His soul felt the weight of it. Accordingly he named his son Methusaleh, which means " After he is dead it shall be sent." Are our souls influenced by the testimony that we bear in this day ? We speak oftentimes of the impending doom of the world, and also of the spueing out of the professing Church, but are our lives really affected by what we say ? Holy separation from every form of evil, and godly sobriety would surely characterise us were it really so.

The long-suffering of God seemed to respond to Enoch's faith in the naming of his son. The judgment of the ungodly was indeed held back until Methuselah was gone, yet his life was lengthened out beyond that of any other man who has ever trod the earth. What a God is ours !

A few words now as to Enoch's translation. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death ; and was not found, because " God had translated him " (Heb. xi. 5). " He was not ; for God took him " (Gen. v. 24). We cannot forbear contrasting his lot with that of Noah, another herald of the coming judgment. The latter was not removed from the scene, but was mercifully preserved through the ordeal, and then established in the purified earth ; Enoch was taken away before the judgment fell. Noah represents the pious remnant of Judah in the last days ; Enoch represents those who in this day believe in the Lord Jesus. Our proper hope is translation. Oh the blessedness of such a prospect ! Not death, but to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air is our true expectation. In 1 Thess. iv. the analogy between ourselves and Enoch is strikingly presented ; v. 17 reminds us of the first part of Heb. xi. 5 ; ver. 1 links itself up with the second part of Heb. xi. 5. We shall be translated presently ; let us seek to be transformed in our lives while we await so glorious a consummation.

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

CHAPTER II. VERSES 1-2.

By WALTER SCOTT.

DIVINE PROVISION FOR FAILING SAINTS.

" *MY little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous ; And he is the propitiation for our sins : and not for ours only, but also for the whole world.*"

The expression " little children " occurs in the authorised version nine times : Chaps. ii. 1, 12, 13, 18, 28 ; iii. 7, 18 ; iv. 4 ; v. 21. In two of these instances the word *paidia* should be translated " babes " (11, 13, 18). *Teknia* occurs seven times and expresses warmth of love and tender affection, a touching example of love from the aged apostle. All Christians are embraced within the compass of this word *teknia*. Christian childhood is signified by *paidia*.

" These things write I unto you, that ye sin not." John unites the apostles with himself in Chap. i. verse 4, " These things write *we* unto you that your joy may be full. But in our text, the apostle

writes in the first person singular. He presents the Christian position (chap. i. 7) in its three parts: in the light; mutual fellowship with all the redeemed; and cleansed by the blood. Then the two-fold nature of sin and sins is dealt with. These constitute in brief the things of which the Apostle writes (i. 5-10) to his beloved children "that they sin not."

"And if any man sin"! that is, any child of God, or Christian. The Apostle does not say that a Christian *must* sin—that would be sin's law from which we have been delivered (Rom. viii. 2), but through weakness or unwatchfulness he *may* sin. The law of the new nature is *holiness*. The law of the old nature is *sin*. Now in these two verses which really constitute a supplement to chapter one, we get the divine provision for defilement, for restoration of forfeited communion with God, and for practical maintenance according to the light. How rich, full, and adequate are the resources of grace!

"If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father." The English word "advocate" might signify a Court of Justice. But there is no judicial thought in the passage, nor are penal consequences of sin in question. These latter were dealt with righteously on the cross. There is no judicial judgment for believers—all that is past and gone. "Advocate" is the same word as in John xiv. 16, "And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter" (or *Paraclete*). ONE WHO TAKES UP YOUR CAUSE AND CARRIES IT THROUGH TO A SUCCESSFUL TERMINATION—such is the force and meaning of *Paraclete*.

Thus we have two intercessors—Jesus Christ in heaven and the Holy Ghost on earth. Our interests here and above are thus carefully and fully looked after even when we have sinned. The *Paraclete* is not "with God," but "with the Father." As High Priest in sustaining grace He represents us before *God* (Heb. ii., iv., vii.). As advocate His grace and intercession restores our interrupted communion with the *Father*. The child has sinned, a cloud rests upon the spirit, the joys of salvation, holy intercourse with the Father have for the time been broken off. Divine righteousness in respect to our sins has been met and established for ever. Judicial judgment upon the sin-producing nature, and upon the sins was a question between God and His Son—settled once and for ever on the cross. That mighty work can never be undone, nor can its

eternal efficacy ever be questioned. But while this is true, it is equally so that believers are liable to sin. As, therefore, righteousness has been made, and is maintained by Christ with God, that question is not embraced within the advocacy of Christ with the Father, which is to restore communion, for the moment sinned away. Our standing in God's presence, our acceptance by Him, refers to the persons for whom He is advocate. His advocacy leads to repentance, sorrow, and abhorrence of sin. The advocacy precedes any feeling on our part and, in fact, produces every right feeling in those who have sinned. Advocacy leads to confession.

But who is the Advocate? "Jesus Christ the righteous" One. Righteousness ever abides, never changes, remains untouched and eternally subsisting for every member of the redeemed family. But not only is He the righteous One, but He has made propitiation for our sins (Heb. ii. 17, propitiation, not "reconciliation"). Now He is that abidingly in the presence of God. Propitiation was made by blood-shedding on the cross and blood-sprinkling on the throne (Lev. xvi.). Propitiation having been made for our sins, He, in His Own Person, is, *that* and ever shall be. Thus His advocacy rests securely on this rock foundation—CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS ONE AND CHRIST THE PROPITIATION. This magnificent truth avails for the whole world "for our sins and for the world"; "*the sins of*" should be deleted; they are not in the Greek text. The rejection of the italicised words clears the sense. The Propitiation is for believer's sins, and also available for the world. God is on the mercy seat to receive all who come. He receives in grace on the ground of righteousness.

OUR INTERCESSORS.

O *Why* am I looking down here
And seeking my help from below,
When *Jesus* is always so near
And ready to aid me, I know?

As "God over all" He appears
Above all the power that can be,
Above all my doubts and my fears,
Engaged on my side to *Keep me*.

Then rise, Oh! my soul *high above*,
Thy trial, thy grief and thy care.
See *Jesus*, in wisdom and love,
Is pleading thy cause ever there.

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY:

The SAINT.

By R. E.

“Less than the least of all Saints.”

“I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.” (Gal. ii. 21).

TWO other considerations helped to sustain St. Paul in his arduous pathway. “If we suffer we shall also reign with Him”; and “The fellowship of His sufferings.” Not only had he present consolation, and the experience of present deliverance, but also the prospect of a complete answer to all the loss and trial here, as well as a full reward. The Apostle ever looked forward to the reign of Christ—“He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet,” was what he was never tired of insisting upon. The charge against him at Thessalonica was that he said, “There is another King, one Jesus.” So that St. Paul lived in no uncertainty as to the issue. If he was treated as the off-scouring of all things he knew that he was being preserved for a “heavenly Kingdom” and a certain reward. It is no wonder, then, that he sought “the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings.” He recognised that his Lord and Master was not reigning on earth at present. True saint that he was he did not shirk the cross. He could have sung,

“To me Thy cross with all its shame,
With all its grace be given.
Though earth disowns Thy lowly Name,
God honours it in heaven.”

Truly, as he says “the sufferings of Christ abound in us.” The list has been by no means exhausted. There was the care of all the Churches: “Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended and I burn not?” There was the forsaking of his own followers: “This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me”; “Demas hath forsaken me”; “At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me”; these and such like utterances tell the sad tale. But the saint in him shone out until the end: “I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.” There was the deadly and increasing opposition of his own countrymen and kindred: “Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.” Their want of recognition and their failure to accept his testimony cut him to the heart.

“ I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continued sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh ” (Rom. ix. 1-3). With the forlorn hope that he might yet win them he paid what proved to be his last visit to Jerusalem, as the bearer of alms to his nation and offerings. This led to some of the most painful encounters of his life, and to the protracted imprisonment at Cæsarea, where he was shut off from his beloved work and the saints so dear to his heart. This issued in his being sent to Rome, to further imprisonment, and finally after a brief respite, to death.

These are some of the outstanding incidents. But even his ordinary experiences would have crushed many a man less virile. In the following words he seems to give us a description of what was quite common to him—“ in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness ” (2 Cor. xi. 27). Well might he say: “ I have suffered the loss of all things.”

There was no undue boasting in all this. For if there was one thing more than another that marked this saint of God it was *humility* and *self emptiness*. He speaks of himself as “ the least of the Apostles, which am not meet to be called an Apostle ”; and as “ less than the least of all saints.” Yet in reality no saint has ever equalled him, much less excelled him. On the other hand, he could say, “ I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles,” and again, “ For in nothing am I behind the very chiefest Apostles,” and adds “ though I be nothing.”

If he gloried at all it was in the things that concerned his infirmities. He was so diminutive that at Damascus through a window, in a basket, he was let down by the wall and so escaped the hands of the Governor. He who was dependent for his escape, not upon some miracle, or marvellous interposition of Providence, but upon the fact that he was so small that he could be put through a window in a basket and let down by the wall, was also the one to be caught up to the third heaven. This marvellous contrast is somewhat obscured in the Authorised Version by the division of the chapter. He was let down and caught up. In an inferior degree he followed his Master even in this. “ He that descended is the

same also that ascended." What experiences this saint had! The potentates of earth desire to apprehend him, and his escape is due to his infirmities: he is then caught up to heaven. Not the first time, or the last, that heaven and earth are in disagreement. What can kings and governors do against a man in Christ who knows not whether he is in the body or out of the body, but becomes conscience of paradise and hearing unspeakable words, which it is not possible for a man to utter? Yet the Apostle is the first to recognise that he was after all a man of like passions with others, and that while the thought of his meagre physical proportions did not tend to elate him, the remembrance of this unique experience and the abundance of the revelation that accompanied it might. He was therefore exposed to the buffetings of Satan. He thus had a three-fold experience. Instead of being delivered from his persecutors in Damascus by the interference of divine power on his behalf, which might have lent him distinction, and made him a wonder in the eyes of men, his escape was due to that of which every recollection was only a cause of humiliation. Next he had an experience of a man in Christ—of something unspeakable—and finally of a most painful experience in his own flesh and of Satan's power to make use of it.

Nothing becomes more evident from a study of these experiences than that they all tended in one direction, viz. to lead the Apostle away from glorying in what he was before men, that he might glory alone in what God had made him in Christ. "Of such an one (*i.e.*, a man in Christ) will I glory, yet of myself will I not glory, but in mine infirmities." What schooling it needs to bring us to this point. The tendency in the present day is so often in the other direction. What a man is in Christ is thought little of, what he is before the eyes of his fellow mortals becomes almost everything. This last can be photographed, described, and accounted for; the other cannot. We do well, in the light of present day standards, to study well and with diligence the way in which this master among saints here presents himself. Three times over, in a few verses, he speaks of glorying in his infirmities. It is quite certain when he was caught up with Paradise and heard unspeakable things, he did not hear much about the great men of earth, nor about himself. He was in a scene which Christ filled, and he was in Christ. Did he want to look at himself much after that? or did he wish to draw

attention to himself? And every fresh sense of infirmity only made him more conscious that it was only what he had been made in Christ which really counted. And as we have seen, he reached the summit of Christian experience and saintship when he could say, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." He knew what it was to be in Christ—"caught up into Paradise"; he also knew what it was to have all the grace of Christ given to him.

Is it not along this path that every true saint of God is led? Is there not the experience of being let down in a basket, whatever form, in our case, it may take? and do we not have to learn that our true stature is what God had made us in Christ? and, finally, the lesson, that, His strength is made perfect in weakness? Self—the self that likes to be recognised, and have a place—resists this and dislikes it, but when once the sweets of it are tasted, the language of St. Paul becomes ours; we not only glory in what makes nothing of us, but "most gladly," and "take *pleasure* in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, &c., for Christ's sake."

Such is self, or in other words, the flesh—yes, even in an Apostle—that being caught up into Paradise would not displace it, nor would the abundance of the revelations. The flesh would use even these to glory in and bring distinction to itself, and even a saint like Paul was actually in danger of being "exalted above measure." What a lesson to us. Our very Christianity will make us unchristian, if we are not careful. How much we know that others do not; how much Scripture we can interpret; how orthodox we are, or unorthodox, may all tend to puff us up, as may the blessing of a stainless reputation, and the goodwill of our brethren. But grace never has this effect. For grace gives the sense that a favour has been granted to us, which was wholly undeserved, and to which we had no claim; but is all due to the love and goodness of another; sin is realised, and weakness is felt.

It is just here we reach the culminating point of this experience we are dwelling upon, so graphically unfolded in the Apostle's autobiographical sketch. It is easy to discern the difference between what we are in Christ and what we are in ourselves. It is the latter which humbles us; and the more so, perhaps, as we become conscious of the former. The Apostle in describing the first, tells us he knew not whether he was in the body or out of the body. When the thorn in the flesh came, he soon knew. The agony of impalement

was an experience which made him very conscious of being in the body. But, on the other side of the account there was a fresh experience of grace. "And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Here was a new asset which left an infinite margin. If we are to understand how great were the resources thus placed at the disposal of the Apostle we must connect the "My Grace" of this passage with 2 Cor. viii. 9: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." Here the whole mission and ministry of Christ, right on to and including the laying down of His life, is connected with grace as its source and power. If this grace was sufficient for all that the Master undertook and endured, it was surely sufficient for the servant. And he proved it so. This is why he was enabled to follow Christ so closely. Is there any higher form of sainthood? To be like Christ—to tread His path—to manifest His character, and to triumph over adversity as He did—this is surely to reach the pinnacle.

St. Paul in measure attained this. We say "in measure," for even *he* never reached perfection down here. "Not as though I had already attained," he says "either were already perfect." Moreover, one distinction has ever to be borne in mind: the grace was Christ's not Paul's. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ"; this is never said of the servant. And again, "My grace is sufficient for thee." We never find St. Paul assuming this attitude, employing such words with reference to himself. He could not become the source of grace to anyone else. At the close of this very same epistle it is, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (not the grace of Paul) be with you all." Thank God He can hand on this same grace to us, as being for us as much as for Him, but the grace He hands on is still the grace of Christ. Again and again when referring to his labours he attributes all to the grace of God. "By the grace of God I am what I am," he tells these very Corinthians, "and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me." (1 Cor. xv. 10). And, again, to Timothy he writes, "And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

Yes, it was grace—God's free giving—that made the Apostle what he was, whether as saint or servant. And blessed be God,

that same grace is for us. For, as already said, he who in chap. xii. of 2 Corinthians speaks of Christ's grace to him, in chap. xiii. says: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." It does not come to everyone in the *same measure*; but what comes to even the youngest and feeblest saint comes from the *same source*, and is of the same kind. For, as the Apostle says in writing to the Ephesians, "Unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."

There is one intensely solemn thought arises in connection with this matter—we may receive the grace in vain. It may be all useless to us; either because we do not draw, or do not use what we have drawn. As we have seen, the Apostle could say of himself, "The grace that was bestowed upon me was not in vain; and as regards others, he writes, "We then as workers together with Him (God) beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain" (2 Cor. vi., 1). We may receive it in vain in two ways. First, by failing to draw; second, by failing to use what we have drawn. A simple illustration may make plain how this can be. High up on the hill outside the town is the reservoir full of water; it is conveyed by pipes to the houses below and carried right into the dwellings of the people. But supposing the taps are never turned on all would be in vain. The supply of water is ample, the pipes have conveyed it within reach of everybody, but for all practical purposes it is just as if there were no water at all. But supposing the tap is turned on and water drawn, but no use is made of it. The floor of the house and the steps leading up to it remain dirty, nothing is cleaned; and nobody's thirst is quenched. In this case is not the water received in vain, just as much as in the other? This is precisely how many treat the grace of God. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared." Salvation is brought to our very doors, yea inside our houses, but it may not be received in any real sense. These are the people who never turn on the tap. Others turn on the tap—they are justified—but they never make any further use of God's grace, or very little, forgetting that the grace that brings salvation is meant for everyday use, and teaches us how to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present age, that we may be a peculiar people zealous of good works. (See Titus ii. 11-14). Would that we thought as much of saving our life as we do of saving our souls!

The distinction here made is not arbitrary, but strictly in accordance with Scripture, and with the facts of everyday life. There is the grace that justifies, and the grace that helps. "Being justified freely by His grace" (Rom. iii. 24) tells us of the one: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may . . . find grace to help in time of need"; tells us of the other. Other distinctions might be drawn, but in pursuing the subject one should be wandering too far away from our main theme. Suffice it to say, that, when our Lord said to his servant Paul "My grace is sufficient for thee," He certainly was not referring to justification, but He was referring to grace in the sense of powers bestowed. The context makes this perfectly plain.

A great preacher relates how, at a time of considerable pressure and anxiety, he was riding home after preaching, feeling a good deal cast down, when the words we have been dwelling upon flashed into his mind. The emphasis seemed laid upon the "My"—"My grace is sufficient for thee." In his then mood he says, he felt something like a little fish swimming in the mighty ocean and saying, "I am afraid there will not be sufficient water."

Is it not worth while studying the life of one, in whose case it is not wealth and prosperity which render him impervious to the ills of life; nor a philosophy which enables him to endure them, but grace which transmutes them all into blessings, so that they become so many avenues through which that grace can reach him. This man has found the secret of the ages—this is the true alchemy.

"THESE" TWO "AGREE IN ONE."

LUKE vii. 36-50 ; JOHN xii. 1-8.

By F. C. JENNINGS.

HOW very beautiful are the moral links between the two dear women: she of Luke vii. and she of John xii. Wide apart as they are in many respects they yet join hands in one. Simon the Pharisee of Luke is changed to Simon the leper. Early in the Lord's ministry is the one incident; at the very end of it is the other. Bethany is the scene of the later; unknown, but possibly Nain in the north, is the scene of the earlier. Separated thus by distance, both of time and space, they are, in a way, morally united.

Look at the two women : she of Luke's gospel has just found *Him*. *She*, who is the outcast, the offscouring of the place in which she dwells—*she*, whom all people of respectability, morality, or religion shun as they would leprosy—*she*, whom the great, the refined, the noble count but as the dust that they tread under foot—*she* has discerned in that lowly Man, through all the veil of His humiliation, none other or less than God, the very God—and God, oh wonder of wonders—not against, but *for* her ! The fountains of her being are unloosed, all the hardness of her heart is melted, and the soft and gentle showers of penitence and self-judgment flow fresh upon His holy feet. What does she know of Him ? Just what her own deep needs have made known to her. How much, and yet how little ! Nothing of His work, no intelligence has she in His truth—never has she, as far as we know, “ sat at His feet and heard His word ”—very uncertain and confused might her answers have been to the questions usually asked of converts. But she knows *Him*, she has found *Him*, and all she has is straightway His. She will pour the penitent affection of her heart upon His feet through her tears ; press all her womanly glory into the same blessed service, as she wipes those feet with her hair ; and show her tender, if timid, love, and reverent adoration of His Person, by kissing those feet and anointing them with the spikenard. Is this not better indeed than all frigid correctness or cold-hearted orthodoxy ? But look at the other woman.

Surely there are great differences indeed in the scene in John xii. It is a supper made by no self-satisfied, naturally religious man ; but in the house of a leper ; necessarily a healed leper, and as leprosy was beyond all human power to cure, we may justly infer that, as Lazarus was there, the living evidence of His power over *death*, so Simon was there, the living evidence of His power over leprosy, or (shall we interpret ?) *sin*.

The names being the same suggest to us that the two men also may touch each other, although in the way of contrast. The Pharisee gives Him no true food for His supper ; he provides nothing that can satisfy or refresh the Lord Jesus. Nay it is neither called a supper, nor a feast made for Him. He merely “ desired Him that He would eat with him.” He was not the object, the honoured Object of the feast. In John, “ they made *Him* a supper.” He was the One solely in view ; it was for Him, and Him alone that the

supper was made. No Pharisee, complacent and self-satisfied, ever did, ever could, or ever will make Him a supper. But a leper, a healed leper, is a very suitable provider for the Friend of publicans and sinners. Yes, in Bethany, He is feasted to His own blessed taste. There, His very host is a glorious evidence of His power over sin, that He can make the foulest leper clean. There, Lazarus sits, a glorious evidence of His power over Death, and that our dread enemy is a conquered foe. There, Martha stands, shall we say a happy evidence of His power over care and anxiety, for now she serves without rebuke from Him, as without complaint of her sister. And there, too, is she whom He has not cleansed from leprosy; whom He has not raised from a tomb, but who is the one to give Him the most acceptable service of all—to break once more that alabaster box of very precious ointment on His feet, and to wipe them with her hair—*just as the woman of Luke vii. did long ago.* These women surely touch, and are, in their testimony, one.

For as the unnamed, unknown sinner in Luke says: “It needs but to know Him *in the slightest*, and you will give up all that you have, won by His love and grace; and count all but loss for Christ,” the *well-known* Mary says: “He is worthy of the same worship and adoration *at the end* as at the beginning; when, after sitting long at His feet and hearing His word, the heart has been flooded with divine intelligence as to His dying love, nothing is too precious for Him,” and she thus may be said to echo the words: “Yea, verily, and I do count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.”

The women are, in a sense, *one*; the alabaster boxes of ointment are *one*, as HE is One, “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”

My fellow-believer in Him, may we too “help those women who laboured” thus to exalt Him and be one with them in breaking the choicest treasures that we in our poverty may have on His feet. What mattered it though one had known Him only for an hour, and the other for years. Each could only give Him *all*. What matters it that you may know Him well; and I know Him so little, that you have clear insight in His truth, and are far beyond me in your intelligence in His blessed ways; you are only, after all, at His Feet, and there, by grace, may I be too. And if a heart that knows, and knows no more than the sweetness of this word, “Thy sins be

forgiven thee" (sins that are "many" in very deed) may pour its poor worthless treasure on His Feet, you—I, may each still break some alabaster box of ointment there, and meet with the same gracious acceptance, and be in the same happy circle of fellowship as the two women, and with all whom the same knowledge brings to the same place.

"Oh better far than all self-complacent morality; better than all mere external ecclesiastical correctness; better than mere doctrinal correctness; better than all religious reputation," says the woman of Luke vii., is it to be at His Feet as one forgiven, for none other in Simon's house thus anointed Him. "Yea, this is true, indeed," cries the woman of John xii., "and more than that, better than having been cleansed from literal leprosy; better even than having been raised literally from the dead, is it ever to sit in conscious need at His Feet and hear His word," for none other, in Simon's house, thus anointed Him.

But is not this better part still open to the poor, the needy, the ignorant, the weary till He come?

But perhaps we have no alabaster box of very precious spikenard. Never mind; there is something left us, no matter how poor we are in every sense, that is very costly in His eyes, for is it not written, "A broken and a contrite heart thou wilt not despise"?

"THE ENTRANCE OF THY WORD GIVETH LIGHT."

(Continued).

IT is worthy of notice, that though the Word was absent from their minds, a way out of their despondent state was by the testimony of the women opened for them. What the women told them had delivered the women from their own perplexity. It would have delivered the disciples had they in truth accepted it, but seemingly it only added for the moment to the difficulties of the case as viewed by them, because the Word which the testimony established was not believed. This suggests that, no testimony will be accepted, which accords with the truth, unless the Word is believed, which the testimony corroborates. This is the key to the reason why testimonies to the truth are refused.

Jesus knew (I need not say) the root of the disciples' trouble, and He discovers it to them: hence, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory"? A searching question, and not without severity. They were thoughtless (that is the force of the word "Fools"), because they did not take into consideration the prophetic utterances, and allow them to have their due and proper weight. Their hearts were sluggish to believe them, because they were set upon the redemption of Israel. Their love for the nation, since the Christ had come, led them to cherish the idea the time had arrived for its accomplishment. Filled with this expectation, their very love made their hearts slow to believe anything else that was contrary, and for the Christ to suffer, and to enter into His heavenly glory was contrary to their desires, for it meant in result the nation left in an unredeemed state, until the Lord's time had come for its redemption. This was God's purpose, but not what they wanted, hence their hearts were slow to believe. From this we can, I think, learn that unbelief has its root in the moral state of the heart and mind.

Jesus, having brought out the cause of their trouble, succeeded in putting them right by the Word. "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." We are not told the particular Scriptures: the general statement is sufficient to show us that Christ put them right by the Scriptures of truth. His exposition in all probability embraced more than His sufferings, death and resurrection, for it was "concerning Himself," which includes more. Be that as it may, the great thing is, the fact that Jesus opened up to them the Word, that in its light they may understand that the events of the Cross which had perplexed and saddened them, and for the time being cast down their hopes, had their place in the ways of God, and were in no sense contradictory to His purposes of blessing, nor to Jesus being the Messiah, and the One who would redeem Israel. The divine teaching of Jesus restored their confidence by strengthening their faith in Himself, in the face of all that which appeared so contradictory. Their words, "Did not our hearts burn within us . . . while He opened to us the Scriptures," imply this. Their sadness and gloom vanished. They felt the power of the Word as the Shepherd of the Sheep brought it to bear upon His own sufferings.

His unfoldings brought them into the light of "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and entered into His glory."

At this point they reach Emmaus, and they constrain Him to abide with them. He goes in to tarry with them and makes Himself known in the breaking of bread—the symbol of His death. "And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him." Henceforth they are to know Him, not in connection with Israel merely, but in connection with all that His death had opened out to them. The two disciples did not remain long at Emmaus. Christ had gone so they went also, and got back to their brethren and found them gathered together.

"The Eleven and them that were with them."

The first words to them are "The Lord is risen indeed." They could add as additional evidence their own personal experience, and did. But none were yet in the calm possession of the blessed truth. They show this by being "terrified and affrighted and supposed they had seen a spirit" when "Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them." His sweet salutation, "Peace be unto you" had not the effect of keeping them from being "terrified and affrighted." The manner of His incoming among them, consistent with His blessed resurrection state, was not understood by them in that light, therefore their supposition. Though for a time it perturbed them greatly, it was good for them that He came into their midst as He did, for by it they could learn what might their Lord had as the Risen One, and that conditions insurmountable to them, formed no barriers to Him.

But the supposition must be removed. Therefore in tender consideration He said, "Behold My hands and feet, that it is I Myself . . . for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." Then "He shewed them His hands and feet." For since the supposition had entered their minds that "they had seen a spirit," it was essential it should be removed, because if not in all likelihood the fact of the resurrection of His body would be lost. It was not with them as with Thomas—no belief unless the print of the nails in His hands, etc. were seen, but, was it a man or spirit that had appeared in their midst? That is to say, was their Lord a spirit or a real living man? Jesus demonstrated to them that He was a living man—the same Jesus who before had died—and the body in which He appeared before them, was the same in which He had died, though changed. Views of the resurrection held and expressed by many to-day show the necessity of this for us to-day.

But still something more was needed, for "they yet believed not for joy and wondered." This Jesus furnished them with (for He waited upon their weakness) by eating before them of the fish and honeycomb they gave Him. As He ate they had time to contemplate Him as He appropriated the meat they gave Him—He did that which they had need to do (eat) to supply the need of their bodies. He was a man then. But sight and demonstrations to the senses are not the basis of faith. Sight and senses are not infallible witnesses: besides such evidences would leave unsettled the questions raised by the sufferings and death of Christ.

Jesus therefore "said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me." He recalls to them thus the fact that the prophetic scriptures concerning Himself which He had spoken to them about had to be fulfilled. Nothing had occurred to Him but what He had pointed out to them before. The Cross, so incomprehensible to them, fulfilled the word. "Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the scriptures." And again refers to His sufferings, death and resurrection, saying, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day." This and more they henceforward were to understand, and, understanding, able, as "witnesses of these things," to announce "repentance and remission of sins—in His name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem."

They were now free from their embarrassments, from the sad and perplexing condition into which the sufferings and death of Christ had thrown them. They had reached certainty and deliverance, but had reached it along a road of disappointment and tears. They had missed a happier way—the path of faith in the written word, had they come along that path they would have escaped the mourning and the weeping which they endured. They would not have felt less, but they would have felt differently because they would have waited in peace, for the morn of the third day, knowing all was not lost, and the enemy had not really succeeded; that the Cross with its sufferings and death would be answered by the resurrection, and that their hopes would be realised in the Lord's own time.

I repeat, they had missed the happier way of faith, but doubtless this mistake became a blessing to them for then as now "All things

work together for good to them that love God"; for by it they could learn that, expectations not according to the Word will not be realised, but end in disappointment; and that the written Word only can supply answers to questions which may arise.

To say that the Light of the Word is much needed to-day is only to state what has been pointed out many times, but it is necessary to emphasise it because the condition of things in Christendom and in the professing Church is perplexing and unsettling. All belonging to Christ are safe enough. They will sooner or later be called out of the ruin to meet the Lord in the air. But we need light and understanding now, for it is right. Light discovers things, enables those who have eyes to see to see them clearly. Understanding enables us to see things in their proper relation. "The entrance of Thy Word" gives both. But note, when it *enters*, not otherwise. When it does enter we think and feel things according to it. We are not swayed to the right and to the left according as conditions change, but walk steadily on through the surrounding darkness in peace, unperturbed by, though deeply sensible of, the present departure.

The Late Hugh Delaney.—Our brother Hugh Delaney would be known to a good many readers of *The Faith and the Flock*. After a long and trying illness he passed away some weeks ago, leaving a wife and two young children almost totally unprovided for. Called from the mine to serve the Lord, he devoted himself faithfully to this service and was blessed both to the Lord's people and the unconverted in his ministry. He endeared himself to many. A fund is being raised to place the widow in a position to earn a livelihood, and we heartily commend this matter to any who are able to contribute. Donations should be sent to Mr. John Scott, Orchard House, Carluke (Scotland).

"It is one thing to be occupied with the glory, and *another* with the Person of Christ. He Himself is the one that fills the heart, and the One that fills Heaven; He is the centre of all."

* * * *

Mr. Walter Scott's well known book on *The Revelation* can now be obtained at 3s. 6d. instead of 7s. 6d. as formerly. A second edition has just been issued.

The Faith and The Flock.

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By R. E.

“Less than the least of all Saints.”

GALATIANS II. 20 furnishes us with another secret of St. Paul's life as a saint. “For I through the law,” he says, “am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless I live : yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God ” (Gal. ii. 19-21). Here we see again it was the apprehension of grace that made the Apostle the saint he was. Let us try and understand the force of what he here sets before us.

“I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.” The principle of the law was, “The man which *doeth* these things shall live by them.” It is manifest, therefore, that, as far as the law was concerned, a man was shut up to his own life. This was not the same as living unto God, for, evidently, the Apostle intends to place the two ideas in contrast. He became dead to the law that he *might* live unto God. The word “might” has the force of “in order that.” It was through the law he became dead to the law. The law cursed a man if he did not keep it. Do it or die, was its principle. When the death penalty is borne the subject of it is put beyond the reach of law. The law has nothing to say to a dead man. This is the position the believer reaches through Christ's death on his behalf. “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us.” So the Apostle adds : “I am crucified with Christ.” “Nevertheless, I live.” He was still the same personality, for it was in relation to law only that he had died (as far as the present passage is concerned) ; yet he himself was superseded, for he was not set free to live as he pleased : “Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Christ living in a man was certainly on a higher plane than law keeping. But what was the motive power for this ? He tells us. “The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

And here, what it is to "live unto God" comes into view. As we have shown, it is in contrast to living under law. Nor is it the same as living *for* God. The two expressions must not be confounded. Living *for* God is the result of living *unto* God. This last describes a life that is lived in the enjoyed sense of all that God now is to the one that believes in Jesus. This is the very antithesis of law. Law was the setting forth of God's requirements—what He had a perfect right to *demand* from man. The voice of law proclaimed that God looked for love and required it. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c."

Now look at the contrast to this. What the Apostle says in ver. 20 of our passage is, "The Son of God Who loved me." How different! The Son of God did not come to earth to *demand* love, but to *reveal* it. It is the difference between Sinai and Calvary; between law and grace; between what makes us dread God, and what makes us love Him. It is the knowledge of this difference that makes a saint. We speak, of course, of the life, and not merely of the calling in virtue of which every believer becomes a saint.

Saint Paul lived unto God. The love that is in God was revealed to him in the Son of God. "The Son of God, Who loved me"—how different this from law. How different from One I did not know, demanding a love I could not give. And what is the extent of this love? He "gave Himself for me." Can any love do more? This then, after all, is God. He found no love in the creature, but He found love in Himself. A love that could give, and, in giving, give all. When I know this I live unto God. What a life that must be which is lived in the full enjoyment of all this.

In order further to understand what it is to live unto God, we must notice the change in ver. 20 from the title Christ to that of the Son of God. This is not an arbitrary distinction. Nor could the two be transposed. To say "I am crucified with the Son of God . . . and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of Christ," would be to destroy the force of the passage. For the titles of Christ are not used in Scripture in any haphazard fashion. The simple and primary meaning of Christ is *anointed*. It is an *official* title. Whereas Son of God is essentially moral and personal. The earliest use of it denotes this. The Angel said to Mary, "That *holy* thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Again, Rom. i. 3, "Declared to be the Son of God with power

according to the spirit of *holiness*." There was in Him absolute conformity to God's nature. "Son" speaks of "image" and "likeness." Thus God was perfectly expressed in Him. This doubtless is the thought conveyed by the title, Son of God, in the passage we are considering. The Apostle not only knew Jesus as the Christ—the One Who is to fill a certain position; but he knew Him as the One in Whom the very glory of God had become effulgent—God's nature made known. As John states it: "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath *declared* Him."

This gives us the force of "I live *by the faith of*." It is that particular faith which is the result of Christ being known in this particular character. It does not mean the faith which Christ exercised as a man when He was here, but the faith we have in knowing Him in connection with what this special title—the Son of God—involves. The glorious revelation of God, which had been given in the Son of God, filled the Apostle's soul. He lived by this. He no longer looked at himself—it was no longer a question of his ability to meet the law's demands—his eye rested upon One Who had not only met all these demands, but in doing so had brought to light the mercy and love of God. In one word, it was not what *he* was, but what God was. *This* henceforth was the portion of his soul.

In this way we are led to see the nature of the life the Apostle lived as a saint. We say "a saint," because it must not be thought this experience was something peculiar to him as an Apostle. Far from it. What he describes here is true for every Christian. He speaks in the singular, doubtless, because of the special circumstances that gave rise to the epistle. These Galatians were in danger of giving up grace and putting themselves under law. The Apostle does not see fit to give them a mere treatise, but he uses the personal note; as much as to say, This is *my* Christianity; this is what I have experienced and this is how I live. Is there not all the difference between giving way to introspection, brooding over a heart beclouded with regrets at shortcoming and defects, if not with absolute failure—and turning the eye away from all this to some fair landscape bathed in the sunshine of God, that yields everything that sight and sense can desire? This is only a faint image of the experience the Apostle here describes. He had become

dead to the law—his eye no longer looked within. His eye rested upon an object that enthralled him. He lived by the faith of the Son of God ; and this Son of God had loved him, because God loved Him.

If our life is linked with a love such as is here described, has not the soul reached perpetual sunshine ? “ The Son of God Who loved me and gave Himself for me.” A love not satisfied with words, but proved in deeds. This is the love for which life hungers. And it may be ours. Let us never forget that while we are dwelling upon a little bit of Apostolic autobiography, yet, as has already been suggested, it is as a Christian rather than the *messenger* of Christ that St. Paul here presents himself. It is interesting to connect his statement here with another in John xi. 5. “ Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.” St. Paul, as it were, adds “ and me.” The Son of God Who loved *me*. And may not the list be indefinitely extended ? Have not believers all down the years been adding their names ; and may not we subscribe ours ? Surely. It is open to all to live this life of faith. The Son of God came to be known, and He delights to be known—look how He turned round when that woman touched Him, in order that she might know Him as well as receive healing—and His love is for all. In many an autobiography we get an experience which is personal to the writer and which few, if any, can share—the qualifications or the opportunities may be lacking—but here it is not so. This life is common to all who seek acquaintance with the Son of God. And is there any life that is higher, better, or more satisfying than the one the Apostle lived, and which he describes for us ? “ The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God.”

It was this life of faith, which had for its object the Son of God, that produced in the Apostle such approximation to Christ. He tells us, in the first chapter of this same epistle upon which we have been dwelling, the purpose of God with regard to him. “ When it pleased God, Who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by His grace, *to reveal His Son in me* ” (chap. i. 15-16). Earlier on he speaks of the revelation of Jesus Christ *to him* (ver. 12). This is Christianity. It is this that amongst other things differentiates it from all other religions. It is more than a religion ; it is a revelation. It is more than mere moral philosophy—even the highest ;

it is the revelation of a Person. It is this that makes saints. The objective produces the subjective. The One revealed to us is formed within us (see Chap. iv. 19). Religion of itself can never accomplish this. St. Paul tells us in this very passage that, not only was he a religious man, but profited in the Jew's religion above many of his equals, "being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers."* Alas! is not Christianity, to-day, with many, reduced to a religion and nothing more—a round of ceremonies and duties. What a grandeur invests Paul's conception of Christianity—God's Son to be revealed in him. Religion may tell us what we ought to be and to do, but it does not enable us to be or to do that which it requires. Christianity reveals what God is, and thus becomes a transforming power in the soul. This was God's intention even when He gave men a religion. For though the law in itself was not designed to reveal God directly, yet, side by side with it, there were declarations that came as flashes of light revealing God. Two examples out of the Old Testament will suffice. This is God's revelation of Himself to Moses after the people had proved themselves incapable of keeping the law and the tables of stone had been broken—"The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." And to Jeremiah: "But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I DELIGHT, saith the Lord" (Ex. xxxiv. 6-7; Jer. ix. 24). How little this was understood by the most religious people of Christ's age, we can find out from two utterances of His: (1) "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless"; and (2) "But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God" (Matt. xii. 7; Luke xi. 42).

Paul's saintship was of a higher kind than the foregoing. He knew that there must be a certain amount of outward form; but he also knew that where the spirit was lacking, outward form was meaningless and valueless. He knew that the Son of God had loved him, and that His death had accomplished whatever was required to settle divine claims and satisfy the divine glory, and henceforth he desired that that One should be seen in him. It is worthy of

* Yet a persecutor at the same time.

remark, too, that the One he preached was first of all evidenced in his own life. "*It pleased God . . . to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him.*" He preached One revealed to him, and revealed in Him. No wonder his preaching was with power and effect. He was not like the one of whom it is said that he preached so well and lived so badly, that when he was in the pulpit his people wished he was never out of it, and when he was out of it, they wished he was never in it. It is what people see in the manner and deportment of the preacher, both when speaking and in daily life, that tells more than mere words, however eloquent. God revealed His Son in Paul that he might preach Him.

What were the two outstanding characteristics of this new life? *Faith and love.* To these same Galatians he writes: "*For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*" These two qualities are what he specially refers to as marking both the saints at Ephesus and Colosse (Eph. i. 15; Col. i. 4): and they preeminently characterised himself. Here is his own description: "*And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*" While for Timothy, to whom these words were addressed, he desires the same thing: "*Hold fast the form of sound words*" he says, in his second epistle, "*which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus*" (chap. i. 13).

Such were the features of the Apostle's spiritual life. And might it not be truthfully affirmed that Faith and Love were the outstanding features of the earthly life of the Lord Jesus? They must, therefore, be expected to characterise saints who are said to be "in Christ." And through all St. Paul's hazardous and arduous life; through all his disappointments, cares and vicissitudes, this faith and love never failed him—all that men and Satan and even the saints could do to him, never weakened the one or chilled the other.

(To be continued.)

"Make the tree good, and his fruit good. I cannot do that, the only thing is to kill it. And indeed I cannot do that either. But God has done it, and I can therefore say, I am dead and my life is hid with Christ in God."

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

CHAPTER II. ; VERSES 3-12.

By WALTER SCOTT.

ETERNAL LIFE IN US CHARACTERISED BY OBEDIENCE, LOVE AND
DIVINE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

“ And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him ” (vers. 3-4).

“ Know,” “ known,” “ knoweth ” are characteristic words of the Epistle, occurring nearly thirty times. God would have His people established in Divine certainty. Human dogmatism and divine knowledge of God and of our own salvation are very different things. The former may make a man intolerant of contradiction, self-assertive and overbearing. The latter imparts quiet strength and establishes the truth in the soul on divine authority.

“ We know Him ” means a present and continuous knowledge—a practical acquaintance with Christ. But how does this knowledge of Christ grow and strengthen in the soul? “ If we keep His commandments.” The laws of Moses are not in question, but the commandments of Christ. The law was given to men in the flesh. Christian commandment applies to men in the Spirit. In truth John in our Epistle never once uses the term “ law.”* The term “ commandments ” as employed by our Apostle conveys the primary thought of *divine authority*. Whatever therefore possesses this character, whether embodied in type or in express statement, possesses the force of commandment to all desirous of doing the Will of the Lord. Obedience is the first feature of the new nature (Acts ix. 6). Obedience enforced under threat of punishment is not *Christian* obedience. We are not under Moses but under Christ. The motive spring and power of all divinely accepted obedience and service is love. The Lord said, “ I *delight* to do Thy will, O my God ” (Ps. xl. 8), and it is to this character of obedience to which we are set apart. The obedience of Jesus Christ is the measure of ours. The new-born child finds his joy in doing his Father’s will. It is the first and fundamental characteristic of eternal life in the believer. The happy, joyous inward consciousness that we know

* Chap. iii. 4 reads : ‘ Everyone that doeth sin doeth also *lawlessness* ; and sin is *lawlessness*. ’

Him, is in keeping His commandments. It is not *do* His commandments, but *keep* them. The doing flows from the keeping. "Keep His commandments" means to value them, to treasure them in the heart and memory.

"He that saith." In this supposed case the third person is employed, not as in chap. i. where the first person plural is used (vers. 6, 8, 10). The language in our text is stronger. It is not "we lie" or "we deceive ourselves." but "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments is a *liar* and the truth is not in him," *i.e.*, he is not a Christian at all. Verse four is the anti-thesis of verse three. These absolute and sharp statements of truth and falsehood in the domain of Christianity are exceedingly valuable and most needful in these days of laxity and lifeless profession.

"But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him." It is a principle common to both Testaments that obedience to God is the practical ground of blessing. Facts and experience amply verify our statement.

"Whoso keepeth His word." *Commandments* form the expression of God's authority. *Words* refer to the varied details of Christian life and conduct and are meant to regulate these. *Word* signifies the mind or will of God as a whole—God known in the soul in the power of the Word which reveals Him. The Word is thus of wider extent than either "commandments" or "words." Keeping His Word is an advance upon keeping His commandments. So, too, the blessing is proportionately enhanced. The love of God is perfected in him. It is an abstract statement. In that soul where the word is held and prized God is free to work in the greatness of His love and perfect that love in the earthly vessel, filled and controlled by God Himself. There is no hindrance, no working of self or flesh, where the word commands the whole being. Thus the inflow of Divine love can freely flood the soul. God's love is perfected in such an one, and in exact proportions as the Word or mind of God is treasured. "Hereby know we that we are in Him." It is not we "know Him" (ver. 3), but we know we are "in Him." Here then is a further and added blessing.

The distinctive term "in Christ," as used by Paul, is not the same as "in Him," employed by John. The former is dispensational, and is set in sharp contrast to our former condition as "in Adam." There are two races, the natural and the spiritual,

with their respective heads, Adam and Christ. Thus to be in Adam is to be of that race of which he is head. To be in Christ is to be of that race of which He is head. But the beloved Apostle John speaks of our being in the Son, not in Christ as such. John conveys a moral idea in his oft-recurring expression "in Him."

"He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself to walk even as He walked" (ver. 6).

Mark the three progressive steps—know Him, in Him, abide in Him. Our state ought not to be an uncertain one. Abiding in Him is the normal spiritual condition of the children of God. Our position before God is a fixed one and our state should ever correspond thereto. "Abideth in Him," intimates a continuous state of dependence and fellowship. "He that saith" is, of course, profession. What then does such a profession involve? "So to walk, even as He walked." If I profess to have my practical life in Him, let it be witnessed in a life that is ordered and governed according to Christ. I cannot be without sin. He was. But the divine principles and motives which governed His life here should most certainly direct mine. This then is our urgent responsibility to walk as He walked. My life should be the reflex of His.

(To be continued).

A SONG FROM A SICK BED.

NEVER MIND.

Never mind the why and wherefore,
Never mind the how and when;
For the thoughts of God are higher
Than the thoughts and ways of men.

Never mind the peradventures,
Never mind the "ifs" and "buts";
Jesus holds the Key of David,
When He opens, no man shuts.

Never mind the fear of favour,
Never mind the "ayes" and "noes";
He who sides with God and goodness,
Far outnumbered all his foes.

Never mind the weights and measures,
Never mind the have and had;
Christ can banquet starving thousands,
From the wallet of a lad.

Never mind the when and whether,
Never mind the "thens" and "tills";
Trust in God's unchanging mercy,
Rest upon His "SHALLS" and "Wills."

July 1st, 1906.

THOMAS SPURGEON.

“BEGINNINGS.”

VI. THE FIRST PREACHER.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

THE most natural calling in the world is that of the farmer ; the most unnatural is that of the preacher. Had men continued in innocency the ground must needs have been tilled (Gen. ii. 15) ; but had sin not intruded itself the admonitions of the preacher would never have been required. At the head of the long line of preachers who have testified amongst men stands Noah ; he is the first man to whom this title is expressly given by the Spirit of God (2 Pet. ii. 5).

The word “preacher” means “herald.” Sometimes it is the privilege of God’s servants to proclaim blessed things to men. Witness Paul’s precious testimony as described by himself in 1 Tim. ii. 3. On the other hand, God’s preachers are sometimes charged with a heavy burden. Jonah in Nineveh and Noah amongst the antediluvians, are examples of this. The first is evangelising, *i.e.*, making known glad tidings. An interesting distinction in this connection may be found in the different Greek words employed in 1 Pet. iii. 19 ; iv. 6.

Let us notice the condition of things in the days of the world’s first preacher. He was born 1,056 years after the creation of Adam. During that long period men were possessed of no Bible, and there was no magistrate to call them to account. It was emphatically the age of conscience. But what state of things did this develop ? Read Gen. vi. 5-6 : “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart.” Such was the condition of the antediluvian world. Have things improved since that era ? Hear what David said nearly 1,500 years after the flood. “The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy ; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” (Psa. xiv. 2-3). No improvement is suggested in such language as this. And how

does the world stand to-day? The world is now responsible before God for the murder of His Son, and lies under His judgment accordingly (John xii. 31). Awful position! How soon the divine stroke may fall!

Observe next, the moment in which Noah rendered his testimony. There is some analogy between that moment and the present. The Lord Himself pointed this out in Luke xvii. 26-27: "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." Noah thus lived at the close of a dispensation, when the thunderclouds of divine judgment were gathering up on every hand. Our lot also has been cast at the close of a dispensation, and once more the judgment of God is preparing for an evil world. Men are as careless and indifferent now as they were in the days of long ago.

Let us glance briefly at the preacher himself. It is written: "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." This comes before the statement, "Noah walked with God" (Gen. vi. 8-9). This is ever God's order. No man can walk with God until he has tasted the grace of God. "Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generations." "Perfect" does not mean "sinless"; his sad failure after he came out of the ark being sufficient proof (Gen. ix. 21); but (as the margin suggests) Noah was an upright man, seeking to walk before God in integrity.

The message of Noah resembled that of John the Baptist rather than that of Paul. Not grace, but righteousness characterised it. Of Noah it is written that he was "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet. ii. 5), and of the Baptist the Saviour said, "John came unto you in the way of righteousness" (Matt. xxi. 32). Judgment was coming, and it was Noah's solemn business to announce it, if haply men would turn to God in repentance. Alas, he was met everywhere with disobedience while the long-suffering of God waited (1 Pet. iii. 20).

A few words now concerning the preacher's salvation. It was wholly of God. He devised the ark, and furnished Noah with its specifications. The storm might rage, both above and around it but the ark was never submerged. "The ark went upon the face

of the waters " (Gen. vii. 18). Type of Him who bare the storm of divine wrath on behalf of all His people. The greatness of His person gave Him competency for so mighty a work. "None but He in heaven or earth, could offer that which justice claimed." Mark how Heb. xi. 7 speaks of Noah and his deliverance. "By faith, Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house ; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Our own position is pictured here. We have heard God's announcement of judgment to come, and though "not seen as yet," we have bowed believingly to the word, and have fled to Christ for refuge. Men scoff now at the bare suggestion that God will again break in upon the world's arrangements and turn them upside down, yet when the sixth seal is opened by the Lamb (Rev. vi. 12-17), and men see everything tottering around them, filled with alarm, they cry to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb : for the great day of His wrath is come, and who is able to stand ? "

The ark being completed in the obedience of faith, the divine invitation was addressed to Noah : "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." "And the Lord shut him in" (Gen. vii. 1-16). None can open the door that God is pleased to shut. Divinely secure, therefore, were all the denizens of that unique vessel. The judgment of God having exhausted itself, we read : "The ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat" (Gen. viii. 4). Surely no accident is here. The seventh month became the first at the time of the Exodus (Ex. xii. 2) ; accordingly the ark rested three days after the day appointed for the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, the very day of our Lord's resurrection. The Saviour's triumphant return from amongst the dead is the public proof that the wrath of God in regard to the sins of His people has spent itself, and that rest and peace have been established for evermore !

"Supposing that everything in us were judged, we should be all one ; it could not be otherwise. And this is not attainment ; a family is not disunited because there are old men, young men, and little children in it."

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.

By S. B. BROOKS.

IT would seem as though there were in the human mind an innate desire to look into the future to ascertain what that future will be, but alas! limiting their thoughts to the present life. To the children of God Scripture affords abundant reasons why such anxious thoughts should be dismissed, and that perfect trust in God exercised which would bring peace and rest to the troubled heart (John 14, 1). Rather than dwell so much on the present, how much more profitably would time be spent in contemplating the future, when we who are Christians shall be brought to "stand (or be manifested) before the judgment seat of Christ. Then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." (2 Cor. 5-10).

The thought, which so largely prevails, that all classes of people, saved and unsaved, will appear *at the same time* before Christ in judgment is entirely unwarranted by Scripture. A general judgment has no sanction from the word of God. Since God calls upon His people to come out from amongst the ungodly in this present life it might be safely concluded there would, in the future, be no indiscriminate gatherings of the saved and the unsaved when arraigned before Him Who is the judge of all.

Let us then have our minds familiarised with the solemn fact that we, *i.e.*, believers in Christ, shall all stand before His judgment seat. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans xiv. 12). This of course, is not a question of being saved or lost. Admittedly these are saints of God. Nevertheless, how exceedingly solemn is the fact, that, notwithstanding that He Who sits on that judgment seat is the One Who saved them, *yet* they must give account of the many serious and grave defects and failures and perversities during the course of their lives on the earth which were never truly confessed, never truly judged, never thoroughly forsaken. All that had been hidden, all that had been unconfessed and unforsaken will now, in the brightness of the light of that glorious presence, be freely acknowledged, and the self-judgment which had been repudiated when upon earth will now be pronounced, and the clearance which ought to have been effected, now takes place in the unclouded presence of Him Who is the "Brightness of the eternal glory."

How the memory will then be quickened, how words spoken which should never have passed the lips will now be vividly brought to mind, and as self-judgment had not been passed upon earth, there, in the light of the One Who occupies that seat, will be pronounced a sentence of self-judgment which will meet with the full approbation of the One before Whom all will appear.

How well it would be for us as Christians to realise the solemn fact of the Judgment Seat of Christ. Matters in the ordinary course of everyday life treated with levity would assume a more serious aspect, and the behaviour of Christians towards their fellow believers as well as towards others, would be influenced by the thought that *this*, whatever it may be, will be heard of again at the judgment seat of Christ. The practical outcome of such considerations as these, seriously entertained, would bring about most blessed results both here and hereafter. In the lives of many Christians what accumulations are taking place which are awaiting the judgment seat! How infinitely better, how incomparably happier it would be to have a full and complete clearance made of these disturbing elements now, in the present life, rather than leave them to the solemn issues of the judgment seat. Doubtless there are many circumstances and conditions existing which would, and do, render it morally impossible to have difficulties removed and explanations made while here upon earth, but whenever such a course were possible how happy it would be if such a clearance could be effected as a result of confessions being made; what peace would be experienced on earth, and may we not say "joy in heaven"? For if joy is experienced in heaven over one sinner repenting, may we not believe that there would be joy in heaven when saints who are at variance are reconciled to each other and enabled to cultivate that happy communion which often gives, even now, blessed foretastes of those joys which will be experienced when gathered together in the presence of their glorified Lord?

The very word "Judgment Seat" suggests the idea of something serious and solemn, but this should not needlessly alarm the true child of God. It should awaken in the conscience a deeper sense of one's responsibilities and throw one more entirely upon the Lord for the grace and ability which will enable one to meet all the demands which are made upon the one who desires above all else to please God. The first saint who was privileged to leave this life without seeing death was one of whom it is said "that he pleased

God." What higher or more blessed testimony can the servant of God desire than that? The very thought of such a testimony is well calculated to awaken his susceptibilities and arouse his energies so that he shall have the present consciousness of the favour of God, and that he shall so win the divine approval that will be freely accorded him when manifested before the judgment seat of Christ.

In the Gospel of John our blessed Lord, in Chap. v., says, he that hears His word and believes on Him that sent Him "shall not come into judgment but is passed from death unto life." The Lord also says that such an one has "everlasting life."

Whenever God enters into judgment with the sinner, one result, and only one, can follow, that is condemnation. The word translated judgment seat in Romans xiv. 10 and 2 Cor. v. 10., does not carry with it the idea of condemnation as necessarily following. The word means a foot-step or a place to set the foot on. The word translated "condemnation" in John v. 24, ought to be judgment, and whenever the sinner appears before God in judgment, condemnation must be the result. But the blessed Lord declares that he that believes "shall not come into judgment." Consequently the believer cannot be condemned. What then is the explanation of the words "we must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ?" Who are the "all"? It includes believers in Christ who have been redeemed by His precious blood. Some one may say, "then the appearance before the judgment seat is merely a matter of form." Let no one be deceived on this point. Accepting joyfully the words of Christ in John v. 24: that he who believes "has everlasting life and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death unto life," yet the serious question arises as to the sins, failures and inconsistencies of which he has been guilty since he became a child of God. What a solemn day that will be when our lives will be reviewed in the full light of Christ's presence! This fact, seriously and prayerfully anticipated, would surely tend to bring about marvellous changes in the conduct and behaviour of thousands of the children of God who have acted and still do act in the various relationships of life so that when He shall be manifested there will be reason why they should "be ashamed before Him at His Coming."

It is deeply to be regretted that certain commentaries, excellent in many respects, fail to distinguish between the judgment of believers in Christ and those who have not believed in Christ "unto

the saving of the soul." We have already said that believers and unbelievers will not appear before Christ, in any future tribunal, at the same time. The unsaved will appear before the great white throne (Rev. xx. 11-15), and it does not appear as though any of the saved will be found there. That serious difficulties exist in the minds of many believers is due to not realising the plainest Gospel truth that "there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans viii. 1). The Lord Himself says, the believer has everlasting life and "shall not come into judgment but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). "For him who has this life judgment is impossible. He has already gone beyond it." (*Westcott*).

Is there any disagreement in these statements or do these Scriptures contradict each other? Let there be no such thought. The difficulty which is felt by many in accepting the full truth of the Gospel which confers such absolute immunity from judgment and its consequences is that it is "too good to be true." Such a limitation of the grace of God and refusal to accept the full consequences of the atonement which frees the believer in Christ from all condemnation is unworthy of a proclaimer of the Gospel of the grace of God. The title of the penitent thief on the cross, and that of the apostle Paul to be with Christ were one and the same. All believers alike can sing "Our title to glory we read in Thy blood." Eternal salvation being dependent alone on the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, shows that the feeblest believer is saved equally with the most devoted servant of God, and the ground of that salvation is the same. But the difference between the two in the future, how immense! While upon earth, the devoted saint of God has found his delight and joy in communion with Him, and has cultivated a life of blessed nearness to Christ, and to the extent of the ability given, has rendered joyful service to his blessed Lord and Master; on the other hand a child of God, less careful to please Him and to walk with Him, will realise at the judgment seat of Christ how sad it was to be so intent on pleasing self and to that extent losing the divine approval which was conveyed to one of old, "That he pleased God." What revelations, what discoveries will there be at the judgment seat of Christ. Let us who are His so live, that is, so "abide in Him, that when He shall be manifested, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming."

What a comfort it must be to every true-hearted child of God to know, that every sinner who has believed in the Saviour for the forgiveness of sins cannot be called into judgment. If not called into judgment, condemnation is impossible. John v. 24 makes this perfectly clear. It is also clear that the judgment of the unsaved will take place before the great white throne, where judgment is pronounced to be according to works (Rev. xx. 12). Every intelligent child of God knows full well that if such are judged according to works salvation is impossible. Let it then be understood that scripture makes it perfectly clear that the believer in Christ cannot be brought into judgment for his sins, because Christ his Saviour bore the judgment for him. Believers can say, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree."

"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow Me" (MATT. XVI. 24).

Thy cross is needed, oh my soul,
If thou would'st joy obtain;
'Twas ever thus: the bitter first,
The respite after pain.
At God's right hand are pleasures rare,
We need a cross to bring us there.

Thy cross is needed, oh my soul,
Needed to keep thee low.
Without its pressure thy proud heart
Had still refused to bow:
Had still been far from her retreat,
Her place of safety—Jesus' feet.

Thy cross is needed, oh my soul,
Thy father knoweth why.
Thou too shalt know, and give Him praise
Throughout eternity;
Praise Him because He gave the cross
To save thee from eternal loss.

'Twas through the Saviour's cross alone
That thy salvation came.
Deliverance from sin, and self,
And from eternal shame.
Yet these rich blessings given to thee,
Without thy cross thou could'st not see.

Thy cross is needed, oh my soul,
Then bear it patiently.
The victor's crown will compensate
And cheer thee by and by.
It may be *here* thy joy to find.
Thy cross uplifted—be resigned.—M. E. R.

LIONS.

A PAPER FOR THE YOUNG.

By W. TAYLOR.

ONE of the old prophets while a captive in Babylon saw a strange vision. No fairy book tells a more wonderful story than is told us about this wonderful sight. The prophet, standing by the side of a river, saw in the distance a great whirlwind. As it came nearer fire came from all parts of it. From the centre of the cloud and fire there came four living creatures. Each of them had four faces and four wings. One face was like that of a man, another of a cherub, a third of an eagle and the fourth of a lion. If you read the first chapter of Ezekiel you will find how strong and swift and patient and sensible these creatures were. Their four faces show their characters ; they were emblems of their nature. So it is not strange, after all, that, when nations wanted emblems to show to others what their national character was like they should put on their national flags and on their coins certain pictures which spoke of their different natures. Thus the Turk chose the crescent, France the fleur de lys, and Russia the bear. England and Germany took two of the emblems seen in the prophet's vision, Germany that of the eagle, Great Britain that of the lion.

Now the lion is, of course, one of the strongest of the wild beasts, and it was no doubt for this reason that it was chosen to represent the British Nation. It is certainly for this reason that the Lord Jesus was spoken of as the Lion of the tribe of Judah. But the devil is also referred to as a Roaring Lion, yet that is not so much on account of his strength, but because, like the lion, there are other things in his nature not to his credit, which we will refer to presently.

THE STRENGTH OF THE LION.

Let us, however, first of all think about the strength of the lion. Only a short time ago the brother of Sir Edward Grey, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, took part in a lion hunt, when one of the lions seized him and worried him as easily as a cat worries a mouse. Poor Mr. Grey died soon afterwards. The lion is so strong that we read in the book of Proverbs that he is the "strongest among beasts." It can tackle an elephant or a hippopotamus without fear, although it is so much smaller than either of them, measuring only 12 feet—

eight feet from nose to tail, with the tail four feet long. It is the "king of the forest" and all creatures own its lordship. If you were to travel in a railway train this afternoon through Rhodesia you would perhaps see in the distance an antelope chased by a lion, when the lion reached its prey you would see it pick up the antelope and run off with it in its mouth as easily as a child carries a doll. Many years ago there were hundreds of lions in Palestine dwelling in the forest, and the reeds of the Jordan. They were so daring and strong that they would boldly carry off children as well as sheep and goats from the towns and villages. Amos tells us that one day he grappled with one of these lions, and took out of its mouth two legs and a piece of an ear of one of its victims. No doubt Amos had some weapon, as David had when he slew a lion. The only man, in fact, who was ever strong enough to fight a lion without any weapon was the strongest of all men—Samson.

WHY SATAN IS COMPARED WITH A LION.

If the lion were as great in other respects as he is in strength we should have a very different opinion about him from that which we have. Because of his strength the Lord Jesus is compared to the lion, and for that reason alone. There are other things about the lion which are not so pleasant to think about. That is why the devil is compared with the lion. In the first place a lion cannot be tamed.* Here and there we see what is called a "tame" lion in a show or menagerie, but only his keeper dare go into his cage. Even he is armed with a whip, or some more deadly weapon, and we have all heard of instances where what are supposed to be the tamest lions have attacked their keepers. Of course baby lions are easily managed, but when they grow older they show their true nature and become dangerous. How harmless those great lions look at some of the open-air Zoos we find on the continent! At Cologne you may see any day lions marching to and fro behind their barriers, looking as if they were enchanted with the music that is being played by the band:

Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,

so long as the music continues. But if you were to go behind that barrier, or as you sit sipping your tea at this delightful open-air restaurant one of the lions was to get loose and run to your table, you would not have much faith in his peaceful appearance but would run for your life. Unlike dogs or cats, horses or cattle, lions can

* It is not intended to contradict James iii. 7. That as a general statement is perfectly true.—(Ed. F. & F.)

have no real affection for either man or beast. Sometime ago at a wild beast show in Leeds you might have seen a baby lion being nursed and brought up by a female terrier. The lion cub was four months old but was as large as the dog which was taking care of it. But in a few months time it would not be safe to leave the two together, for although the terrier had cared for the cub and they had played together, it is most likely that when the lion grew old enough it would one day decide to make a meal of its foster-mother.

But if lions are so fierce, when food is given to them day by day, what must they be like when they have to search for their own food? Their fierceness is then indeed cruel, and they are as cunning as they are fierce. In one of the psalms which speaks of the lion we are told that the wicked man who oppresses the poor "lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den," That too is a picture of Satan, who loves to do his work best in secret and in the dark. We all know what the eyes of a cat are like, and how, as darkness comes on, a change takes place. Now a lion's eyes are just like a cat's. In the daytime there are narrow slits in the middle of the eye. At dusk the pupil of the eye is about half the size of the eye-ball, but as darkness deepens the pupil gets bigger and bigger until it fills nearly the whole of the eye-ball. The darker the night the more the pupil expands, so you can imagine, when a lion faces its prey in the dark, how its great balls of fire terrify the poor animal, and make it more easily captured. And how stealthily the lion goes through the jungle or over the turfy ground! Its paws are like soft fleshy cushions, and although it is so big and strong it can go along as quietly as a mouse. Even its whiskers are brought into use when the lion is hunting. If it comes to a narrow thicket it measures the width by its whiskers, and if the whiskers touch the sides it knows that it cannot get through without making a noise and so withdraws. When once the lion has caught its victim there is no chance of its escape. With one blow of its strong paw it will stun an antelope, a giraffe or a bullock. Its tongue, like the cat's, is covered with sharp hook-like hairs, so that it can lick every scrap of flesh from the bones.

When therefore Satan is compared with the hungry and cruel lion we see what a terrible power he has, and how, when he clutches a victim, he has it entirely at his mercy. We have already seen that

the devil is like a roaring lion. Even its roar is a proof of its cunning. Sometimes it will crouch like a large stone on a small hillock, and a lion-hunter has told us that its roar "rolls along like thunder and reverberates in many an echo," so that you cannot tell from what point the roar of the lion really comes, and he is consequently better able to pounce upon his victim.

HOW GOD CAN TAME THE LION.

It would be a terrible thing if the Roaring Lion, the Devil, were allowed to have all his own way with us as the lion in the forest has with the poor animal he seizes. But God would not permit that. Although no man can tame and overcome the lion God can. We are told in Isaiah that a good time is coming when the lion shall lie down with the lamb. That will be when the devil is chained. There are several stories told us in the Bible of how God has tamed lions or given His people power to overcome them. There was once a prophet who did the opposite of what God told him to do, and we read that because of his disobedience "a lion met him by the way and slew him." And now a wonderful thing happened. God allowed the lion to kill the man but kept it from eating him.

His body (we read) was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the body, and "behold, men passed by and saw the body cast in the way and the lion standing by the body."

These men ran to the city where the old prophet had lived and told the news, and the people went to take back the body. When they got to the place they found the lion was still there guarding the body as if to keep it from harm, and the ass was standing patiently by his side. They put the prophet's body on the ass and took it to the city to be buried, whilst the lion went quietly on his way. That story which is told in 1 Kings, chap. 13, at once reminds us of another time when God tamed not one but many lions, on that terrible day when Daniel was thrown into the lions' den. How surprised the king was in the morning when, looking into the lions' den he saw that Daniel was still alive!

"My God" (said Daniel) "hath sent his angel and hath shut the lions' mouths and they have not hurt me."

Those are cases where lions were tamed. We have already referred to two men to whom God gave sufficient strength to overcome lions, namely, Samson and David. You will remember what

David said to Saul when the king thought it was madness for the boy to fight against Goliath:

“The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.”

David always trusted in God's strength after that. Then we read also of Benaiah, one of David's "three mighty men," "Who slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow." How thankful we ought to be that Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, has overcome the Devil, the Roaring Lion, and will one day chain him up so that he can no longer do any harm. But how awful was the fight between these two which took place on the cross, on the little hill called Calvary. The Lord Jesus prayed "Save Me from the lion's mouth," and seemed at the moment to be beaten, but in reality He was the conqueror, for—

By weakness and defeat
He won the meed and crown,
Trode all His foes beneath His feet,
By being trodden down.
He hell in hell laid low,
Made sin, He sin o'erthrew,
Bowed to the grave, destroyed it so,
And death by dying slew.

“They gaped upon Me,” He said “like a ravening and a roaring lion,” yet He was fighting for the sake of the people who were mocking Him. He won the victory also on our account, and now tells us we need not be afraid of the roaring lion if we believe on Him Who fought and triumphed over our great Adversary. Because Jesus shed His blood to wipe away sin, which had been brought into the world by the devil, He brings to us peace and power if we put all our trust in Him.

And how strong Jesus is! We are—even the strongest of us—“but little children weak,” but He could truly say “all power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.” When it was stormy on the sea He could make it calm with one word. He could heal the sick, raise the dead, walk on the water, feed five thousand people with a few loaves and fishes, and finally when His work was done on earth, could vanish into the sky. When the disciples were looking up after Him, you will remember two angels stood by them and told them that “this same Jesus” will one day come back again to the earth. Don't let us forget those words “This same Jesus.” Although He is still in heaven He is always the same

and He tells us that if we now, in the strength that He gives us, resist the Devil, the Devil will flee from us, for he is always afraid of the Lord Jesus. Saved because Jesus has won for us the pardon of all our sins by dying on the cross, we must now "be strong and of a good courage." We must be as courageous as Christian was at the Palace Beautiful, whose story we have all read in "Pilgrim's Progress." Christian, after losing his roll and finding it again, comes to the Palace Beautiful, from which Mistrust and Timorous are running away, terrified by the sight of the lions. Christian, too, is afraid at first, but the porter, whose name is Watchful, cries out "Is thy strength so small? Fear not the lions, for they are chained, and are placed there for trial of faith where it is, and for the discovery of those that have none. Keep in the midst of the path and no hurt shall come to thee." He did as he was bidden and was perfectly safe, and so shall we be too if we keep our eyes constantly fixed on Jesus, Who has promised to be with us through all our lives, and to help us whenever we are in difficulty or danger.

A LETTER ON HOLINESS.

DEAR——

The Holiness people are often very earnest and they mean well, but their system is unreal, and when their adherents become disillusioned, I fear many must be thrown into confusion, if not despair, or thrown off the track altogether. Nothing is to be gained by unscriptural statements or by denying facts—and surely indwelling sin is a fact to all except those who purposely ignore it, or are wilfully blind. If individuals declare, that, in them sin does not dwell, they would find those they come in contact with are not quite so sure about it, for what is not perceptible to the individuals themselves is often only too patent to others. Moreover, their testimony does not agree with St. Paul's; and I, for one, should prefer to have him as my example. Instead of saying "sin dwells not in me," he said "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, *good* does not dwell." If we are ever to attain to true holiness, we must make the distinction the Apostle makes here. He recognises that *the flesh* is still in him, and always will be, and that it will always remain sinful; but that there has also been a work of God in him—what he speaks of as "the inward man." "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man," he says (Rom. vii. 22).

There are then these two principles always in us, side by side, the one delighting in what is evil, the other delighting in what is good. How, then, is the one to be kept in check and the other to be the controlling force? Only as the eye of the believer is continually on Christ. Only as I see that He is my life—my true self—the source of all to me as a Christian. Apart from this it is a fruitless struggle, as Rom. vii. shews. The old nature is too rebellious. But the moment this position is taken, “O wretched man that I am! *Who shall deliver me,*” he can immediately exclaim, “I thank God (I am delivered) through Jesus Christ our Lord.” And then follows the splendid discourse on deliverance in chap. viii. For the law (or principle) of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath *made me free* from the law (or principle) of sin and death. He has learned that though the flesh is not consumed or taken out of him, yet sin in the flesh has been condemned in the death of Christ. God passed sentence upon it there. He never expects any good from it nor must we. And as we take sides with God and accept His condemnation of the flesh at the Cross, not actually in us (or we should have been judged for ever) then we “walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.” And this is true holiness.

Romans vi. deals with much the same subject, only from a different point of view. In Rom. vii. it is I have no power to answer to the law of God. The renewed nature craves to, but cannot; the old nature will not. Only as the eye is on Christ do I receive the power of the Spirit, and so triumph. In chap. vi. it is a question of whether sin is to have dominion. In this case it is a question of deliverance from an old master and service of a new; in the other it is by what power can I fulfil the demands of the new? It is easy to see that these two things are distinct. A slave might be delivered from the master who was tyrannical, in order to serve another who was kind and good, but this, in itself, would not enable him to do all that the latter might require.

Rom. vi. shews us that while sin—the old master—is not taken out of us, we are entitled to reckon ourselves dead to it. And this on the ground of our baptism. “How shall we that have died to sin, live any longer therein?” the Apostle asks. How did we die to sin? We were baptized unto Christ’s death. Therefore we are buried with him *by baptism* unto death. What does this involve? What did Christ’s death involve? The chapter tells us, further on.

“For in that He died,” says ver. 10, “He died unto sin once, but in that He liveth He liveth unto God.” This was the significance of Christ’s death. He was made sin, we are told. But He died. Death ended that relation. He will never enter into it again. If we have been baptised unto His death, we are privileged to take the same position. And so the chapter proceeds: “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus.” Thus I am delivered from the old master through death with Christ (signified in baptism) and a new master comes in view—“alive unto God.” Sin, therefore, is not to reign (ver.12). This shews that sin is not eradicated. If sin were dead it *could not* reign. Here I am told not to let it reign. And what is the power for this? First, by seeing that through my baptism I am in a new position as regards sin and I am entitled to *reckon* (notice the word—“reckon”) myself dead to it, then what next? I am to yield to a new master. “Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” This is the practical aspect, as the other was the doctrinal. *And if we truly yield to God, God will take care that we do not yield to sin.* This is really the force of ver. 14. “For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law but under grace.” There is all the power and help of God for the one truly yielded.

What is the practical consequence of this? Ver. 22 sums it all up, “Being made free from sin and become servants to God, *ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*”

In this way true holiness is reached. There are three points to be carefully kept in mind. One of these is negative, the other two positive. The negative truth is “Reckon yourselves to be dead unto sin”; the positive, to yield to God, and that I am joined to Christ. “Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married (joined) to another, even to Him Who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God.” (Rom. vii. 4). In both cases the result is fruit.

The above remarks by no means exhaust the various aspects of the subject, but I trust they may prove helpful to your friend.

Yours in Christ,

THE TRUE TEST.

“This is to be your test—Christ. Try everything that is presented to you by this test. Whatsoever comes before you for consideration and acceptance, whether it be the philosophy of men or the refinement of the world, if it be not “after Christ,” beware of it. If it be not “*after Christ,*” or *according to the mind of Christ,* avoid it. It may have the semblance of wisdom, of learning, of morality, yea, of religion itself; it may come with much of the attractiveness of Christianity about it; but no matter—if its tendency be not to humble the creature and exalt the Saviour; if it be not to make the cross more needful, a Saviour more precious, and *you* more than ever separate from the world, then beware of it—it is not “*after Christ.*” Thus does the Apostle set before us Christ as “all and in all.” Our faith in Christ, our walk in Christ, our root in Christ, our foundation in Christ, our completeness in Christ, and Christ Himself the touchstone of all that comes before us. ‘I am determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.’ ”—*Extract.*

THE WAY TO FIND REST.

“Look at Christ—is He not perfect? As He is so are you. Look at Christ—is He not all you could desire? You are the same. Why will you continue to look within at your own evil heart for peace? There is nothing there but sin. There is nothing there but what will cast you down and make you miserable. Look at Christ, and, with your eye on Him, you will have the peace you desire. Do not be surprised if you look within and see so much to humble and shock you. What else do you expect from your own heart? It is ‘deceitful *above all things,* and *desperately* wicked.’ Look within if you will for what is bad, but never look within for anything to encourage you or give rest to your soul. Oh no! Look at Jesus! There is everything to satisfy your heart. It is what He is, and not what you are, that God looks at. This is the rock of peace! This is the pillow of repose! This is the pavilion of safety! This is the ark amid the waterfloods of doubt, difficulty and despair! And till the eye of faith looks there and there alone, the conscience will be troubled, and the soul will be driven to and fro amid the billows of a stormy sea.”—*Extract.*

THE THRONE.

PSALM XCIII. ; REV. IV.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY Mr. WALTER SCOTT AT THE
TEMPERANCE HALL, BOSCOMBE, ON 4th MARCH, 1912.

I BELIEVE the Coming of the Lord is just at hand. Signs multiply everywhere heralding the near approach of our Blessed Lord.

I do not know if you enter into my feelings. My soul is sometimes torn with conflicting feelings and emotions. Personally, I should like to see my Lord. He made Himself known to me fifty-seven years ago, and I shall never know the meaning of that word, "*satisfaction*" until I find myself in His much loved presence. "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness," but not till then. But when I think of the poor world! when I consider the state of the perishing!—one would almost pray that the Lord might for just a brief moment delay His coming that poor sinners may be snatched as brands from the burning and that there might be perhaps, through the cries and tears of God's beloved people a time—a moment—of salvation before the Lord Jesus Christ comes.

The Romans divided the night into four distinct watches of three hours each, commencing at six in the evening. Now in Matt. xiv. (a dispensational chapter) we get, I believe, the Lord Jesus Christ coming to the remnant of Israel in the fourth watch of the night, but in Luke xii., where Christians and Christian service are contemplated, there we find, "If He shall come in the second watch or come in the third watch." At a moment not known either to angels or men the Lord may be here. Beloved friends, He is at our very door, and the word for each of us is, in the language of Matthew xxv., "Then those virgins arose and went forth to meet the Bridegroom," and as they went forth they trimmed their lamps. *That* is the special work of the aroused virgins—trimming lamps.

I do not believe any true child of God will be left to pass through the horrors of the Great Tribulation. I believe that there are two things standing perhaps in the way of the personal appearing of the Antichrist on the earth—the incarnation of every satanic bit of wickedness ever perpetrated on the earth. He is called the Man of Sin because every form of wickedness will be found concentrated in this man. But your eyes will never see him because there are two things which must take place before the Antichrist is revealed.

The first thing is the catching away of the saints of God—we are caught up ; second, the professing Church is spued out. Compare the third of Revelation with the state of things around you, and the verdict will be that it fits precisely. And so we are not waiting for the Antichrist or the Apostacy, we wait for the return of the Lord from heaven. But then some saints of God may be afraid and terrified, and say, but will we be amongst the company spued out of the Lord's mouth? *No*, you will not be. I believe *that* will be accomplished by the translation of the true saints to heaven, because when the Church of God is removed, that will accomplish the rejection of the professing Church on earth.

But now what I want to call your attention to is the moral strength we have in the verses I have read. This great industrial conflict that is waging to-day (the coal strike), may be patched up, but it will break out again. The masses feel their power. We have not seen the last of it yet. I believe that through these godless associations of to-day—these combines, secular and religious—the masses of the population are being led on to ruin.

The Nations are getting ready too. There are signs as to that. The world is getting unhappy, and crowned heads are uneasy, and the masses of people are terrified. "What next?" is the cry of the day.

I have read this fourth chapter of Revelation because the first object presented to us there is a Throne. I often read this in connection with the ninety-third Psalm. I have had my share of difficulty and trial ; I know a little of it—over half a century I have proved that there is a *living* God. Sometimes brought into circumstances of extreme trial and difficulty with no way out, no, nor shaking yourself out, when you feel that unless the living God Himself comes in there is no hope. Oh that fourteenth chapter of Exodus ! Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord ! Let God work ! Stand still in the presence of that great difficulty which you cannot surmount. Stand still and see the salvation of God.

So, beloved friends, what a sight we have got here. The Seer says, "I beheld a Throne." And blessed be God for the One that is on the Throne.

I can turn from the scenes of earth to the Throne that is set up in the Heavens. Why a Throne ? Because it is a sign of stability. It is a sign that God has got a firm grip of things, that God holds

the reins of universal government in His hand, and that the Crown has never fallen from His brow, and God is there in the greatness of His being. God is there! What a thought. And so, beloved friends, that is the first sight that is seen in Heaven. How strong is the Throne of the Eternal established in Heaven.

“I saw roundabout the Throne twenty-four thrones.” The thrones of representative persons of Old and New Testament Saints of God. The full sum of Old and New Testament believers. Not the martyrs of the coming crisis. Their translation is an event subsequent to this. Here you get the full complement of the Old and New Testament Saints.

Let us turn from all the uneasiness that is round us now—the lack of rest, the contempt for Divine authority, magisterial authority, kingly authority, the lawlessness that is characterising the populations of the earth, beloved friends, let us turn from the seething mass of humanity, look up at the Throne and the One sitting thereon. This is not a historical statement. It is not a thing of the past. One sits upon it. What a mercy there is a Throne in Heaven, and One of combined majesty and grace sits upon it. *Over* the Throne there is a rainbow seen in all its beauty—a complete and perfect rainbow. *Out* of the throne proceed thunderings, lightning and voices, the signs and mutterings of coming judgment. The Lord is coming to smite and chastise the nations (Rev. xix.).

But round the Throne and over it there is a rainbow—the sign of Divine Goodness—the Lord’s remembrance of mercy. O Lord Jesus Christ, when Thou comest, and Thy garments stained with blood, and vengeance in Thy heart, in that day Thou wilt remember mercy! In Rev. x. you get the last notice of the rainbow, and then it is round about His head.

But we must turn to the ninety-third Psalm. There are only five verses in this Psalm—learn them. Have them imprinted in power on your soul, and the rising tide of evil will never disturb you. “The Lord Reigneth”—The Lord Jehovah—the Self-Existing One! The force of this is given in Rev. i. 8, when the meaning of the name is explained to us. From Him which *is*—The One Who ever lives and Who sustains the life of all. I have yet to learn that the tiniest blade of grass is not in contact with Jehovah—the tiniest seed on the earth, Jehovah is in relation to *that* and to all. To me it would be an intolerable thought to suppose that we were the creatures of chance. Jehovah reigns! Blessed be His Name.

Christ's Kingdom will be one of benevolence, righteousness, and grace. The Kingdom will be an everlasting Kingdom. It is intensely interesting to observe that when the Lord Jesus Christ, as Son of Man, is taking the dominion, you get His universal authority asserted. All power is given to Him in heaven and earth, or as the Revised Version gives it, "All authority" is given Him. Power may not have a legitimate source for its exercise. Power may be arbitrary, but, beloved friends, the Lord Jesus Christ has authority. The power He exercises is legitimately placed in His hands by God.

Jehovah reigneth. Thy throne is established of old. There never was a time when there was not a throne.

Now see what He says in the third verse. "The floods have lifted up their voice." The floods rose in their rebellion against the throne of Jehovah. "The floods *lift* up their waves." It was so, and it is. We get rebellions in the past. We get them now. They lifted up and they lift up, and what is the result? The angry combinations of men hurl themselves against the throne of God to their utter destruction. All the power of men and of Satan, singly or combined, is utterly useless. They are only driven back to their own everlasting ruin. Amidst an angry and rebellious world, the throne remains.

This Psalm has aided me over many difficulties. I have gone in my weak moments and put my poor trembling foot upon the steps of the Throne of the Eternal God, laid my hand upon that throne, and become strong in the greatness of Another. What a reality to have to do with the living God! Christ died the Just for the unjust that He might bring us to God, not part of the way, but the whole. It is He that becomes the source of the joy and rest of our souls.

Do not be alarmed at what you read in the papers to-morrow. Read the ninety-third Psalm and its living message to your heart. Read until it is graven upon thy soul! Our eyes will see Thee and hear Thy voice! And that one sight of Christ will transport our souls, and we will take our part in the great Hallelujah Chorus, the close of Rev. v. Earth's part is given in the last Psalm.

May God make us strong. May God confirm our faith and confidence in Him, for Christ's sake, Amen.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Ques. D.N. asks: *Is the Gospel mentioned in Matt. x. 7, the same as that preached by Paul and referred to in the Acts?*

Ans.: The Gospel preached in Matt. x. 7, was a gospel limited in extent. Jesus commanded the twelve not to go in the way of the Gentiles (or nations) nor to any City of the Samaritans; and it announced, the Kingdom of heaven is at hand (or hath drawn near). The King was present in the land. He was sent to the people as an only Son (see Matt. xxi). The rejection of the heir by the Husbandmen finally culminated in their own curse: "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matt. xxvii. 25). This gospel of the Kingdom was to the Jew first, and is accompanied in Matt. x, by signs—power to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils. "Freely ye have received, freely give." But whether preached by the twelve Apostles or their Lord it found no answer in the hearts of those to whom it was sent.

After the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ He commissioned His disciples to preach repentance and remission of sins in His Name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem (Luke xxiv., 47); and promised that they should receive power after that the Holy Spirit had come upon them; and further, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." (Acts i. 8).

Peter and the other Apostles bore witness to the incarnation, life, death, rejection and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and that He would be the Judge of quick and dead (Acts x. 36-43).

After the martyrdom of Stephen, which carried with it the rejection by the Nation of Israel not only of the King but also the testimony to Him by the Holy Spirit (Acts vii.), a great change took place in the testimony. Saul of Tarsus was converted, and it is important to notice that he preached the gospel of the glory of Christ, which went beyond anything hitherto announced. Christ in glory was the measure of the blessing for man—Jew and Gentile being equally guilty and lost—and it thus became *the gospel of the grace of God* (Acts xx. 24).
G.K.

"God's gracious way is to get a man taught in the Sanctuary that he may *not* get fiery trial down here."

DEATH-BED REPENTANCE.

“ God asks for love to His dear Son, and a life of holiness, and man says “ No, I will give you a few days, or perhaps a few hours before I die.” He thinks that the awful business of eternity can be crushed within the narrow compass of a dying hour ; that when fever is wasting the frame, when pain is racking the body, when the mind is losing its power, and the thoughts are wandering, and the spirit is sinking, and the throbs and throes of dissolving nature are shaking the earthly tenement to its foundation—then will be the most convenient season to seek the Saviour. But death comes sooner than was expected, as it always does, and all is unreadiness. He gave God no time while living, God gives him no time when dying. He dies ! His only hope is in the mercy of that God whom, throughout life, he has despised and rejected. He dies ! No life is left behind to test the genuineness of his so-called conversion, his death-bed repentance.”—*Extract.*

EXPOSITION OF THE REVELATION. By Mr. Walter Scott.

In our July issue we called attention to the reduced price at which the above could now be obtained, viz., 3s. 6d. instead of 7s. 6d.—a remarkably low price for such a large and useful book. More and more, we predict, will the Revelation occupy the attention of all Biblical scholars, and we heartily commend the above pages to all who are interested in this portion of the inspired word. The dictum of certain Higher Critics that the Revelation is a book of cryptograms of which the key has been lost is amply disproved by Mr. Scott's full and lucid exposition.

Under the heading, the Contents of the Book, he observes (p. v.), “ The three-fold division of the prophecy is noted in chap. i. 19 This verse is the key to the interpretation and understanding of the book. It contains a past, a present, and a future.” This is the opinion that has long been held by some of the most devout and intelligent students of Scripture, and we are glad to see that many are now adopting this view. Chap. i. refers to what is past ; Chaps. ii. and iii. to the Church period ; and Chap. iv. to the end to what is still future.

It is impossible to give anything like an adequate review ; we can only say that if one started to read Mr. Scott's work in almost total ignorance of the subject, he could scarcely lay down the book without having gained an intelligent conception of the whole. Verse by verse the meaning is explained.

5s. sent by S.R. to the fund for the late Mr. Hugh Delaney's family, duly received.

The Faith and The Flock.

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PRICE—ONE PENNY.

THE GREAT COMFORTER!

“I, even I, am He that comforteth you.”—Isaiah li. 12

Sometimes, along life's way,
Sorrows o'ertake us fast;
The sunshine here and there,
Is soon with clouds o'er cast;
Yet, moved with loving sympathy,
God sweetly says, “I'll comfort thee.”

We're only strangers here,
And sorrow comes to all;
Bereavements, sad and sore,
Oft cause the tears to fall;
But God's great Love is full and free,
His promise sure, “I'll comfort thee.”

Father, in Thee we trust,
To Thee we bring our grief;
When for Thy help we plead,
Be near to give relief;
Whate'er our lot, where'er we be,
Whisper in love, “I'll comfort thee.”

Although the night is long,
It leads to endless day;
When sorrow, pain and death—
Will all have passed away;
Then we shall see God's will was best,
Who leads His own to perfect rest.—WILLIAM J. YOUNG.

EVIL THOUGHTS.

MARK VII., 21.

“ ‘ Evil thoughts.’ I am fully persuaded the reason the Lord mentions this *first* is because it leads to all that follows. All the others are *acts*, and acts spring from *thoughts*. Evil thoughts lead to evil acts. If we are not watchful over them they will lead us onward into sin. Mark that slight thread attached to an arrow. It wings its flight over yonder deep gulf and falls on the other side. The thread draws over a cord, the cord a rope, the rope a bridge, and thus an highway is formed for all to pass over. Such are our thoughts. They may be only thoughts at first, but let them roam unchecked into sin, and they will little by little draw the man after them into the same pestilential haunts. Perhaps you will say ‘ Can a Christian commit such sins ? ’ Yea, Christian though you be, there is no sin you cannot commit : nay, more, that you will not commit, if you are not watchful, and if the grace of God do not keep you. ‘ Be watchful,’ then. Look *within* you. Watch your heart ; watch your thoughts ! Then look to Christ.”—*Extract.*

WHAT IS IT THAT SAVES?

“ ‘ Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.’ Here is the secret of the believer’s salvation, ‘ The righteousness of the Lord.’ What is it that saves a man ? Is it repentance and sorrow for sin ? No, it is not, although he must have these. Is it a broken and contrite heart ? No, although he must have that, too. Is it prayer ? No, although he must have that, too. These are all but the *hand* that is stretched forth to receive salvation. The salvation is in Jesus himself, in Jesus only. It is ‘ the righteousness of God which is unto all, and upon all them which believe.’ There is no life in your hand, though there can be no life given till that hand is stretched forth to receive it. Your prayers and tears, your repentance and faith, these are all but the hand that must itself for ever remain powerless till the Holy Spirit move it with His quickening breath. But if that hand be moved by Him, then, no matter how weak and withered it may be, the righteousness of God is put into it. This is the heritage of the weakest faith, of the most trembling touch of the Saviour’s hem, of the most withered hand that lies pleadingly at His feet for mercy. ‘ This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.’ It is theirs, for God has given it them ; it is theirs, for Christ has purchased it with His blood ; it is theirs, for they have renounced their own righteousness and have looked to Jesus for a better ; it is theirs, for the word of God which cannot lie, has said it ; and neither heaven, earth, nor hell shall ever take it from them.”—*Extract.*

NEVER DOUBT!

(*By an Invalid.*)

When thy way is dark and cheerless,
Do not doubt that God is near ;
Near, to answer thy petition,
And to drive away thy fear.

When thy heart is sad and lonely,
Rest in faith upon His love ;
Trust Him in thy darkest moments,
And His faithfulness thou’lt prove.

When, from sorrow or bereavement,
Silent teardrops freely fall ;
Calmly rest on the assurance,
That He knows, and counts them all.

Yes ! He knows, and loveth always,
More than any earthly friend ;
Oh, then never doubt His goodness,
Goodness that will know no end.—WILLIAM J. YOUNG.

FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

MARK II., VERSE 7.

A BIBLE STUDY.

S. E. D.

ALL need the forgiveness of sins (Romans iii. 10-23 ; 1 John i. 8-10). Mark the plain statements in the last passage. If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves. If we say we have not sinned we make God a liar.

(1) THE FACT THAT GOD FORGIVES SIN.

First stated in Ex. xxxiv. 6-7 ; also in 2 Chron. vii. 14 ; Ps. cxxx. 4. Illustrated in David, Ps. xxxii. 5, and in the man sick of the palsy, Matt. ix. 2.

(2) THE GROUND UPON WHICH AND THE PERSON THROUGH WHOM GOD FORGIVES. THE BLOOD OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

See Eph. i. 7 ; Col. i. 14 ; 1 John ii. 12 ; Acts x. 43 ; Rom. iii. 24-25. What has Christ done that God forgives for His Sake ? See Heb. ix. 14, 22-26 ; 1 Pet. ii. 24 ; Is. liii. 5-6.

(3) THE CONDITION IN US NECESSARY FOR FORGIVENESS.

Repentance (Acts iii. 19) ; "*Faith*" (Acts xiii. 38-9) ; "*Confession*" (1 John i. 9).

(4) THE PERFECTION OF THIS FORGIVENESS.

- (1) Sin blotted out (Isa. xliii. 25).
- (2) Totally removed (Micah vii. 19).
- (3) Forgotten for ever (Heb. x. 17).

(5) THE CONSEQUENCES OF FORGIVENESS.

- (1) *Life* (Col. ii. 13).
- (2) *Happiness* of Soul (Ps. xxxii. 1-2).
- (3) *Praise* in the Heart (Is. xii. 1).
- (4) The *Fear* of God (Ps. cxxx. 4).
- (5) *Reconciliation* with God (Luke xv. 12-32).
- (6) *Peace, Joy, Access, Hope, Love* (Rom. v. 1-5).

We bless our Saviour's name
 Our sins are all forgiven,
 To suffer once to earth He came,
 He now is crowned in heaven.

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

CHAPTER II.; VERSES 7-14.

BY WALTER SCOTT.

“BRETHREN, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again a new commandment I write you, which thing is true in him and in you : because the darkness is past (or passing) and the true light now shineth ” (vers. 7-8).

The speciality of the communication may be gathered from the repetition of the phrase, “I write.” There are three things incumbent on the children of God, and are prescribed by the Apostle as evidential proofs of the reality of eternal life in them. First, obedience. Second, a walk according to Christ’s. Third, love to the brethren. What is meant by the old commandment, and what is signified by the new commandment? How old and how new? The old commandment is embodied in John xv. 17. “These things I command you, that ye love one another.” The command is an old one as dating from the Lord’s intercourse with His disciples. The same commandment to mutual love is termed “new” because given by the Holy Ghost through the beloved and aged John. “Which thing is true in him and in you.” The same life, the same nature is common to Christ and believers, consequently the same character of obedience, the same holy walk, and the same love are equally characteristic of Christ and those who are His. The same in principle, but certainly not the same in extent or in perfection of display. “Because the darkness is passing” (not past, as in our English Bibles), “and the true light now shineth.” The darkness and light are moral. God has been perfectly revealed in the Son of His love. Gentile ignorance of God, and the dim light of Judaism are past for believers. But pagan darkness is not dispelled in a moment, but the darkness is passing, and in another day, the light and glory of the Lord will be universal. The darkness is disappearing and the light shines.

Verses 9-11. Hatred and love of the brethren are set in sharp contrast. If the former is true of anyone no matter what the profession may be, he is in the darkness of nature. On the other hand

where love of the brethren exists it is a divine proof that the one so characterised abides in the light and he is not an occasion of stumbling to others. Where love and light constitute the moral atmosphere in which one lives and acts how can there be occasion of stumbling. All our mistakes and failures occur outside the realised presence of God. Were we habitually living and moving in the unclouded light of God our path would be without a break or stumble. Hatred—which includes every form of dislike and personal ill-feeling—is a manifest proof of living and acting in the darkness. Ver. 11 is a searching passage. May it search and expose the conscience of both writer and reader. “The darkness” (R.V.) is named three times. Love of the brethren must not be confounded with love of a party or sect, or of persons who may hold precisely with me in opinion or doctrine. “My brother,” in John’s writings, is not synonymous with “my neighbour,” but signifies every member of the family of God irrespective of ecclesiastical difference, apart altogether too from growth, gift, or natural acquirements. Is the person saved? Is he redeemed by the precious blood of Christ? Is he born of the Spirit of God, then he is to me a brother, “beloved”; and I love him because he has been begotten of God (chap. v. 1), he is a member of the family of God, and all its members are characterised by love—that is a family trait.

“I write unto you little children (teknia) because your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake” (ver. 12).

In the large and increasing family of God there are three progressive classes severally addressed by the aged Apostle (vers. 13-27), as babes, young men and fathers. But before doing so he writes to all. In the affectionate term used by the Apostle all saints are included. The whole company of the redeemed is in view. There are two blessings common to every child of God—Eternal Life and Forgiveness of Sins. It is this latter which is specially referred to in our text. All Children of God are equally forgiven. In this eternal and divine forgiveness of all their sins, there are no measures, no limitations, no degrees. The babe in Christ is as fully and completely forgiven as the father in Christ. Then the blessed character of the forgiveness may be deduced from the fact that God forgives for Christ’s sake. It is the demand of Christ. His blood and worth surely claim this first and fundamental blessing for all who truly believe in His blessed Name, and God richly answers in

the forgiveness of sins, casting them all behind His back and dismissing them from His memory for ever. The forgiveness is present, "ARE forgiven."

A THREEFOLD CLASSIFICATION OF ALL CHRISTIANS.

In verses 1, 12 and 28 the term "little children," embraces the entire family of God, irrespective of age, gift, or spiritual growth, whereas in verses 13 and 18 the expression in the original denotes an infantile condition. The portion before us forms a parenthesis of exceeding interest and one which has largely engaged the spiritual mind.

All christians may be grouped into three classes: (1) Fathers; (2) Young men; (3) Babes (*paidia*). The terms here used are purposely employed to set forth the progressive spiritual growth of God's people, be they male or female. John writes with the pen of Apostolic authority; thus, in verse 13, "I write"; in verse 14, "I have written." Twice he addresses each class: see verses 13, 14. That to the babes is the longest communication.

FIRST ADDRESS TO FATHERS, VERSE 13.

"Ye have known him that is from the beginning." It has been already remarked that the Johannine phrase "from the beginning" refers to the first manifestation of God on earth—to His appearance in true and holy humanity amongst men. We know of no truth within the compass of Divine Revelation of such depth and profound importance. God manifested in flesh (1 Tim. iii. 16) is the necessary basis of Christianity; its denial is to the everlasting ruin of souls.

"Known Him." Herein is wrapped up the highest spiritual state and experience of the most advanced saint. Personal knowledge of Christ, so as to fully confide in Him under all possible circumstances, and as apprehending the revelation made in Him, is the distinguishing feature of a father in Christ. Profound intelligence, devotedness in service, marked ministerial gift, the highest intellectual endowment, are not necessarily the characteristics of an advanced spiritual state. All these, singly or combined, may elicit admiration and beget homage from men, but the "fathers" are otherwise spoken of. They know Christ. They wholly, fully rest in Him. The study of the Gospels is the especial delight of the "fathers," for therein is unfolded a life so transcendently beautiful, so absolutely holy, yet withal of such grace that every word, every touch, every incident is redolent with fragrance to God. In that Blessed One, whose path on earth and present place in

heaven has bowed our hearts, we rest and are satisfied. There can be nothing morally higher than a personal knowledge of Christ from the beginning. This is the goal of christian experience, and is the end in life to which the Holy Ghost conducts the soul.

SECOND ADDRESS TO FATHERS, VERSE 14.

"I have written unto you fathers because ye have known Him that is from the beginning." There can be nothing higher than an intimate, personal acquaintance with God's Son. *In* the bosom of Jesus (John xiii. 23 R.V.) was the delight of the soul of the Apostle of Love. The divine bosom was his dwelling-place. Is it ours? Is Christ so known and served and habitually confided in that the heart is at rest amidst the stress of life, with its complications, its discords, its shadows and griefs?

Without doubt the two most prominent "fathers" were John and Paul. Both turned from self to Christ, from experience to Christ, from inward conflict to Christ. It is to Christ the Holy Spirit conducts the soul. A loftier aim, a deeper lesson there cannot be. The soul travels slowly to this holy goal. It is often a painful process ere the end is reached. A personal and experimental knowledge of Christ is the supreme lesson of the hour. "I know whom I have believed" (2 Tim. i. 12). Stress of circumstances, the mingled joys and sorrows of life left their impress on the soul of the grand old apostle. *He knew Christ.* Christ in heaven was his soul's delight, Christ filled the vision, and Christ became the *alone* centre of his moral being. It is true that conflict and experience and even the characteristics of the spiritual babe were ever witnessed, more or less, in the apostolic fathers John and Paul. But these were in the back ground. Christ known and loved in the heart and life is the absorbing object of the spiritual "father." We deprecate an intellectual study of the life of Christ. Such studies hurt the soul and lower immensely the tone of communion with God. But the study of Christ on earth and in heaven, reverently pursued, is sure to leave its impress on the soul. Holy intimacy with Christ will make you unconsciously Christ-like. O to reach this blessed goal! It is within the reach of all. All cannot be teachers or evangelists but it is within the compass of every christian to reach a moral elevation—a profound state of rest—of which Christ is the centre in the soul, that the holy calm of heaven may be ours *now* and till we see His face in glory.

THE LAST WEEK OF THE LORD'S LIFE BEFORE THE CROSS.

By F. W. CHAPMAN.

WE all cherish the memory of the closing scenes in the lives of those we love, and all who know and love the Lord Jesus will find great blessing and joy in dwelling on the last week of His life before the cross.

The Lord Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, which aroused the keenest opposition and hatred of the Jewish leaders. So much so that they sought to kill him (John xi. 53) ; for many of the Jews, as a consequence of this miracle, "went away and believed on Jesus" (John xii. 11).

After this event the Lord withdrew with his more immediate circle to the wilderness to a city called Ephraim, and there remained in more or less seclusion until the approach of the Passover (John xi. 54). He then joined the band of pilgrims who made their way to Jerusalem to keep that feast.

On the way He scatters blessings. Gives sight to blind men ; Bartimæus being one of them (Luke xviii. 35-43), meets Zacchæus, and brings salvation to his house by His Own presence—for as Simeon once said, "*Mine* eyes have seen thy *salvation*." (Luke ii. 30).

On the Friday night preceding the Passover Week, He arrived at His beloved Bethany, the spot so dear to His heart, and apparently spent the night there. On Saturday (as we read in John xii. 1) "Six days before the Passover" they made Him a supper, and amongst the guests were Martha, Lazarus and Mary.

Mary's heart is full of personal devotion to her Lord, Who, she knows, is about to die, and she took "a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair, and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment." Silently she does this blessed act, but the whole house is filled with its sweetness. Martha's service, valued, and in its place necessary, does not meet all the Lord requires. Mary's act of personal love and devotion meets with a response from His heart as He owns its intelligent appreciation of Himself. But Satan's tool is there. The traitor's heart exposes itself by its grudging complaints of "waste," He cares not for the poor, but was a thief.

Judas was probably attracted to the Lord by political motives. He apparently had no heart for Christ, but seeing in Him One Who might prove to be the Deliverer from the power of Rome, he threw in his lot with Him—only however, to be disappointed when the Lord definitely told His disciples that He should die (Matt. xvi. 21).

PALM SUNDAY.

On the morrow (Palm Sunday) He sends two disciples on from Bethphage—a place on the mount of Olives—to a village close by where they would find an ass tied, with instructions to loose and bring him. In fulfilment of Zechariah's prophecy (Zech. ix. 9) He rides on the ass in triumph into Jerusalem. Those words, uttered about 500 hundred years before, now find their answer. "*Thy King cometh unto thee, He is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.*"

From John xii. 16-19 we gather that a large number had followed from Bethphage, whilst another body came out from Jerusalem to meet Him. Thus a large crowd with Jesus in the midst is seen wending its way into the City of the great King, garments spread on the road and palm branches waved overhead. Whilst the air is filled with joy and praise as they shout the Messiah's Psalm (Ps. cxviii. 25), "Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord; Hosanna in the Highest" (Matt. xxi. 9).

Whilst joy fills *their* hearts, sorrow fills the Lord's, for as they neared the City (travellers tell us that at this point in the road Jerusalem bursts upon the view in great beauty) He beheld it and wept over it (Luke xix. 41), saying, "If thou had'st known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes."

The weeping here is expressed by a word which speaks of deepest outward emotion, whilst at the grave of Lazarus it was quiet, silent weeping.

Once in the city, her Royal King, owned by even little children with their loud hosannas—rejected by the Religious Rulers—repairs to the Temple and there exercises His rightful power by cleansing it for the second time of its abominations, and in the same scene heals the lame and blind (Matt. xxi. 12-16).

On that *Sunday night* He returns to sleep at Bethany (Matt. xxi. 17).

On *Monday morning* coming up again to Jerusalem He saw a fig-tree covered with leaves, but having no fruit thereon, and utters the solemn curse, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever." Israel—typified by the fig-tree—had all the outward signs of fruit-bearing, but in reality was fruitless, and as a nation is now set aside and under the Judgment of God.

On Monday night the Lord returned to Bethany. On *Tuesday morning* on His way to Jerusalem the disciples noticed the withered tree, and remark "How soon is the fig-tree withered away," whilst He unfolds to them the power of faith in God.

From Mark xi. 27, we learn that the Chief Priests and Elders of the people challenge the Lord as to His authority for doing these things. He answers them by asking a question as to whether John's Baptism was from heaven or of men. To this they dare not reply, and evade an open answer by a plea of ignorance, so the Lord refused to answer their question.

On this occasion were uttered the parables of "The Two Sons," "The Householder who planted a Vineyard," and "The Marriage of the King's Son," which, reaching those guilty consciences, aroused anger and malice so that they sought to lay hands on Him, but feared the multitude" (Matt. xxi. 46).

Pharisees, Herodians, Sadducees all unite in their hatred of the Son of God and try to entangle Him in His words, but retire from the conflict beaten, and "No man was able to answer Him a word neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions" (Matt. xxii. 46).

Then Jesus uttered the most solemn denunciations of hypocrisy ever spoken, with the "Woes" on men professing godliness but denying its power. Surely it is good for us to challenge our own hearts in the presence of so searching a passage of Scripture, ending, in verse 33, with what must have filled the Scribes and Pharisees with horror, and yet left them as far as ever from God.

THE LAMENTATION OVER JERUSALEM.

That afternoon (Tuesday) as the Lord Jesus publicly left the City for the last time, He utters that heart-broken cry, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often would I . . . and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate, for I say unto you ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. xxiii. 37-39).

Leaving the temple His disciples point out the buildings, and draw from Him the facts of its future destruction.

They cross the Cedron and reach the Mount of Olives, where they sat down. What a meeting! The Rejected One and His Own, alone, as evening shadows fall. What an unfolding of prophetic truth follows. Part already fulfilled. Jerusalem with its temple utterly destroyed. Their glory gone. But how much awaits fulfilment:—The Coming of the Bridegroom; the Great Tribulation; the Judgment of the Nations. On that evening the Lord Jesus spoke the Parables of "The Ten Virgins" and "The Talents," giving us in this day much to exercise us as to reality and faithfulness whilst He is away.

On Tuesday night again we find the Lord Jesus at Bethany, and it is remarkable that scripture gives us not a word as to Wednesday. Would it not be likely that He spent that day quietly alone with that loved family and those in His immediate circle at Bethany? Does it not touch our hearts to think of Him *there*? Loving and loved. Does He not prize even to-day hearts yielded to Himself, not only for service but worship and devotion. Surely the silence of scripture is eloquent.

Judas Iscariot had been busy during the early part of the week and seems to have been in close touch with the Chief Priest, Scribes and Elders of the people, who had convened a meeting at the palace of the High Priest and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty and kill him. But their decision seems to have been that it would be most ill advised to do so during the feast, lest there might be an uproar amongst the people (Matt. xxvi. 1-5). This appears to have been on Tuesday at latest, or Wednesday, for Judas evidently knowing of their difficulties volunteers for a sum of money to betray Him to them.

The contract is made, on the one hand the Chief Priests, on the other Judas, the traitor. The sum fixed 30 pieces of silver—the price of a slave.

Judas now seeks opportunity to betray his Master.

On *Thursday* morning the Lord Jesus leaves Bethany and its sweet associations for the last time and sends on Peter and John to make ready the Passover. The deeply interesting story of "the man with the pitcher of water" (men rarely carried water, it was the work of women in the east), the ready response to the

question, Where is the guest chamber? the large upper room furnished, and the making ready are probably all well known to the reader, but we do well to linger over these scenes, and our hearts grow warm as we contemplate them.

The Lord had followed later in the day and passing through the huge crowds gathered for the Feast had reached the quiet upper room on Thursday evening (Mark xiv. 17). We are told that on Thursday afternoon just prior to the evening service (3 p.m.), the Paschal lamb was slain, and then followed the slaying of many more that the lamb roast with fire might be eaten that evening at the Passover Memorial supper.*

The Lord Jesus is now alone with the twelve and they recline at table, whilst He rises and, in an act of wondrous lowliness and grace, girds Himself and washes their feet (John xiii.), unfolding to them that "One of them should betray Him." Sadness fills their hearts. Is it possible that one of them should betray Him? Lord, is it I? passes from the lips of one and another, till the traitor himself dare venture the same question, to which he receives an instant reply, "Thou hast said."

The words "My own familiar friend, he who eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against Me," were now about to be fulfilled. Judas receives the sop—the sign of friendship—and Satan enters into him. The Lord says to him, "That thou doest, do quickly." The wretched man leaves the company and goes out into darkness to perpetrate the foulest deed man had ever accomplished.

(To be continued).

"BE COURTEOUS."

I PETER iii. 8.

IN these days of hurry and nervous strain, and of many demands upon time and strength, one is apt to lose sight of the necessity for cultivating those graces which may be regarded as the "lily work" of the Christian character. In the apostolic injunction, "Be courteous," we see that the grace of courtesy is a necessary part of the equipment of every child of God. And yet how very

* Those who are interested in the details will find them fully explained in "The Temple," by Dr. Edersheim.

often among even the most devoted Christians, this grace is practically absent. The lack of it is very often not even recognised and if it be too obvious to be disregarded, it is the custom to describe discourtesy as merely "manner," or to find other excuses for its absence, which are equally futile.

Courtesy plays a large and very important part in the economy of the Christian life, and its influence cannot be over-estimated. The little courtesies of life, including courteous manner, courteous speech, courteous habits, all of which are merely personal translations of the Golden Rule, have a greater effect upon one's fellows, and do more to recommend one's Christianity, than is generally realised. An earnest follower of our Lord, with a burning desire to win souls for Him, or a Christian greatly desirous of glorifying Him by life and by lip, may hinder, or even spoil, his or her work by the discourteous word or action, and may create an adverse impression which can never be dispelled. The hasty reply, the abrupt word, the curt greeting, the impatient manner, the unanswered letter, the broken engagement, the grudging interest, are all trifles perhaps in the life of a busy man or woman whose days are filled with service for God, but they are trifles which tell, they are the spoiled "lily-work" in the "temple of the Holy Ghost"; they are the "little foxes that spoil the vine" of a fragrant Christian life. We must ever take time to be holy, and should we not also take time to be courteous, for one should be the complement of the other. The excuse is sometimes made that good manners are a natural gift, and cannot be cultivated. But is it not true that good manners spring from heart culture, and being so, is it not in the power of every Christian to claim the help of the Holy Spirit to overcome natural deficiencies in this direction, and to cultivate that sweet courtesy which should flow naturally from the spring of the love which has its source in the love of God Himself?

"Be courteous" is the inspired command, and failure to manifest this Christian grace is disobedience to the Divine Will.

—*Extract.*

"It is no good to look for strength before obedience, strength is only found in the path of obedience."

* * * *

"Peter got strength by learning he had none at all."

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY: SINNER, SAINT AND SERVANT.

The SAINT.

"Whereby the world is crucified unto me."

"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful unto me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." I. Cor. vi. 12.

By R. E.

A SAINT is, literally, *a separated one*. All true Christians are saints in this sense, for all have been separated from the world, whether they realise it or not. The object with which Christ "gave Himself for our sins" was "that He might deliver us from this present evil world." St. Paul tells us the bearing of this upon his own life—"God forbid that I should glory," he says, "save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. i. 4; vi. 14).

The value of these autobiographical touches is that we not only have truths stated in a doctrinal form, but we see the demonstration of those truths in actual life. To see truth embodied and expressed in the advocate of truth, everyone will recognise as of immense value. The truth itself becomes more real: the utterance of it more impressive. St. Paul's view of the world and his attitude towards it are here clearly defined. To him it was an *evil* age. This view was not singular. Our Lord Himself described the generation of His day as "evil and adulterous," and clearly intimated that its character would never change, until He came back in judgment to purge it (see Luke xvii. 24-37). St. John tells us not to love it, for all that is of the world is not of the Father, and the world passeth away (1 John ii. 15-17). An evil and a passing age! On the Passover night the people who partook of the lamb roast with fire did so with loins girded and shoes on their feet because while the sprinkled blood sheltered them from the destroying angel, it for ever separated them from Egypt. They were to leave it. Figure of that moral separation which should characterise God's people to-day.

What precisely did the Apostle mean by the world being crucified to him, and he to it? It is certain there was nothing monastic about him. No one was more in touch with life. He

knew every side of it. In business (for he was a tent maker); on board ship; in the place of concourse, whether it was the synagogue or Mars Hill; in the streets of the city, as well as in the schools, he came face to face with men everywhere. There were indeed certain conditions under which he would allow an intercourse with the men of the world which he would not permit between those who professed Christianity (see 1 Cor. v. 9-11). He was no recluse, for he wrote, "If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake." In what respect then was the world crucified to him? He perceived its true character, and he estimated it at its true value. It was a crucified thing because it had cast out the Son of God, and this told its own tale. It had put out the light; it had refused both truth and grace. What must be its character, when it could act thus? If a man stands before a work of art, which is a masterpiece, and sees nothing to admire, if no form or line appeals to him, does it not proclaim his own defect? "Are these your masterpieces?" said a tourist to the curator in the famous Uffizi Gallery of Art at Florence, "I certainly don't see much in them myself." "Sir," replied the curator, "*these pictures are not on their trial*; it is the visitors who are on their trial." So with the world. When Christ came into it, the world was immediately put on its trial. In crucifying Him it demonstrated its own state and wrote its own condemnation. It had no eyes and no heart for God. It was from this standpoint the Apostle regarded the world, and the world to him was nothing better than a crucified thing. It was in utter ignorance of God's wisdom. "Which none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known it they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory."

But what about the one who holds this view? How does the world regard him? The world as such will see nothing in him. So the Apostle adds, "and I unto the world." It is the man that admires the world that is applauded by the world. But what correspondence can there be between the man who sees Christ to be "the power of God and the wisdom of God" and a world which thought Him so worthless that it crucified Him? And what had made Christ so much to Paul? It was not always so. Oh! Christ had stooped from the highest glory to meet him, a persecutor, and instead of crushing him, as He could have done, easier than we can crush a moth between our fingers, He spoke to him and made him

conscious of a love he had never known, and yet of a light above the brightness of the sun eclipsing everything.

“Christianity is an enthusiasm or it is nothing,” someone has said. What enthusiasm seems to glow in the words upon which we have been dwelling; “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ whereby the world is crucified to me and I unto the world.”

What kind of saint was Paul with reference to the ordinary routine of life?

In 1. Cor. vi. 12, there is a very interesting reference to the principle that governed himself with regard to the matters which go to make up our every day life. “*All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient (or profitable); all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*”

First of all he lays down as a fundamental principle that the Christian is called to perfect liberty. *All things are lawful.* He is not, of course, contemplating sin here. Paul had been a Pharisee, and he knew perfectly well if there was one thing more than another always on the lips of a Pharisee it was this, “It is not lawful.” This crops up again and again in the Gospels, and it was always rebuked by our Lord. So twice over here, in one short verse, we get the statement, “All things are lawful.” Let us grasp this firmly. Two dangers always threaten the believer—legality and looseness. Let us see how the Apostle avoids both one and the other. Having stated that “all things are lawful,” he adds, “*But all things are not profitable.*”

The question is, how can we use our time to the best advantage. A man does not engage in business simply for its own sake; he looks for profit, and if at the end of the year he found that all his time and energy and thought had brought him no tangible result, he would be disappointed. No, in worldly affairs people are not satisfied with marking time, or wasting their time, and in spiritual matters it should be the same. What are we going to get out of it, and what is the Lord going to get out of it? should be the uppermost question. So, when the past with all its sins and failures is settled and closed for ever, and we stand in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, we have to ask ourselves with

regard to this plan and the other purpose—this pursuit and the other pleasure—not merely, Is it lawful? but, Is it profitable?

Then comes another question. A thing may be lawful and it may be profitable, yet it may absorb us so much that we get under its power. So the Apostle adds, "*I will not be brought under the power of any.*" Here is a danger signal to which we do well to take heed. Remember, it is not here a question of sins. Sins are never lawful. St. Paul is not thinking of these here, but of all that naturally falls within the compass of our everyday life. Take music for example; it is both lawful and profitable, but it is easy, especially for some, to fall under its spell. We knew a lady who had never touched a piano for twenty years, because she had once been under its fascination. Take dress. How many become the slaves of fashion. What shall they wear, and how will they look, become the questions of the hour. Yet some attention to dress is an absolute necessity. Then there is the matter of having the home look nice. Perfectly lawful and not unprofitable within certain limits, but how soon those limits may be exceeded, and the home become an idol. Once staying in the north, we noticed the good woman opposite always cleaning her house. Our hostess remarked one day, "That house is her God." Take the matter of recreation and kindred pursuits. While some deny themselves all such and go to one extreme, are there not many more who plunge in the other direction and spend more time and money on such things than is justifiable.

Now with all these matters, and a hundred others, which are lawful and more or less profitable, how necessary to remember the Apostle's words, "*I will not be brought under the power of any.*" Is this or that obtaining any real power over me? Am I its master, or, is it mine? Can I drop it at any moment for something higher and better? or is *it* dragging me away, more or less perceptibly, getting possession of my heart, and spoiling my enjoyment of that which is spiritual and eternal? For, let it never be forgotten, that, anything, no matter how good in itself, be it even a husband, or wife, or house, or garden, or child, anything that has power over us, in the way here meant, is an idol. A man or woman as truly bows down to *that* thing, as much as if a carved idol of wood or stone stood in the house; for the simple reason that the heart is supremely governed by it. Is it not well to remember, too, that the idol of one

may not be the idol of another. We do not all bow down to the same image, but with everyone of us—and each one who knows his or her own heart will attest the truth of this—there is some one thing that is liable to exercise power over us ; a thing that is not sin in itself, but which may lead to sin and departure from God, unless we are loosed from its power. It may with some be light reading—the novel or the newspaper—how many are under the power of this in the present day, and what waste of time, even if the morals are not corrupted ; with others it may be society, or the cigar, or money, but, whatever it be, it is certain we shall make little, if any, progress *as Christians* while such power dominates us. May the resolve of one of the purest and brightest saints that ever lived be ours : “ I will not be brought under the *power of any.*”

St. Paul then goes on to remind us of the transitory nature of all that contributes to make up man's life on earth. “ *Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them* ” (ver. 13). God has given us senses, and He does not object to their being gratified in a lawful way ; but both the senses and what ministers to them pass away. How necessary to remember that the body is not to be the *slave* of animal desires, even of those that are lawful, much less of forbidden lusts. “ The body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.” The body, once the servant of sin, is now to be the servant of Christ. And the Lord is for the body. He gave Himself for our entire being, and He will never lose what has become His property, consequently the body will be raised. Our bodies are the members of Christ.

The Apostle now brings us to the climax of the whole thing : “ *He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit.*” If anything obtains power over us, whether it is money, or pleasure, or the pursuit of knowledge, whatever it is, *that*, as we have seen, becomes an idol, and *that* is the thing we are joined to. St Paul speaks of being joined unto the Lord. Here is our supreme safeguard. Nothing will obtain undue power over us when this is true. How solemn the word uttered to God's people of old, “ Ephraim is *joined* to idols ; let him alone.” This is in Hosea, ch. iv. 17. Thank God, before the end of that book we have their repentance described. “ Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols ? ” Are there not many idols to be banished from our hearts ? Shall not our lips make this same avowal ? Shall we not see to it that

we are really joined unto the Lord? The Book of Ruth furnishes a beautiful illustration of what this means. Naomi is entreating her two daughters-in-law to leave her and return to their own land. Orpah consents, and goes back to her people—and unto her gods. *But Ruth clave unto her*—“ And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee : for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge ; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God : where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried : the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me ” (Ruth i. 16-17).

It was precisely this spirit which animated St. Paul. He was joined heart and soul unto the Lord. Christ was not only his Saviour from the guilt of sin, but Lord of his life. Lord of all his powers : Lord of all his plans and purposes : Lord of every waking hour. His time, his talents, his strength were all consecrated to Christ, and under His control. Is it any wonder he was such a saint? Is it any wonder he was able to say, “ Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ ” ?

Notice he does not affirm that the Corinthians were joined to the Lord ; he speaks in the abstract, “ He that is joined.” Considering their then state, it was hardly possible for him to go so far as to affirm it directly of them. For alas ! it is quite possible to be justified and to have received the Holy Spirit without being joined to the Lord in the sense of this passage.* There is indeed another sense in which all true believers are joined to the Lord, *i.e.*, as members of His body. “ For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.” But here it is an individual matter ; “ *he* that is joined.” It is attachment of heart ; the being joined by affection. And this it is that produces a saintly life. It is what Barnabas meant when he “ exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.” Two people may be joined in matrimony, and become legally husband and wife ; they may never be joined in real affection and devotedness one to the other. It is to this last that the Apostle is here referring. And the consequence of such a union is to become one spirit—one in aim, in desire, in hope. And this oneness—this harmony and correspondence with the Master, is surely the very essence of saintship. What it leads

* Another translation has it, “ But he who joins himself to the Lord, becomes one spirit with Him ” (*Conybeare*).

to is the acknowledgment that we are not our own; "*Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your bodies*" (vers. 19-20).

What true liberty is indicated by the Apostle's words, "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." A two-fold liberty. Liberty from the bondage of law, and from being under the power of that which ministers to the senses. St. Paul comes down to everyday matters with which we all have to do, and shews us how we are to regard them. It is not a question of "Touch not, taste not, handle not," but of regulating the appetite; and due attention to this leads to glorifying God in our body and in our spirit. Is not this what every true child of God desires? Let us sum up very briefly the steps that lead to it.

First of all justification through Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit; next being set free from all legality; then the forsaking of whatever is not profitable, and the determination not to be brought under the power of any. Fourthly, while that which ministers to the senses has its place, yet it all comes to an end; fifthly, the recognition that the body is for the Lord's use; and lastly, the all importance of the heart being joined unto the Lord. Only thus can we make real progress as Christians and our profiting appear to all, even as it was with the Apostle.

UNKNOWN RICHES.

SEVERAL weeks ago an old man living in New Jersey discovered about \$5,000 in a family Bible. The bank notes were scattered throughout the Book. In 1874 the aunt of this man had died, and one clause of her will was as follows:—

"To my beloved nephew, Steven Marsh, I will and bequeath my family Bible, and all it contains, with the residue of my estate after my funeral expenses and just and lawful debts are paid."

The estate amounted to a few hundred dollars, which were soon spent, and for about thirty-five years his chief support has been a small pension from the Government. He lived in poverty, and all the time within his reach there was the precious Bible containing thousands of dollars, sufficient for all his wants. He passed the

Bible by. His eyes rested on it, perhaps his hands handled the old leather bound Bible with its brass clasps, but he did not open it once. At last, while packing his trunk, to move to his son, where he intended to spend his few remaining years, he discovered the unknown riches which were in his possession. What thoughts of regret must have come to his mind. If he only had opened that Bible years ago, he then might have used the money to great advantage. Instead of it the treasure lay idle for thirty-five years. And he might have had it and enjoyed it all that time.

This is a sad story. But there is something infinitely sadder than the experience of this man. It is the neglect of the Bible by God's people. Our God has given to His people a costly treasure in His own Word. In this Book of books the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God are stored up. Here the riches of His love and grace are made known, and the highest wisdom man is capable of possessing is told out. All the child of God needs spiritually is to be found on its pages; all wants are there supplied. And yet these riches, put at our disposal by a loving Father, are unknown and unused riches. Instead of being enjoyed, used, and in using them multiplied, they are neglected. Many of God's people are dragging along in a spiritually impoverished state, when they might have all their need supplied and constantly increase in the knowledge of God. Occasionally we receive letters from aged Christians, including preachers. They tell us how they deplore the fact that they did not know certain truths thirty or forty years ago. "How different my Christian life and experience as well as my service might have been," is what an old Christian wrote to us recently. And all this time these riches were in the Bible, they might have enjoyed them. Oh, the neglected Bible! May we arise and possess our possession.—*Selected.*

"If self were always kept under the extinguisher, God would not have to send us heavy trials to crush it, or little ones to find out its unjudged presence."

* * * *

"What the world calls *mercy* (when they speak of hoping in the mercy of God) is simply indifference to good and evil; the hope that God will think as little about sin as I do."

GROWING IN GRACE IN THE GARDEN OF THE LORD.

2 Peter iii. 18.

FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS.

By C. A. I.

THE lesson taught in the verse referred to above, is one that is learned progressively in the school of God.

Peter, the somewhat aggressive, impulsive, and yet devoted disciple of our Lord, when giving this most blessed exhortation to his fellow believers, was now a matured Christian ; he had learned from prolonged experience the preciousness of that transforming grace, and of the knowledge of his Lord, and without doubt, he bore the characteristics of grace in his life and general demeanour.

He deeply realized, too, its absolute necessity, in order that " The hidden man of the heart " might be manifested, the outcome of which would be—" The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price " (1 Peter iii. 4).

In musing over the verse referred to in his second epistle (his final exhortation ere his departure) and the necessity of divine growth in the soul and spiritual progress, one's thoughts become engaged with the development of plants in a garden. In the fourth chapter of the Song of Solomon, we read of the " Spouse of the Beloved " likened unto " *A Garden inclosed* " ; we read also of the Bride's love and affection going out towards her Beloved in the invitation given :—" Let my Beloved come into His garden, and eat His pleasant fruits " (Song of Sol. iv. 12-16). Which, (if we may consistently apply the illustration to " Christ and the Church ") He is ever desirous to do. Yes, He is ever looking for and expecting to gather the fruit of His wondrous, matchless love towards His own, for " He loved the Church and gave Himself up for it " (Eph. v. 25). Is it not perfectly in keeping that the blessed Lord should take a delight in visiting that Garden, planted by the loving hand of His Father ? (Matt. xv. 13). Does it not afford Him much joy when He gathers up the much-desired fruit—the result of the heart's occupation with Him—" The Garden inclosed " ?

A thought suggests itself here. We think of the large garden of profession, wherein are planted, by the rude agency of human organisation, or as the result of inherited environment, what we may correctly name, Artificial Plants—those that have no root—having no vital connection with the soil of Divine Grace—professors, but not possessors of spiritual life—having a certain status among the Lord's people, but not real living plants in the "Garden of the Lord," the "*Garden inclosed*"—that sanctified portion within the larger Garden of Profession—where they who truly love their Lord are found, otherwise known in New Testament revelation as "The Body of Christ," "Household of Faith," "Spiritual House," composed of living stones, etc., etc.

The Lord Jesus, speaking of the hypocritical Pharisees, who were contented with a mere position and outward form as regards the things of God, said :—"Every plant which My Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matt. xv. 13); and oh! how many, it is feared, will have to undergo that solemn uprooting operation by the hand of a holy God, because He demands "Truth in the inward parts" (Psa. li. 6).

Make *sure* you are a *real living plant* in this wonderful garden, rooted deeply in divine grace by the power of the Holy Spirit, not merely one of that superficial—that self-sufficient company, which draweth nigh unto God with the lip, but whose heart is far from Him (Matt. xv. 8).

But now, a word to all who are truly planted in the garden of the Lord, and over whom the Lord is watching so tenderly, far more tenderly than we would tend a plant in a flower garden, concerning the progress of which we are anxious, sheltering it from cold blasts, that would check its bloom and maturity.

Since God in His grace and love has been pleased to give you a position in this wonderful enclosure, so precious to the heart of the Lord Jesus, it is His desire that you should grow—that you should step forward—learning more of His mind and will concerning you, and through the grace of God, become more transformed into the moral likeness of your Saviour and Lord.

God has given us such a beautiful example in His Beloved Son, when He was down here amongst men—the patient, humble, dependent Man—the true witness for God. Hear His words :—"I came

down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (John vi. 38). That was His delight: His spiritual meat was "to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work" (John iv. 34). A permanent expression of the heart of God His Father, expressing love and grace in word and action wherever He went; but oh, how little response He met with from those who were the recipients of His divine favour!

So the exhortation the spirit of God gives is that we should *Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*" (2 Peter iii. 18), that we, who are through grace linked up with Him, bearing His worthy Name down here in the scene of His rejection, should become more like Him in our behaviour, as witnesses for Him during His absence. Being rooted in grace like a plant in the soil, and growing in it as a plant grows in the sunlight and atmosphere.

To know a person we must live in his company—be acquainted with his likes and dislikes; it infers intimacy, and proportionately as our love goes out to that person our actions will be directed to give him pleasure and honour.

We may know much *about* our Saviour, but the question is—*do we know Him?* The Apostle Paul enjoyed communion with Christ in a very blessed and exceptional way. Yet his soul's desire expressed in Phil. iii. 10 was: "That I may *know Him* and the *power of His resurrection.*" How many of us realize what that means? We need to know what it means to have died with Christ, and to have risen with Him and to walk in newness of life, so that *our affections are set upon Him* Who is our life up there, at God's right hand (Col. iii. 1-4).

You are now a "*New Creation* in Christ Jesus, old things are passed away; behold all things are become new" (2 Cor. v. 17).

It is because Christians do not realize this truth that worldliness has so crept into their hearts, robbing them of so much that is precious, and the *Lord* of much glory; the mind becoming too much attracted to the transient things of earth rather than with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is ever engaged in loving service on their behalf above (Heb. vii. 25; ix. 24).

Let us remember the exhortation—"That with *purpose of heart* they would cleave unto the Lord" (Acts xi. 23)—so that

“ Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith ” (Eph. iii. 17). And we may “ grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ ” (iv. 15). That our desire may be, as F. R. H. expressed in one of her spiritual songs, “ Lord Jesus make Thyself to me a living bright reality.” If this be our blessed experience, we shall bloom in His garden, the “ garden enclosed,” and our lives, like the precious ointment of Mary of Bethany, will emit an odour and fragrance that will afford refreshment and joy to the heart of our Lord and Saviour, as He gathers the precious fruit from the garden of our individual hearts.

PURSUED, YET NOT LEFT BEHIND.

2 CORINTHIANS iv., 9 (R.V.).

Pursued as stag by pack of hunting hounds,
 The Church of God was followed to the death.
 Yet she sprang forward, and by leaps and bounds
 Sped onward still, though as with dying breath.
 Not left behind ! The Church of God had strength
 Proportioned to her day : nor lagged, nor failed ;
 But evermore escaped her foes. At length,
 All left behind, she shall in Heav'n be hailed.

Pursued as in the olden days, a ship
 Was followed by an enemy. But sped
 Full sail ahead, and favoured would outstrip
 The pirate craft, from which she sailing fled.
 Fair winds of Heav'n will ever favour those
 Who ask their aid. Speed on ! Set every sail !
 Ye shall not be o'ertaken by your foes :
 “ Not left behind ” ; God's breezes never fail.

Pursued ! a wounded warrior in the fight
 Fell on the field : and did his comrades fly
 And vanish like a spectre from his sight,
 Leaving him there to perish and to die ?
 Pursued ! the flood was rising and the folk
 Must hurry to the hills—drive on the sheep—
 Let loose the fowls, unhitch the oxen's yoke—
 And will the babe be left behind asleep ?

“ Not left behind ” ! I may be weak and frail :
 I may be wounded and the march impede ;
 I may seem left of men—their friendships fail—
 But God will not forsake me in my need.
 “ Not left behind ” ! I shall arrive at home :
 He has my hand and helps me up and on :
 He will not loose or leave me, till we come
 Where weakest warriors have the life-crown won.

WILLIAM LUFF.

A HUMAN DOCUMENT.

Dear Mr.———

I write to you—first, because I ought to do so ; second, because some day you may meet some poor wandering soul like I was, and this may lead him to the Saviour.

When I sit by the fire I often wonder if I really am the man that has endured so much—that has been so desperate—that has been rescued from such mire. I look at my hands and I wonder if those are the hands that have wrought so much mischief. Yes, I sit by the fire, and again wonder why I should have allowed sin to run away with me, and I think of the 20 years I never had a fire to sit by. Surely Satan has had his own way with me.

But I hasten on, as I want to tell you what God has saved me from ; and if ever you feel discouraged, think of this :—

Twelve years Penal Servitude for attempted murder of a police sergeant ; after drinking a few glasses of brandy we (three of us) battered him with his own truncheon till we thought him dead ;

Three years for throwing the landlord of an hotel over the stair banisters (attempted murder).

Three years for “ receiving.”

Three for burglary.

I was the convict that attacked the warders and led the others on ; then attempted to escape, for which I was shot in the leg, when I would not surrender. I was confined to cells for 46 weeks, and for two of these weeks my hands were handcuffed behind my back—both day and night—owing to my violence. I was even washed by prisoners.

My purpose in telling you this is to show you what sort of condition I was in when I entered that heaven-sent abode of rest, the———

I had not long been released ; I had been arrested the week previous because a policeman complained that I threatened him. The Magistrates said that they wished to treat me kindly ; would I go to Australia or Canada, and they would pay my fare ? I said I would go to London. The police bought my ticket (17s. 6d.), gave me some money and sent me off.

Now, dear Mr.—, listen :—

I believe I had 1s. 6d. left when I walked up the Mile End Road that eventful Sunday night. I read the poster at the door and decided to enter. I was more desperate that night than I had ever been. I would have committed any crime—my heart was as cold as the flags I stood on. I had seen both murderers and thieves die when I was hospital orderly and it never moved me. I had never shed a tear for years. I was “stone dead” with sin. I began to listen to the singing; then I took my seat well down the Hall, where I always sit now on Sunday nights. I remember seeing Mr.— and Mr.— and others, then you began to speak, and this is what you said :—

“The devil *takes* all from a man—friends, home, self-respect—all he has got, and at the finish he takes his soul as well and damns it for ever.” (I began to pay attention.) “God *gives* all to a man—peace, joy, contentment and finally everlasting life.” (I was interested.) “If there is a poor lost soul here without a friend knowing where he is, who thinks there is none to love him, remember, no matter who you are, what you are, we love you, Jesus loves you, Jesus will find you.”

The tears began to race down my cheeks (what a release!) and I murmured, “Jesus of Nazareth, I am lost indeed, find me.” He heard me? Oh, yes. I always thought of God as being away in the skies. What a mistake! He was by my side. I was rent from head to foot, in and out, up and down. Violence cleared out of me there and then. Good temper arrived; peace for misery, Christ replaced Satan.

I left the Hall. Next day I looked for work. I had no character, no testimonials, no references. I was asked for none. I simply said my work would be my reference. When could I start? “Now”! You know the rest.

I have received every kindness at the Hall, and I love the place. . . . all have encouraged me. Surely God is more than He promises, and He never forgets His children. Can you wonder I could not speak to you on Sunday morning? I am now happy, saved, blessed, protected, all through the prayers of the faithful and your loving words. Surely none need perish.

I am, dear Mr.—

Your loving friend,

IS THE SECOND ADVENT PAST?

A REVIEW OF "THE CHRIST HAS COME," BY E. HAMPDEN COOK, M.A.

MR. Hampden-Cook has sent us his book, "The Christ has Come," in which he attempts to prove that the Second Advent took place in the year 70 A.D. at the destruction of Jerusalem. The author does not seem to have made himself acquainted with dispensational truth, or to have taken into account important doctrines upon which any true view of the Lord's Coming must be based, relating to the Kingdom, the Church and the future blessing of Israel. He asserts that "in 70 A.D. the heavenly Kingdom was fully established over the earth"; "that the millennium, or Kingdom of God, denotes the now existing sovereignty of Christ and His saints"; and also that the Devil is even now bound in the abyss, and this accounts for the improvement in the world since 70 A.D. Such assertions seem to us little short of blasphemy, though we are quite sure Mr. Cook does not intend it. It is hard enough to believe that God is *permitting* all the evil in the world—the wrong, the injustice, the depravity—to continue for some wise purpose, and until an appointed time, but to make God directly responsible for it—and this must be the case if Christ is actually reigning—is not only unbelievable, as long as we retain any just thoughts of God, it is unthinkable. Let Mr. Cook read Isa. ii. 2-5; ix. 6-7; xi. 1-9; xxv. 6-8, all of which refer more or less directly to Christ's reign, and ask himself if any part of the present habitable earth corresponds with the condition therein described.

Moreover, Mr. Cook seems to have overlooked the fact, mentioned over and over again in both old and new testaments, that the blessing of Israel as a nation is bound up with, and inseparable from, Christ's second advent and the establishment of His Kingdom. This fact alone—seeing it is yet unaccomplished—is sufficient to disprove Mr. Cook's theory. Christ said, "Ye shall not see Me until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." This is when He comes. Yet we are told He did come at the destruction of Jerusalem; and that that was in judgment. We are also told that He was seen. Yet our Lord says "Ye shall not see Me until ye shall say 'Blessed'"; And this is spoken to the Jews, not to the disciples. Would the Jews say "Blessed" if He came in judgment? How could they? If not, then He has not come.

Nor does he seem to distinguish between the Kingdom in mystery and in manifestation. Christ spoke in Matt. xiii. of the mysteries of the Kingdom, because He knew of His rejection and consequent absence from the earth, and He shows in a series of parables how things would develop during that period. When He comes to reign over the earth there will no longer be any mystery. The power of His sway and government will be manifest, and His glory will be seen by all. To put a purely spiritual interpretation upon passages that delineate this, or to make them mean a gradual subjugation of evil by means of legislation and philanthropy, as Mr. Cook does, is simply to falsify everything. As to the Devil being bound, and the contention that Rev. xx. 1-3 has long been fulfilled, we should have thought there was ample evidence to the contrary.

As to the Church, Mr. Cook does not seem to realise the nature of it. He wants us to believe that a few watching, prayerful Christians were caught away when Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Romans. These, he tells us, were the wise virgins of Matt. xxv., and we are also informed that the marriage of the Lamb has already taken place (p. 64). A small part of the Church is already glorified and reigning with Christ. All this is necessary to Mr. Cook's theory, but it is utterly subversive of all New Testament teaching upon the Church. It is represented there as one company. We are told Christ will present it to Himself a glorious Church. The Apostle Paul in unfolding the doctrine of the Second Advent speaks of the dead in Christ, including them all; and of the living, without making any distinction (1 Thess. iv. 15-17). Christ loved the Church. "The Spirit and the Bride, say Come." Christ is spoken of as the Head of His body the Church. What becomes of these truths if part of the Church is glorified and the marriage of the Lamb has taken place? Then the resurrection is past already. The fact of individual members passing away from earth through death is quite a different matter to that which is propounded by Mr. Cook. They await their resurrection bodies and are neither glorified nor reigning in the sense in which the book under consideration asserts. Mr. Cook also confounds the Great Supper of Luke xiv., with the Marriage Supper of Rev. xix.

In Phil. iii. 20-21, the Apostle Paul tells us "We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall change our vile body."

If our Lord returned in the year 70 A.D. why was not the Apostle John's body changed? Mr. Cook does not attempt to disprove the generally accepted belief that St. John lived long after the destruction of Jerusalem. How, then, does he meet this difficulty, for if our Lord did come, the faithful disciple who had leaned upon His breast would surely have been taken. Mr. Cook feels the difficulty, and he simply tries to explain it away. But it can not be explained away. The prolonged life of the Apostle stands absolutely in the road of Mr. Cook and he is not to be got rid of by saying he is an exception. Further, it is generally believed that he wrote his first epistle after 70 A.D. In that epistle he refers repeatedly to the Lord's Coming as still future. How then could Christ have come? But grant for the moment that he wrote before the foregoing year, the difficulty is not lessened. In his epistle he says "It is not yet manifested what we shall be, but we know that *when He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him*, for we shall see Him as He is." John says "we." He speaks of something to take place with regard to himself, some transformation, when the Lord came. Mr. Cook says the Lord did come. Yet John still remained unchanged. If Mr. Cook's theory is true, then John's words are false. Either way, whether we place John's first epistle after 70 A.D. or before it, his statements conclusively prove that the Second Coming of Christ did not take place in that year.

We cannot follow Mr. Cook through all his arguments. He bases his view mainly upon our Lord's words, "This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." He insists upon this statement being taken literally. Now a generation, in this sense, is supposed to last about thirty years. Taking what is really the correct chronology, our Lord spoke these words in the year 29. Jerusalem was not destroyed until the year 70. This leaves a margin of *forty-one* years, time enough for the whole generation to have passed away; *i.e.*, reckoning the present generation as between the ages of thirty and sixty. A literal interpretation here, it will be seen, is most unsatisfying in every way.* Our Lord elsewhere said, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man," and He added, "Neither the Son." This seems to lose all its force if, after all, our Lord did say decisively it will for certain happen within thirty years. For ourselves, we do not think for a moment our Saviour

* It hardly admits of a literal interpretation even if it is necessary to put back the date of the taking of Jerusalem by four years also.

meant a limited period of years. Generation is frequently used in the Bible in a much wider sense. "Thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Noah was then six hundred years old. Did God mean by this He had seen Noah righteous for a certain number of years? We do not think this was the significance of it at all. It meant that He had seen Noah righteous in the midst of a generation that had been characterised by wickedness for hundreds of years. So with regard to what our Lord says to His disciples. He does not mean a generation of thirty years, but one of certain moral characteristics or else He is referring to the descendants of Abraham.

Nor is Mr. Cook consistent. When it suits his purpose he declines to take even definite periods of time literally. He will insist, for the purposes of his theory, that a generation must be a very limited period, but when scripture speaks of Christ reigning for a thousand years he is willing to believe it means an indefinite period; in fact, much longer.

We have shown Mr. Cook's theory falsifies the truth as to the Kingdom and the Church, leaves out of sight the promised restoration of Israel at the Second Coming, contradicts plain statements of the Apostle John and reduces prophecy to a hopeless tangle. When such is the case, any discussion as to the period covered by the term generation, becomes of comparatively little moment.

R.É.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

P. Ques. : *Could you kindly explain the washing of feet by Jesus? (John xiii.). Is it an everyday act?*

Yes, the feet-washing is an everyday act. That is, it may take place at any time. Christ washed the disciples' feet for two reasons: 1. In order that they might have part with Him (John xiii. 8). The chapter opens with the announcement that the "Hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father," and also, that, "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." Such was His love that it could not brook distance, and He wanted His own to be with Him in spirit in the scene to which He was going. Feet-washing was to fit them for this enjoyment, for the defilement contracted as they walked through this earthly scene would hinder it.

2. Christ washed the disciples' feet to set them an example (ver. 15). Just as His love could not tolerate the thought of separation or distance, so ought it to be between the disciples themselves. They should wash one another's feet. Alas! the opposite has often been done; and accusations, calumnies and slanders have been heaped by one disciple upon another. Instead of having part together, they walk at a distance. Instead of embracing, they repudiate one another. It is as the truth as to Christ's death, and the knowledge of His love are communicated to us that the washing is effected. In His love He went into death where we were lying to fit us to share with Him a scene of holiness and love.

L. Ques. : *Can you explain the verse, " Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body " ? (2 Cor. iv. 10).*

Christ accepted death because it was the will of God. He came to die. The believer must also be prepared for death. (This was well understood at some periods of Church history). If he accepts the very extremity of what might happen he will certainly be prepared to accept everything short of that, and thus God's will will be done, and so the life of Jesus will be manifested in Him. See, for further explanation, *May F. & F.*, p. 142.

An Irish Girl (Kathleen). In reply to your letter, we do not advocate theatres, dancing and cards for Christians. We are quite sure the children of God are better and happier away from these things. Only remember, it is possible to be thoroughly worldly in spirit even where these things are excluded. We are glad to know that the passionate longing you had for dancing is gone, and that God has replaced it with a desire for better things. As to the Christian's attitude towards the world see our article next month (D.V.).

" Little as I am, I have a place in the heart of the Lord ; and His mind is, that I should walk in circumstances here as one who has a place in His heart."

* * * *

The Lord Jesus had to " sink in deep mire " (Ps. lxxix. 2) before bringing me up " out of miry clay, and setting my feet upon a rock " (Ps. xl. 2).

The Faith and The Flock.

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PRICE—ONE PENNY.

EDITORIALS.

PROTESTANTISM AND ROMAN CATHOLICISM.

In a book recently published occurs the following statement from a Roman Catholic point of view: "You may slough your skin of State-patronised easy-going Protestantism as easily as you can change your political convictions . . . but Catholicism penetrates the bones, and permeates the very marrow. You cannot pluck that forth; it is rooted in the fibres of the soul." It is very easy to talk in this way. That there is a "State-patronised easy-going Protestantism" which is worth very little, no one can deny; but is there nothing else but this kind of thing outside the Papal Church? The writer of the above would lead us to think so. And on the other hand, is there nothing in the Roman Catholic Church but what "penetrates the bones and permeates the very marrow"? Luther, in the energy and power of re-discovered truth, found he could easily dispense with a good deal that this corrupt Church gloried in, and he did not feel himself any the worse for it. And did not thousands have a like experience, and do not thousands still? We have only to look at the state of religion in countries dominated for centuries by Roman Catholicism to see how much or how little there is that "penetrates the bones and permeates the marrow." If it is easy to "slough your skin of State-patronised easy-going Patriotism," have not France, Spain and Portugal been doing the same thing with regard to Roman Catholicism?

* * * *

WHAT IT IS REALLY MATTERS.

There is a broader and deeper question than as between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. How far has the *truth* "penetrated the bones and permeated the very marrow" of the individual who professes to belong to either? That there is a degenerate Protestantism abroad is only too true. And it is this, more than anything else, which accounts for the fact that the only countries where Popery is making any headway at all is in those which once were strongly Protestant. A Protestantism that has only a "name to live"—that can so far forget itself as to give public

recognition and civic welcome to the representatives of a system that slaughtered its leaders, and would do the same again, if it had the power—a Protestantism that expends a large part of its energy in political agitation, and is satisfied if it listens to a sermon and repeats certain prayers, or hears them repeated, once or twice a week—is indeed not calculated to inspire its opponents with admiration, or lead them to believe that they have anything to gain by joining its ranks. But, then, there are hundreds and thousands of Catholics whose religion is just as empty and meaningless, as far as they personally are concerned.

The real question, therefore, as we have already intimated, is, How far is each individual, be he Protestant or Catholic, permeated with the *truth*?—for the truth alone makes free.

* * * *

WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

Are there not numbers on both sides—Catholics and Protestants—in almost total ignorance of the truth? We do not mean intellectually, but experimentally—though in many cases there is not even a mental grasp of the truth that saves. If the question were put, Have you the forgiveness of sins? does the Holy Spirit bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God? has God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father? has the love of God been shed abroad in your heart? do you know what it is to be “in Christ” and accepted in the Beloved? are you living in expectation that when Christ comes He will take you to be with Himself in the Father’s house?—what dubious answers multitudes would give. It would be revealed at once, that on all these points, about which, in Apostolic times, believers had the utmost certainty, there exists now the greatest uncertainty. It is precisely these things that both Catholics and Protestants need to be assured of. And assurance can only come by attending to that revelation God has so graciously given for the benefit of His children, and which is contained in the book we call the Bible. It is only as its statements are accepted as addressed to each individual sinner and believed implicitly, that there can be “joy and peace in believing,” and the blessings the Gospel brings be known.

* * * *

THE TRUE GRACE OF GOD.

The Bible declares our sin, but it also declares the remedy. We are proved to be guilty before God, but to such guilty ones the

Judge Himself addresses words of pardon and peace. A righteousness of God is offered to those who have none of their own, through faith in Christ. We are "*justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*" (Rom. iii. 19-26). When we simply believe God (*i.e.*, believe His word contained in the Bible, whether as to our guilt or justification) we have peace with Him; we realise that through Christ having been delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification, every question as to our past conduct is settled, and we stand henceforth in His grace. That is, we are now to learn what henceforth He is pleased to be to us, and consequently we "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Believing this, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. Not only do we know condemnation can never overtake us, but that God loves us. He has not merely acquitted us, *He loves us*. We are henceforth inseparable in His thoughts from Christ. As the Saviour identified Himself with us so completely that our condemnation came upon Him; so, He being raised from the dead, we are now just as completely identified with Him. Is there no wrath any more for Him? There is none for us: we are "*saved from wrath through Him.*" Is there any need of ours He cannot meet? No. We are "*saved by His life.*" Are we through Him all that God wants us to be? Yes. "*By Him we have now received the reconciliation.*" God joys in us and we joy in Him. (Rom. v. 1-12). Peace, favour, love, salvation, joy in God are the portion of the believer, solely through the work Christ has accomplished. All freely administered by God through Him to the one who simply trusts and accepts.

Is it not when we make some discovery of all that God in His grace can do for us *because of what Christ has done for Him*, that we begin to know something of the true power and blessedness of Christianity? Any Protestant or Roman Catholic who has not as yet tasted these things is but poorly off, no matter what else may be his boast: He has not sufficient to live with or to die with. And instead of either abusing the other, each would be better employed in seeing that he is a participator in what the grace of God has provided. "*By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.*"

The article on the Christian's position with regard to the World is unavoidably held over until next month, owing to lack of space.

THE LAST WEEK OF THE LORD'S LIFE BEFORE THE CROSS.

By F. W. CHAPMAN.

II.

AFTER he (Judas) left, the Lord instituted His Supper. Judas was not present, for we are told that "The sop" preceded the third cup which had its place in that night's ritual; and Judas had gone out immediately after the sop. Our Lord then unfolds, in a wondrous way, that feast of remembrance which it is our joy to partake of week after week. "Till He come."

It was given to Paul, the chosen Apostle to the Gentiles, to unfold the fuller teaching of The Lord's Supper—which he received from the Lord glorified (1 Cor. xi.).

Simon Peter—full of zeal and warm affection, as ever—declares his undying allegiance to His Lord and Master, but alas, little knew how much he had to go through in order that he might be fitted for after service.

Next follows those precious discourses and the prayer uttered by our Lord—as recorded in chaps. xiv., xv., xvi. and xvii. of John. That collection has been described as "The Holy of Holies," and as we consider the circumstances of their utterance we may well be filled with adoring worship. The Passover Hymn closed that night's service.

Some have thought that, owing to the words (recorded in John xiv. 31) "Arise, let us go hence," that they then left the supper room, and that the following discourses were uttered on the way to the Cedron. We incline to believe that chap. xviii. 1 makes it clear that the Lord Jesus finished the discourse ere they left the room, for "When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron."

The hour would probably be between 9 and 10 o'clock on Thursday night when they crossed to the Garden called Gethsemane (the oil press). The picture is a vivid one.

The still night, with its brilliant Passover moon, the city full of worshippers, whilst this little band, composed of the Son of the Living God and His eleven disciples, quietly wends its way down the winding path to that place to which they often resorted. Perhaps a garden owned by some disciple who loved Jesus, lent to Him whenever He wished to use it. Thither they repaired, and there we may be admitted. Eight of the disciples wait at the Garden entrance. Peter, James and John enter the garden with the Lord, who withdraws from them still further. Ere He leaves them, those words are uttered, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death," and, later, that agonising prayer, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me."

We cannot linger over this scene, so blessed, so holy, except to notice the sorrow and calm suffering of our blessed Lord, and the lack of watchfulness in those disciples. Yet we may not judge them, for, full of sorrow, weariness and nervous expectation, we should probably have done the same. Perhaps even now we cannot watch with Him one hour.

With those words, "Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray Me" (Matt. xxvi. 46), they are prepared for the events immediately to follow.

Let us join another band: Coming down the road at midnight to that hallowed spot, led on by Judas, is a noisy band of men from the Chief Priests and Pharisees, with, no doubt, a company of Roman soldiers. They approach with lights and torches as though they had come out against a mob of unruly men. Let us gaze on the sublime majesty of that Person whom Judas embraces and kisses. Jesus utters those touching words, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" (Matt. xxvi. 50). Whilst again we hear those words, "Whom seek ye?" and the response, "Jesus of Nazareth"; and His reply, "I am He." They fall to the ground, as though smitten by Divine Glory. "The Priests of old could not minister when the Glory of the Lord filled the house." Soldiers brave and daring—angry Temple officers—noisy rabble, fall to the ground before the majesty of God's beloved Son.

He yields Himself to them—a willing victim—Jehovah's burnt offering—to be led as a lamb to the slaughter.

The sufferings of the Lord Jesus in Gethsemane were anticipatory, and in view of Calvary. We must not suppose that He was made sin nor that He bore our sins in the Garden—but it was the place of trial. For Adam had been placed in a “Garden,” and there he was tried and failed. The “Second Man” is tried in a “Garden” at the same hand, but Satan found nothing in Him. Adam had failed in allegiance to God. The Second Man is obedient, even to death.

The Psalms give us some of the Lord’s experiences in Gethsemane, as well as at the Cross.

In Gethsemane the Lord suffers in prospect of death, but an angel strengthens Him. Let us be careful in studying this solemn subject not to seek to unravel the mystery of that wondrous person—God and Man.

“ His Glory, not only God’s Son,
In Manhood He had His full part.”

That multitude little knew Who it was they led, bound by ropes, that night to the house of Annas. For it appears they took the Lord to the private house of this man, who was father-in-law to the High Priest, and had great power in Jerusalem at that time.

Annas sent Him to the palace of Caiaphas, and there in the early hours of Friday morning the Lord was so rudely and roughly handled. There He was scoffed at, spit upon, and beaten: there insulted for hours, till day should dawn and the Sanhedrin meet. It was whilst the Lord Jesus was at the palace of the High Priest that Peter, brought inside from the street to the courtyard—stood and warmed himself. There it was he denied his Master, and there it was he met that look which melted him to tears and sent him away to weep bitterly.

(To be concluded.)

The inability of the Lord’s disciples to exercise the “power” He had given them led a man to question whether their Lord had any more ability than they (Mark ix. 18-22). Sad to have to confess that the “unbelief” of disciples which they are unconscious of (Mark xvi. 14) is a greater hindrance to the Lord’s work than is the opposition of His enemies.

THE LATE GENERAL BOOTH.

“They that be wise (teachers) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” (Dan. xii. 3).

WHATEVER view people may take of some of the methods of the Salvation Army, no one can doubt that in the passing away of William Booth, the founder and leader of it, the Church and the world have lost a most remarkable man. He was far more than that, of course. He was a spiritual and uplifting force—greater, perhaps, than anybody knew—a man who knew the power of God and used it—and one who bent all that power bestowed upon him, as well as every power he possessed, in one direction—the temporal and spiritual uplifting of his fellows.

Such men are born of God, and are His workmanship, and they cannot be repeated. They are raised up to do a special work, and they ought to be recognised and honoured. They may make mistakes; they may pursue a policy which other people cannot always approve; but that is not the real question. The point is—Is this man of God? Is he doing the work God has fitted him for and called him to? If so, then there is something to learn from him. There can be only one answer, we think, to these questions, with regard to the one of whom we are writing. What may we learn from his career?

It cannot be unimportant to enquire, first, What it was made General Booth the spiritual and uplifting force he undoubtedly was?

(a) *He had the necessary equipment*—physically, mentally and spiritually. We must not despise the first, though good men sometimes do. If some of us had to live over again, perhaps we would pay more attention to the body. We do not know enough of General Booth to say to what extent he *cultivated* his physical powers, but one thing is very evident, he never gave way to self-indulgence, either at the table or in any other form.

(b) There were *mental and moral qualifications*, too. His administrative ability is unquestioned. He was capable of taking

a large view of things. He had conviction, tenacity of purpose and courage. He was not one who simply carried out the views of other people; he formed his own conception of his duty, of what was needed, and he carried it into execution. He possessed unbounded mental and physical energy.

(c) But all this would have been insufficient without the last qualification—*spiritual fitness*. He knew that God overshadowed him. He had experienced the mighty change we call *conversion*. To this man, from his youth right onward, God was always an ever-present reality. He was far from being a mere philanthropist. He believed in the new birth, the power of the Holy Ghost, and possessed unshaken faith in the Gospel as the power of God unto salvation for the most depraved.

2. Let us fix our attention upon another point—the wonderful blessing given to his family. His entire household are given up, heart and soul, to the same work as himself. This is a sight worth looking at. It is far too rare. Father and mother and children all devoted to one object. Doubtless some of the credit for this belongs to the mother, but not all.

3. May we not learn, too, how *God will always guide and sustain a man in the appointed path*. We are not all called to fill such a public place as General Booth or engage in such extensive work, but, nevertheless, if we are prepared to do God's will, there is an appointed path for each one of us. The great thing is to find it, and then walk in it. In doing this we may sometimes have to go contrary to the views of others. It was so in the case before us. It is well known that a whole Conference of Christian men decided what William Booth's course ought to be; but he did not adopt their suggestion. He knew his own capabilities, and he knew God, and when he left the humanly ordained path he did not miss his way. The General was not one wise in his own conceit, but a man of faith. He heard a call, and he responded. And God honoured him. If we are not to miss the path appointed for us we must be guided in the same way—we must have something like a just estimate of our own qualifications, a knowledge of how far we can trust God, and a growing conviction that the path we are entering upon is one to which He is calling us. In most cases it may be a call to perform very ordinary duties, but He knows best what we are fitted to undertake.

4. Another lesson from the life just closed surely is, that, *God raises up different workmen to do different work.* We cannot be the judges of one another in this matter. How apt we are to think the Holy Spirit will work only in grooves to which we are accustomed. The Jews thought that Christianity must retain the forms of Judaism. The Bishops and Clergy of Whitfield's day considered field preaching indecorous ; and we, to-day, are blinded oftentimes by similar prejudice. As well try to imprison the air and chain the lightning as expect the Spirit of the living God to confine Himself to our preconceived notions of what is proper. In saying this we are far from endorsing all the procedure of the Salvation Army. The dangers incidental to their methods are tremendous, and ought not to be ignored. We can contemplate hardly anything worse than what the Army might become with the fire gone out of it, and only the drum beating and shouting left. With such movements the first inspiration counts for almost everything. While that dominates the situation all is well, the eccentric part of the programme is subordinated to a high and holy purpose. May the original purpose and passion continue to animate both the leaders and the rank and file. May they never mistake mere excitement for piety, or the effect of music for the work of the Spirit, or be satisfied with material benefits in lieu of spiritual transformation.

5. Does not the career of General Booth contain a profound and *humbling* lesson for the Church? Christians had gone on building their fine edifices and were occupied more and more with embellishing these, and almost losing sight of the fact that the masses would not come to them. Fine music, learned discourses, elaborate architecture and comfortable pews have no power in themselves to regenerate, and have no message to degraded and sinful men and women. Yet the Church was going comfortably on, scarcely realizing the waste of money and opportunity ; when lo ! a single individual and his heroic wife take their stand on Mile End Waste. That was the beginning of a movement—a movement, be it noted outside all Churches and Chapels—which was to grow and expand until the slum knew of it, and the drunkard and profligate were reached by it, and it had extended to the ends of the earth. What cannot God do with one man entirely yielded to His service? General Booth lived for God ; prayed to God ; and wrought with God every day of his life with one o'ermastering passion ; and this is what resulted.

Yes, the secret was here—he was thoroughly given up to one thing and he had God with him. In certain respects he was a man of hardly more than ordinary capacity. It was the power behind him to which he yielded himself that made him what he was; it was the effect of the love of God, the atoning death of Christ, the presence and co-operation of the Holy Spirit. But as someone has said, he was in “his general equipment of learning, natural intelligence, moral discrimination hardly more than ordinary. What was extraordinary was the unheard of dynamic behind this quite ordinary piece of machinery.”

“I remember once” says the same writer, “hearing him preach from the text, ‘Ye shall receive power.’ I shall never forget his intonation of that word ‘power.’ He stalked up and down the platform—as his manner was—all the while speaking, half over his shoulder, to the vast spell-bound audience . . . enforcing by illustration after illustration, the necessity of supernatural re-inforcement if we were to do anything at all—anything, even quite a little thing, let alone a great one. It was the Pentecostal doctrine. ‘Ye shall receive power’—such power! Tremendous, irresistible, sweeping everything before it. That was General Booth’s explanation of himself: I have yet to hear a better. I remember the old man, after this hurricane of speech, going down on his knees, and pouring forth a hurricane of prayer—prayer, that on that great sea of people the breath of the Spirit might blow, and the promised ‘power’ descend. That the prayer was answered, I have not the slightest doubt whatever. There were few of us went out from that wonderful presence without the sense of some added grace to fight the flesh, the world, the devil—snatched for us, by that marvellous man, from the very altar-fire of God.”

Such was William Booth. However we may differ in opinion as to the machinery he felt at liberty to employ, can we not thank God for such a life? A life spent absolutely in the service of others, with never any thought of earthly gain; spending his days in prayer and effort for the good of those who had no claim upon him, except the claim which want always has upon compassion—living on frugal fare, denying himself worldly pleasure and toiling only for the salvation of lost souls.

R.E.

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

CHAPTER II. VERSES 13-17.

By WALTER SCOTT.

A THREE-FOLD CLASSIFICATION OF ALL CHRISTIANS.

(Continued).

FIRST ADDRESS TO YOUNG MEN, VER. 13.

"I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the Wicked One."

The term "young men" refers to those who in ripeness of spiritual growth have progressed beyond the infantile stage, but not yet attained to the spiritual status indicated by "fathers," nor the fulness of rest in Christ from experience and conflict reached by the latter. The displacement of self in the heart and life, and Christ everything and everywhere should be the high and holy ambition of every christian. We are not saved simply *to be happy* or *to be holy*, yet these are amply secured in our salvation. But God's ultimate design is stated in words too plain to be evaded or explained away. "*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*" (Rom. viii. 29). In this eternal purpose every child of God is embraced.

Those referred to by the Apostle as "young men" are christians characterised by strength and energy. Satan had sought to ruin their testimony and service, but in the power and grace of Christ they had overcome the Wicked One. Their strength was derived from communion—habitual communion with God—and the abiding power of the Word in them. These inward sources of strength, were sufficient to defeat the wiles, and break the power of the enemy. The Christian in whose heart dwells the word of God, and who walks with Him in self-judgment is invulnerable to the attacks of Satan. Conflict with Satan, is a very *real* thing. The Devil is a *real* person. The sword of the Spirit—not "your sword," as people foolishly say—is the Christians' only offensive weapon. *We* may quote texts by the hundred, and with no result but increased weakness on the part of those who do so. On the other hand, a word of Scripture, uttered in the power of the Holy Ghost, is enough to make the host of evil fly. "The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God." (Eph. vi. 17). Satan can harass the saints of God, but

there his power ends. Soon he shall be under our feet (Rom. xvi. 20), and creation released of his presence for 1,000 years (Rev. xx. 2, 3). In our text he is termed "the Wicked One," a designation of ominous significance. The whole world lies in his embrace (1 John v. 19, R.V.).

SECOND ADDRESS TO YOUNG MEN, VERS. 14-17.

"I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the Wicked One. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

"Ye have overcome the Wicked One." There is a ring of triumphant victory in the conflict with Satan. Our position in Christ places at our disposal the whole resources of grace and strength and in the diligent and prayerful use of these we overcome the wily and watchful enemy of our souls. The victory is thus assured before we enter upon the conflict—always a serious one, but especially so in these closing hours.

Then we hear the warning voice of the spirit, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." Mark it well, it is not here the world of *persons*, but the world of *things*, the world, as morally characterised; this is evident from verse 16. Unless the term "world" as employed in our text is seen to consist of a moral system, characterised and controlled by certain principles set up and governed by Satan, there is bound to be confusion, and consequent inability to answer to the exhortation, "Love not the world." The divine statement, "God so loved the world," should find an echo in every christian heart. Love born of pity, of compassion for the perishing sons of men, is ever right and godly, but "love not the world" is in no wise contrary to the text or spirit of John iii. 16, which refers to persons, and not to the world-system as such.

Cain was the founder of the vast organised system in opposition to God, and governed by Satan (Gen. iv.), its prince and god. Distinguish, too, the earth from the world. The former is the Lord's (Ps. xxiv. 1); the latter is Satan's (2 Cor. iv. 4). Persons and things have got away from God. Persons you love in all

tenderness and pity, but things, as love of dress, love of gold, love of power, love of earthly grandeur, these things you hate. We refer to the holy tendencies of the new nature, and not to the actual experience of *all* christians.

"If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." The love of the Father and the love of the world are here set in sharp opposition. There is a system of things of which the Father is the source and Christ its centre and glory. There is another system which powerfully appeals to the natural mind. How is it characterised? How is it known? *"The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world."* It is not a question of positive right or wrong; but the love of fine dress, of fine furniture, of fine surroundings, of "getting on in the world," of ambitious desire to take a place in society. Lust (not necessarily of an immoral kind) and pride are the two great principles which govern human action and life in all its spheres, and these are not of the Father. It makes the path narrow. The Cross has put the world on one side. We cannot have the Cross and the world. We cannot have the Father and His system of heavenly things, and love the world with its system—whether it be love of pleasure, of social life, or political activity.

The tendency of the "young men," owing to the energy of their character, is to take part in the worldly system and get engrossed in its concerns. The path of holiness is a narrow one, but it is the one the Father would have you walk in and persevere in it. In proportion as the principles of the world get a hold of the heart, moral relaxation ensues. The truth is, separation from the world is but little known. We excuse ourselves. We pare down the incisive, keen edge of the word, we blunt its sharpness. Few of us are prepared to apply the word in fullest measure. Beloved brethren, let us own our sinfulness, and humbly seek grace to walk up to the height of our divine and heavenly calling from *henceforth*.

"The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." The world is doomed. Its termination is almost in sight. The world and its system of things is to be overthrown, and every desire or lust after it will share in the general wreck. But perpetuity of life and blessedness is assured to the obedient. *"Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear"* (Heb. xii. 28).

TRUTH AND MERCY ARE UNITED.

Truth and mercy are united,
 Righteousness and peace have kissed ;
 God in grace has now invited
 All who will with Him to feast.
 God is light and in His justice
 Sin He cannot pass in peace ;
 Jesus having died and risen,
 He can freely give release.
 God the Son, in grace abounding,
 Expiated all our guilt,
 Stooped to depths that have no sounding
 When in love His blood He spilt.
 What a glory and what triumph
 In the cross we now perceive,
 Righteously God justifieth
 All who in His Son believe.
 Satan's filled with consternation
 At the mighty grace of God
 Taking from the lowest station
 Sinners justified by blood.
 Into union (O the glory !)
 With His Son in heaven above,
 There to voice the wondrous story
 Of His never-changing love.
 Endless praise and adoration
 Be to Thee our glorious Lord,
 Maker of the new creation,
 Thou shalt ever be adored.

THE YOUNG BRIGAND.—“ Forty-two years ago there fell at the Place Neuve in this city (Geneva) the head of a young brigand. The pastor whose duty it was to offer that man the consolation of religion was . . . a follower of the theology which is called modern. On request being made to him to visit the young outlaw he replied—and the reply honoured his frankness—‘ Send someone else, for I have nothing to say to the man.’ The ‘ some one else ’ was a believer in the inspired Bible and the ‘ some one else ’ presented to the brigand the Christ of whom St. John said that ‘ His blood cleanseth from all sin ’ ; and the brigand died in peace.”

Saul sentenced Jonathan to death for breaking his command (1 Sam. xiv. 44) after having failed himself to keep the commandment of the Lord (1 Sam. xiii. 13).

THE SAVIOUR.

WHAT HE SAVES FROM.

By R. E.

“Thou shalt call His Name JESUS; for He shall save His people from their sins” (Matt. i. 21).

NEVER had this name been given in such a connection. Joshua is only another form of Jesus, but he did not save people from their sins. Though he was the appointed leader to bring the nation of Israel into the promised land, yet when Achan sinned, Joshua could not save him from it.

“Am I God to kill and to make alive,” said the King of Israel, when Naaman was sent to him, “that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?” How much more astonished would he have been had he been asked to take away his sins.

“O Lord Jesus, Thou Saviour from sin—sin that makes me guilty before God—sin that corrodes the life, that destroys happiness, that brings death eternal—dost Thou save from this? Then art Thou a Saviour indeed!” Yes, “He shall save His people from their sins.”

Sin touches us all. It has marred, defiled and enslaved us. It is the greatest curse. Every other bane removed would be of little account if this remained; every blessing bestowed would be of little worth were sin untaken away. Therefore, sin is always the first question. Man doesn't like to face it. But God would not be the true friend of man He is, if He ignored it. This is why the one outstanding thing connected with Jesus here is—salvation from our sins.

If we have no sins, then we can have no Saviour. He is meaningless. It is declared of Him, He “came into the world to save sinners.” If there are no sinners, His mission was in vain. If some only are sinners, then, those who are not, have no use for Christ. Would any thoughtful person like to take that place? To virtually place himself outside of Christ altogether, and have no connection with Him whatever. If a person does not think himself a hell-deserving sinner, this is what he does.

Someone will say, perhaps, "I need Him as a pattern. He is the great Exemplar." This, if we only knew it, only condemns the more. We have only to place ourselves beside such a pattern to see what we are. It is quite true Christ is a pattern, but only to those who know Him first as having saved them from their sins. Those who think of Christ as a Pattern before He has become *their* Saviour know neither themselves nor Him.

It is astonishing how ready we are to be saved from anything but sins. Israel would have liked deliverance from the Roman yoke. We, to-day, wish to be saved from *poverty* or *trouble* or *sickness*. But these are only symptoms. God goes to the root trouble of all, and He provides a Saviour Who shall save His people from their *sins*.

DO I WISH TO BE SAVED FROM SIN ?

And even when we come to ourselves and realise to some extent that we are sinners, we still fail to see, perhaps, the full meaning and significance of this verse. We think of it as being saved from hell or punishment. And the question arises, *do I wish to be saved from SIN or merely from the PUNISHMENT of sin ?* There is an immense difference. If salvation from the consequences of sin is all that engages my thoughts, I have not yet realised what *sin* is : its dreadfulness ; its deadening, vitiating character. There are hundreds of criminals in England to-day who wish only to escape the *punishment* of sin. They don't hate the sin. Their thought is not how to escape from *it*, but how to avoid the consequences. And it is possible for our view of salvation to be very little higher than that. But, if so, we have never seen the danger and dreadfulness of sin ; and we have never seen the purpose for which Christ was born. He was born that He might " save His people from their *sins*."

Now is that what we all wish to be saved from ? Have we so felt the disgrace, the torment, the horror of sin—as sin—that we cry out to be saved from it ? If so, then indeed Christ will appear a Saviour to us—we shall see something of His greatness. To want to be saved from this, is a very different thing from merely wishing to be saved at last from the punishment of sin.

We fear this distinction is not always kept in mind, and escape from punishment is made, however inadvertently, the principal consideration.

SAVED FROM SINS MORE THAN BEING SAVED FROM CONSEQUENCES.

To appeal to people to be saved from *consequences* may be, after all, but little better than an appeal to cowardice, or mere self interest ; and this will largely affect the Christianity grafted upon it. How different is the Bible way of putting it : “ *He shall save His people from their SINS.* ” Do we wish Christ to do this for us ? He can. There is not a single sin to which we have been subject He cannot save us from. Bring them all to Him. He will save you from that hasty or vindictive temper ; from those impure desires ; from the craving for drink ; from foolish and hateful thoughts ; from the love of the world and all that it contains ; from the fear of man. And it is when you hate *sin* and desire to be saved from *it*, and *are* saved from it—then only are you truly saved. For then only has Christ performed His proper office as Saviour. “ Thou shalt call His Name Jesus, for He shall *save His people from their sins.* ”

What a great salvation this is, and what a great Saviour Christ must be, we shall easily understand if the terrible nature of sin is comprehended. To be saved from this will endear to our hearts for ever the One Who has done it. When the plague and slavery and fever of sin, with all that it entails of guilt and wretchedness, are no more, and we realise that we are His Who has won us and delivered us from it, then we become astonished at the grace of God in providing such a Saviour. Our whole being, too, is affected. To be saved from our sins is something more than a “ get off. ” And it is because the gospel is too often presented as a mere means of escape from punishment that the moral transformation in the lives of those who receive such a gospel is so inadequate.

PUT IT TO THE TEST.

The blessedness of such an announcement—“ He shall save His people from their sins ”—is that it can be put to the *test*. At least test it, before you refuse it. No one is more eager for such a test than Christ. If He fails here, He fails everywhere. But if He succeeds here, His triumph is complete ; and no one can gainsay His claim to be *the* Saviour. If He can save people from sins, He can save them from anything. If the most debasing, enslaving, devilish thing in the world—that thing called sin—that has ruined our nature, and blighted our happiness, and estranged us from

God, is not beyond His reach, what can be? Christ asks you to test Him, for He knows He can succeed. Has He saved any from their *sins*? Myriads could answer, "He has saved me." Saul the persecutor, Augustine the libertine, Hone the infidel, Richard Weaver the profligate, along with sinners of every sort and description, have proved His saving power. He can equally save you. And more. You must be saved by Him or not saved at all. Where else can you turn? Is there *anyone else* at whose knees you can fall, like Simon Peter, and exclaim, *I am a sinful man, O Lord*: and like him, not only be saved, but be made a means of salvation to others?

Christ saves from sins. Every system that makes light of sin, or little of it, is false. There are some who try to ignore it. There are others who attempt the impossible task of saving themselves from it. It is not too much to say, that, every religion and every teacher may be tested by the attitude assumed towards sin. Few things are more astonishing than the ignorance of the natural heart as to its nature and enormity. As to any true and just estimate of it, man is in utter darkness. It is said of the Emperor Nero—that monster of cruelty and debauchery—that his people did not hate him half so much because he had murdered his wife and mother, as because he had, as they thought, tarnished the imperial purple by appearing publicly as a musician and as a competitor in the public games! How often we measure sin merely by what touches our own pride. One great proof that the Bible is from God is found just here—it knows how to talk about sin; only there can I gain true thoughts about it; *only God can teach me what it is and all it deserves*; and it reveals at once the greatness, the glory and the holiness of Christ that He saves from it.

THE NAME JESUS.

Christ is true to His Name. "Thou shalt call His Name Jesus"—Saviour. Who is speaking here? God. It is good to consider the significance of the fact: God giving the name "Jesus" to His beloved Son. *Giving Him that Name meant a cruel death for the One God loved.* It meant that He must die under judgment for the sins of others. Not else could He ever be true to the name given Him. Yet God named Him, well knowing this. Mary did not realise what was involved, but God did. We often give our children names at random, perhaps with never a thought as to any meaning.

What mother would like to give her child a name that must necessitate a violent death ?

The other day a little girl of three years old was sitting on the doorstep of her mother's cottage and singing, with pussy on her lap, " Ding, dong, dell, pussy's in the well." She was heard to say that she would put pussy in the well. And, true enough, before long the kitten was down the well in the garden, eighty feet deep before the water was reached, and then thirty feet more of water. But this was not all. Sometime after the little girl herself was missing. Everywhere search was made by mother and friends, but all in vain, and there was no answer to their calls. Nowhere could she be found, until the well was thought of and dragged, and her poor dead body brought up. She had probably gone to look for pussy and ventured too near. The well was to have been sealed up, but it never had been. The mother, when she named that child at her birth had never thought of such an end. She had not named it with a name which she knew sooner or later must involve a death so tragic. How much worse it would have been to have had to anticipate it. But when God named that Babe in Bethlehem He knew *all* that it meant. Yet He gave the Name, for He knew that not otherwise could there be a Saviour for men. What meaning in those words—" He that spared not His own Son."

AND CHRIST WAS TRUE TO THAT NAME.

He knew full well all that it involved. He knew He was to be " delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God " ; that He was " foreordained before the foundation of the world." On the Mount of Transfiguration it was the subject of discourse with Moses and Elias, and on coming down He told His disciples beforehand it must take place, and so " He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem." The salvation He brought to man necessitated His own death. The penalty of sin *must* be borne, as well as the love of God to man fully declared. It needed the cross for both. And it is well for us not to lose sight of either side or weaken either side. There must be expiation as well as love, and the cry that recorded the forsaking tells us so. " My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? " declares that righteousness was at work as well as love. There are two elements in sin, and both had to be met. There is the guilt of sin, and the estrangement and depravity

of sin. The cure for both is in the Cross. Nothing could meet the guilt but One, spotless Himself, taking our place and submitting to the penalty—He is forsaken of God and dies. But that same event declared another thing—“ God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” This wins us back to God and becomes the strongest motive for a holy life.

HOW DO WE BECOME HIS PEOPLE ?

“ He shall save His *people* from their sins.” How do we become His people ? In a way which shuts none out, and gives hope to all. If Christ saves from sins, who is excluded ? Have we not all sins to be saved from ? And these sins will make us welcome to Christ and be our passport, if only we come in penitence, feeling the burden of them, and wanting to be rid of them. For He does not save His people *in* their sins, but *from* their sins. And when you learn that He not only saves from them, but that He Himself *suffered* for them : “ Who His *own self* bare our sins in His *own* body on the tree ” ; you will never want to commit sin again, for you will love the One Who, not only by His power, henceforth, delivers you, but once in His love made His own soul an offering when He bore them in your stead.

And are you professedly one of His people, and yet there is some sin you have never forsaken ? You may well doubt if you are truly His, and whether He will own you in the last day. Turn from that sin at once and let Him save you from it. Do not doubt *Him*. He will be true to His Name. He *must* be, for it is the Name God gave Him : He *must* be, for He surrendered all in token of it : He *must* be, for He has been raised from the dead and made a Prince and a Saviour in ratification of it. Oh, who can doubt, and who need despair when Jesus is able to save.

“ What I want is for God to put *self out* ; and that is not joy. Is the nipping of evil joy ? or of its shoots ? God crippled Jacob, but it was not pleasure to him. And He has got to nip—to crush—the root. A horrid thing this self ! It will grow out of the least fibre.”

* * * *

“ What measures sin is the greatness, the magnitude of the Being against whom it is levelled.”

PUSH ON!

YOU have been hindered in your work. Something has gone wrong. Somebody has done wrong. You have been injured, grieved, wounded, and have felt discouraged, and so you have halted and ceased to push forward and do the work which the Lord had appointed you. You cannot forget the unkindness and unpleasantness you have felt. You brood over it.

Do you not see that this is *just what the adversary wants*? The great object he has in view is to keep you from doing the work which the Lord has set you to do. He cares nothing about your feelings or your rights, but he wants to *hinder the work*, and the longer you halt and hesitate and complain, the better he is suited!

Now there is just one thing to do in such a case and that is to *push on*. Do not halt or hesitate. Satan cannot hinder you unless he can frighten you. Your business is simply to *go forward—to push on*.

You have been defeated. Your plans have failed. Gather your strength and make new plans. Determine that you will push on and do more work than if you had not been hindered. Push on. Life is fleeting. Time is short. Death, judgment, eternity—all are hastening. In a little while your working days will be ended. How sad it will be to find at last that you have been deceived and deluded by Satan, and have neglected your proper work and failed to fulfil the ministry which you had received of the Lord.

Of course you have been wronged. Who has not? Were you not forewarned of this? You did not think it would come in this way? Of course not; and Satan knew you did not think it, and that was the reason why it *did* come in precisely this way. But never mind. While you hesitate the devil is busy. While you are mourning he is exulting; and while you are lamenting over the wounds and bruises you have received, he is planning for another attack just as malicious—just as devilish as this. Now the thing for you to do is to gird up your loins and push on. Make haste and do the Master's will, and all the power of Satan will fail to disturb or overthrow you. Push on, the Master soon will come; and when He comes, He will straighten all things. You will hold the field when the fight is over; and God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. Forward, march! Push on.—(*Extract.*)

“BEGINNINGS.”

VII. THE FIRST PILGRIM.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

A PILGRIM is a man on a journey. Having seen (or heard) of a brighter portion elsewhere, he abandons his present surroundings and travels towards it. He gives up the present for the future. Abram was the first man divinely called to take such a path; every believer is, in the divine thought, a stranger and a pilgrim to-day (1 Pet. ii. 11). How far we are this practically, each heart must answer for itself.

Pilgrimage has been occasioned by sin. Adam in innocence heard no such call as “Follow Me.” Indeed it was his duty and responsibility to continue where God had placed him, and never leave his first estate. But sin has upset everything. The man having been driven out of the garden, “the world” sprang up. Its beginnings are described in Gen. iv. 16-26. Between God and “the world” there is nothing in common. Everything in man’s system of things is opposed to the divine nature.

No one was called out into a place of distinct separation until Abram’s day, though necessarily every earlier man of faith felt alienated in heart and mind from the godless order by which he was surrounded. In Abram’s day there was a very definite reason for the divine call, “Get thee out.” After the flood a new form of evil sprang up amongst men—idolatry. Its earliest phase is, perhaps, indicated in Job xxxi. 26-28. Abram’s kindred were no better than others, as Josh. xxiv. 2 shows. Idolatry was a formal giving up of God for the worship of demons (1 Cor. x. 20). Rom. i. 18-25 is the divine arraignment of the world for this dreadful sin. Be it remembered that both Noah and Shem were alive at this time; the one dying two years before the birth of Abram, and the other living on until Abram was 150 years old. But the testimony of these witnesses was apparently without effect. Satan, in turning men’s minds thus to idolatry, captured the whole situation, and God was thrust out of the world.

THE DIVINE OBJECT IN SEPARATING ABRAM.

It was at this point that Abram was called. What was the divine object in thus separating this man unto God? Simply to do him good as an individual? He was indeed blessed as an individual ("I will bless thee, and make thy name great"), but there was a larger thought than this in the mind of God. He wanted a channel by means of which He could bless the world. Hence the words, "Thou shalt be a blessing . . . in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Thus we have in Gen. x., xi., the framework of the world as we now know it—parcelled out amongst the nations which have sprung from the three sons of Noah, and in chap. xii. the man and the principle by means of which God could work in it. What grace!

Turn now to Acts vii. 1-2; the call of Abram is there most touchingly described. "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come unto the land which I shall shew thee." There came thus the moment when God—"the God of glory"—made *Himself* known to a poor dark idolater, and won his heart for ever. It was not a new religion that Abram learned, nor a new set of opinions, but he came to know *a Person*. The result was that, like the Thessalonians later, he turned to God from idols to serve the Living and True God. Has the God of Glory revealed Himself to you, beloved reader? He has raised up His Son from amongst the dead, and enthroned Him at His own right hand on high. All the glory of God now shines in His face (2 Cor. iv. 6); or in other words, all that God is has been declared in the man Christ Jesus. Do you know Him? Is your heart entranced with what it has found in Him? If so, but not otherwise, you are in a position to take the pilgrim's place.

"Tis the treasure I've found in His love,
Which has made me a Pilgrim below."

None can well give up who have not already received.

Note Jehovah's word to Abram in Gen. xii. 2: "I will make thy name great," and compare it with men's ambitious word in chap. xi. 4: "Let us make us a name." Men's schemes, be it the Tower of Babel or any other, come to an end, and the names of

those who plan them and who labour them through perish with the world to which they belong ; while he who identifies himself with the divine interests gets to himself a name which will abide for ever. Better far let God make our name great than seek anything for ourselves in such a scene as this.

Abram's obedience was but partial at first. The whole family connection removed from Ur of the Chaldees with him, and indeed Terah his father seems to have led the removal. Gen. xi. 31 says, "Terah took Abram his son," etc. Let us speak tenderly here ; reproachful words ill become us. How often have we held up to reprobation the errors of those who have gone before us, with but little heart-searching on our own part ! Peter's failure in looking at the winds and waves instead of at Jesus, and Martha's mistake in her complaint to the Lord concerning Mary are familiar examples of this. Yet Peter stepped out of the boat on the strength of but one word from the Saviour's lips ; and Martha served with her very best and with all her heart even if she did put service before communion (Matt. xiv. 29 ; Luke x. 40). How many words from the Lord would we require ere we would leave the shelter of a boat to walk on the angry deep ? And how many of us would be prepared to serve as Martha served ?

THE COMMENT OF HEB. XI. 8.

Long after Abram's pilgrim days were done, the Spirit spoke of his journey thus : "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed ; and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. xi. 8). What an undertaking ! Had anyone asked the patriarch when he was packing his camels where he was going, he could not have told them whether he was travelling north, south, east or west ! In the eyes of his materialistic neighbours he was as great a fool as Noah, when he built his extraordinary craft with no outward and visible sign of such a vessel ever being required. But the man of faith is ever a fool in the eyes of the world.

Haran marked a halt, from which there was no progress while Terah lived. The very names are suggestive. Terah means "delay," and Haran means "parched." Alas, how many hindrances are experienced by those who long to wholly follow the Lord, the most serious of them all frequently coming from our own

family circle. Unconverted relatives, or worldly-minded Christian relatives are often a sad drag upon our souls. But full blessing cannot be known until obedience is complete. "Parched" must be confession of the one who sees where the pilgrim's path leads, yet hesitates to pursue it. The Psalmist says, "I made haste, and delayed not to keep Thy commandments." "In keeping of them there is great reward" (Psa. cxix. 60 ; xix. 11).

ABRAM MOVES ON.

Terah, being dead, Abram moved on again (Lot, however, accompanying him). "They went forth to go into the land of Canaan ; and into the land of Canaan they came" (Gen. xii. 5). His first act, on arrival at the plain of Moreh, near Shechem, was to put up an altar. At this spot Jehovah appeared to him, and renewed His promise: "Unto thy seed will I give this land." This is the first recorded divine manifestation since Abram left Ur of the Chaldees, and it just illustrates our Lord's words to His disciples in John xiv. 21: "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me ; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." Obedience always brings the light and joy of the Lord's presence as its reward to the soul.

An altar and a tent characterised Abram in Canaan. Yet, says Heb. xi. 10: "He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Man's cities had no appeal for his heart. Babylon and Nineveh had already reared their proud heads, and Egypt's cities (the ruins of which are the marvel of our time) were already in being. But Abram stood apart from them all with God. In looking for a heavenly country and city his faith really rose *above* his calling, for God had not spoken to him of such things, so far as the record tells us. In our case this is impossible. So exalted and wonderful is the calling wherewith we are called that faith can do no more than rise *to* it (Eph. i. 18 ; iv. 1). And how many of us really apprehend God's calling ?

Compare for a moment two passages in the Epistles to the Hebrews—ii. 11 ; xi. 16. In the first we read: "He is not ashamed to call them brethren" ; and in the second: "God is not ashamed to be called their God." In chap. ii. 11 it is grace speaking ; in chap. xi. 16 government. Of all Christians without distinction it is

true that Christ is "not ashamed to call them brethren"; but it is not necessarily true of all that "God is not ashamed to be called their God." He never linked His name thus with Lot, nor even with Obadiah. Why? Because neither was willing to take the outside place with Him. Brethren, let us exercise our hearts as to this. We are living in a worldly age, and on every hand we hear the tacit refusal of believers to accept the pilgrim's portion. Yet people are only useful to God as they walk in separation. When Abram declined into Egypt he brought trouble, not blessing, upon that land; when Israel mingled with the nations they brought down the hand of God upon themselves and upon all others. And what has the Church's pathway been? May the Lord, in His mercy, raise up those who will, with holy determination, walk in spirit apart from all things here, and await with fervent desire His Son from Heaven.

I. CORINTHIANS XV., 51, &c.

Asleep, not all shall fall, but in a moment brief,
 As in the twinkling of an eye, "all shall be changed"—
 Such the blest prospect written on the leaf
 Of God's inspired Book. By God Himself arranged
 For all His own, who on that blissful morn
 The great archangel's ringing voice shall hear,
 And form behold of Him once marred by spear.
 To His own image changed, they shall not fear
 The solemn summons of the "trump of God";
 For "perfect love" hath cast all fear away.
 The saints of God asleep beneath the sod
 Shall meet with those alive on that blest day.
 Together then caught up by power divine
 To meet the blessed Saviour in the air
 They shall for ever in His glory shine,
 His praise throughout eternity declare.

Jonathan in faith overcame the *Philistines*, and "wrought great salvation in Israel" (1 Sam. 14). How sad to see him slain on the battle field years after by the *Philistines* (1 Sam. xxxi. 2).

Here is a lesson for young "soldiers of Jesus Christ" (2 Tim. ii. 3). Take care to wear the "whole armour of God" every day, for the fact that you slew "*Philistines*" some time ago does not prove that you can face them to-day.

JUSTIFICATION AND AFTER.

AFTER we are justified, how do we go on? God does not think well to take us to heaven immediately. We have to live amid the same surroundings, mix with the same people and do the same work for, perhaps, many years. How about the thousand and one things that make up everyday life?

We are all called to be saints, but we cannot all be missionaries, or even preachers. Our sphere of service is, perhaps, very limited; we have no opportunity of doing heroic acts. Is it possible to achieve anything of saintliness amid the daily round and the common task? Certainly it is. And in order to see this let us ask, What was St. Paul's relation to the thousand and one things that make up everyday life? If we turn to 1 Cor. vi. vers. 9-20 we shall see. Let us be quite sure, however, of the ground of our justification first. We find him reminding the Corinthians of what they had been in the past. "But," he can add, "Ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Let us note well the three things stated here of these Corinthians. They had been bad enough surely. Evidence of their guilt was overwhelming. But what does the Apostle say? "Ye are washed—sanctified—justified"—justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Everything depends upon the Name. Just as the payment of a cheque depends, not upon the worth of the bearer of it, or the kind of person he is, or the clothes he wears, but upon the name at the foot of it, and the amount standing to the credit of that name at the bank, so believers are justified, not on the ground of anything attaching to themselves, but solely because of what attaches to the Name that is above every name—the Name of Him Who died for them and in Whom they believe. "*And by the Spirit of our God.*" For one *must* be justified who has received the Holy Spirit. He comes as the seal of our justification and the earnest of our inheritance. Thus the past is settled. As to all that follows after, we have only to remember the Apostle's maxim: "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." "Glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's."

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY :

SINNER, SAINT AND SERVANT.

The SAINT.

“Preaching Christ and living Christ.”

ST. Paul was one who had complete control of his body, and surrendered it to God for His use : knowing at the same time that God was no stern taskmaster. How completely the apostle entered into this phase of Christian life, and how severe he was with himself, another piece of autobiography will tell us. If we pass on to chap. ix. of this same epistle* we read (vers. 25-7) : *“Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown ; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly ; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air ; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection ; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (or rejected).”* Here we learn that, in order to keep his body under control, he did not hesitate to buffet it—the real force of “Keep under my body.” He was not satisfied with being a preacher—a mere exponent of truth—but all the desires of the flesh must be led captive : he would not be brought under the power of any. How great a saint this man was surely all this reveals to us. Let us follow him, even though we may never reach his level. The whole context reveals the impressive fact, that this man who was so merciless with regard to himself ; exercising all the rigour and discipline of the athlete ; as regards others, could unbend to an extraordinary degree. *“To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak ; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”* Is not this a trait most beautiful and much to be cultivated ? How often we are inclined to pursue the opposite course, and be easy with ourselves and exacting upon others.

While on this passage, it may be as well to say a word as to the precise significance of the word “castaway,” as here used by St. Paul. It is sometimes adduced as evidence, by those who think it impossible to have any assurance of salvation while still in the

* 1 Corinthians.

body, that even the Apostle did not know he was saved. Without going thoroughly into the wide question which this raises, we may ask—Has the term “castaway” anything to do with the matter? The context surely decides in the negative. Is it not clear from the whole trend of thought which governs the passage that the writer is not thinking at all of the ground of justification or of the means by which a guilty sinner is saved? He speaks of a *race*. Such a simile is never employed where forgiveness or justification or acceptance are in question. He goes on to refer to the athlete and the boxer; similes wholly out of place if he is giving us the plan of salvation. We are not delivered from our guilt nor do we become God’s children by running, fighting or wrestling. Is it not, then, perfectly obvious that he must be on a different topic altogether from justification; and that he is treating of receiving a prize, and winning a crown? And are not these things connected with *reward*? which justification never is. What the Apostle feared was, that he might come short of this; for the simple reason that *reward* is according to our merits; therefore as to receiving a prize he might be a castaway (or rejected); but no fear as to whether or not he was a *child of God* or as to whether he would at last reach heaven ever darkened his soul.

Let us now turn to the Epistle to the Philippians—an epistle which will furnish us with some additional autobiographical references and give us a further insight into the character of St. Paul as we are now considering him.

We see from Chapter i. *how completely other interests than his own immediate welfare controlled him.* He says, “*The things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel*” (ver. 12). He regarded everything from this point of view, and so long as the gospel advanced on its victorious career he cared not what happened. Even if bonds came to him, yet, if those bonds tended to make people attend to God’s provision for their need, he was satisfied; it was not necessary that he should be the herald. Greatest and most successful of heralds as he was, the proclamation of the good news did not raise any question in his mind as to his own part in it. Content was he to be hidden from the gaze of men, if only others were spreading the light of salvation; nor did he repine at the iron chain which bound him to a soldier,

so long as the word of God was not bound. And he was superior to a still more subtle form of annoyance. He speaks of some preaching Christ "even of envy and strife"; "*Supposing to add affliction to my bonds.*" Yet so completely was Christ before him, and not his own importance or his own feelings, that he is able successfully to elude what might otherwise have proved a poignant grief, and to say, "*Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, CHRIST IS PREACHED; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.*"

The same spirit is manifest when it is a question whether he should depart to be with Christ or abide still in the flesh. To depart and be with Christ was for him "very far better." Under any circumstances such an event would be fraught with the highest conceivable joy to one to whom Christ was all and in all.

But to exchange the rough circumstances he then knew for the Paradise of God: to shake off for ever, not only the clanking chain, but the very body that was bound by it; to find release from "the care of all the churches"—all this made the prospect more enticing of being with the One he had served so faithfully and loved so well. Yet he was willing to postpone all this, when he realised that to abide in the flesh was more needful for others. "*And having this confidence,*" he says, "*I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith.*"

" Ah! but not yet He took me from my prison;
Left me a little while, nor left for long—
Bade as one buried, bade as one arisen,
Suffer with men and like a man be strong."

Could anything be more interesting or instructive than this autobiographical sketch which has been furnished for all time in this brief letter to the saints at Philippi? To be allowed to see the inner working of the mind of this great Apostle; to be able to look back over more than eighteen centuries and become familiar with his joys and sorrows, his conflicts and his victories; yea more, to be allowed to pass, not only into the very presence of that illustrious captive, but into the inner shrine, as it were, and hear his musings and communings—and become acquainted with the secret of his power—is surely a privilege of the highest kind.

And, in one word, what was the secret of this superiority to adverse circumstances? what the secret of so much calm assurance

when everything seemed against him—such splendid triumph over all that opposed, and such sweet forgetfulness of self? It was Christ. This is the answer. Out of sixteen verses, 8-23, only four occur without some reference to the One Who was the source and object of the Apostle's life. It was this Person Who controlled him, satisfied and uplifted him. To him Christ was both the essence of the gospel and the object for which he lived. He preached Christ and he lived Christ. With this servant and saint of God these two things were never separated.

As regards the message of which Christ was the sum and substance, three things may be noticed. In verse 12 we have "the gospel"; verse 14, "the word"; and verse 15 it is "preaching Christ." These three can never be severed. The gospel is good news; and this implies man's need of it. Next—this gospel has been communicated; it is "the word"; man has not devised it; it has come by divine interposition. Lastly, the essence of that message is Christ. "*The gospel of God, concerning His Son Jesus Christ.*" "*We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord*" (Rom. i. 1 and 3; 2 Cor. iv. 5).

And one thing more. The preaching of this gospel must be backed by a life in every way agreeable thereto. The one, who, in this chapter, speaks about preaching Christ, also says "*For me to LIVE is Christ.*" Was not this one great secret of his power and success? Does not the Church, to-day, stand in need of these two things—the witness of lip and life? Would not an affectionate, earnest presentation of Christ, accompanied by a life devoted to Him prove far more effectual in impressing a world that is away from God than all the human expedients and devices so prevalent in this age?

SHADOWS OF HEAVENLY THINGS. By R. B. Cave.

Cloth, 1/- net; post free, 1/2.

Mr. Cave writes in a most interesting and original fashion. The incidents from real life, which come at the end of the book, will touch a responsive chord in the heart of every reader. The teaching deduced from the types is very suggestive. On this topic there is, of course, always room for some difference of opinion.

"SURELY I COME QUICKLY." By George Hucklesby.

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This is a new and revised edition of a former work, and consists of four lectures on The Lord's Second Coming. It is a plain and comprehensive survey of the whole subject in its various aspects, and will be found very helpful. In justice to our readers, and in the hope that, if a second edition is called for, there may be an alteration, we feel bound to point out two blemishes. In the first place, in speaking of John xiii., the author not only does not draw any distinction between the feet washing of that chapter and the laver of the Tabernacle, but treats them as if they were the same. On p. 18 we read, "There must be a continual washing of the hands and feet at the laver of Truth." The important point in John xiii. is, there is no washing of the *hands*.

In the next place, the last line of the verse of poetry on p. 48 conveys an erroneous impression. Christ was made like unto His brethren, truly, but this was in incarnation, and in order to bear the judgment which rested upon *them*. But that is passed, and passed for ever. In glory, we are made *one with Him*. Is there not all the difference in the world between the two? We are conformed to His image, not He to ours. Our bodies are fashioned like unto His. We share *His* glory; and we are *His* brethren; He is not our brother. Moreover, to say, "That Thou with us art One," is really to put ourselves in the place of prominence. This objectionable line has been altered in one hymn book with which we are acquainted, and stands thus: "That we with Thee are one"; and this represents the thought of Scripture.

Both the above can be obtained at 13 and 14, Paternoster Row, E.C. (Mr. A. Holness).

BOOKS BY THE EDITOR.

The Greatest Event in the World. 6d. per doz., or 3/3 per hundred, post free.

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The Faith and The Flock.

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EDITORIALS.

THE SACRIFICE OF GIVING.

Perhaps few things are less understood than the Sacrifice of Giving. Where the majority of us fail most conspicuously is in bringing our Christianity into touch with everyday life. When our belief affects our pockets it is real faith. A Christianity of pounds shillings and pence is something that commends itself. We do not mean when it *consists* of that, but when it *circulates* it.

Few things are more distressing to us—and we believe our feeling is shared by others—than the kind of appeal so often heard at Conferences and tea meetings for, what is euphemistically called, “fellowship in the expenses.” The speaker generally seems to think it necessary to make some feeble joke, which raises a half titter; as though it were only through our risible faculties our pockets could be touched. The response is usually as feeble as the joke, and the laugh it created. Have we forgotten that *giving* is as much a sacrifice to God as prayer and praise? Would any of us think of cracking a joke about the latter, or presenting it in some ludicrous light? Every sober person would say, far be the thought. Then why should we not say the same with reference to the other sacrifice? Can we forget that Heb. xiii. 15-16 links them both together and places them on a level? We believe the method we are complaining of is a mistake in tactics, apart from any higher consideration. If the collection is a matter which can be passed off with a few funny turns of expression, people think lightly of what they are doing; and they give accordingly. Never, perhaps, does the appeal need so much to be directed to the very highest in us, and placed on the very highest grounds, as when it is an appeal for money. If this were remembered, the results would, we believe, often be far greater than they are. How solemnly, appropriately and inspiringly King David spoke of all he had given in preparation for the building of the Temple! (1 Chron. xxix.). And, according to that a man hath, God values all gifts alike. Who can ever forget the manner in which our Lord once drew attention to a gift of two mites? Let our giving be the most sacred and searching business of our lives. Not a mere question of inclination, but of principle.

“THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT.”*

“As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you”
(Isa. lxvi. 13).

“Blessed be God . . . the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort” (2 Cor. i. 3).

IN the above quotations from the Old and New Testaments we have God presented to us in the same character, viz., as a Comforter. In the one case it is as a Mother. In the other as a Father. “As one whom his *mother* comforteth, so will I comfort you.” “Blessed be God, the **FATHER** of our Lord Jesus Christ, the **FATHER** of mercies, and the God of all comfort.”

Our very first view of God is in the character of a mother. In that sublime opening to the Bible in which the earth is seen without form, and darkness upon the face of the deep, the Spirit of God is described as moving—brooding like a mother bird—upon the face of the waters. So God still broods over many a wrecked and darkened life. “As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.”

A Mother! Does not all that is tenderest and best gather round that name? Do you not see the gentle form bending over the child, the young man, or the grown up daughter when pain, grief or disappointment has come? What concern, what sympathy, what love blend in the voice, in every movement, in every touch. And God says, “*As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.*” He Who *made* the mother—He Who gave the pity and solicitude of a mother’s heart—He from Whom came all that was ever found in the loveliest, purest and holiest mother that ever lived—He says, the comfort He will give is, “as one whom his mother comforteth.” Oh! what a God!

These words are found in the prophecy of Isaiah; and they come at the very close of that wonderful evangel. What a close! God bending over the bowed form of repentant Israel—Israel His son, His firstborn. In the opening chapter the awful sin of Israel is depicted in its most glaring colours; and no words were too strong in which to paint it; but in the end, after all the sin and the folly and the needed discipline, God has His wayward child, as it

* To be obtained of the Author, 34, Cliff Road, Leeds, in booklet form, complete, price 2d. each; or 1s. 3d. per doz., post free.

were, in His arms : and He comforts. It begins with chapter xl. : *“ Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned ; for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.”* And in the same chapter we learn who this God is that comforts, and feeds His flock like a shepherd, and gathers the lambs with His arm. *“ Have ye not known ? have ye not heard ? hath it not been told you from the beginning ? have ye not understood from the foundation of the earth ? It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers ; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. . . . To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal ? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number, He calleth them all by names, BY THE GREATNESS OF HIS MIGHT, FOR THAT HE IS STRONG IN POWER ; NOT ONE FAILETH.”* It is this One, and no one less, Who comforts as a mother.

And how does a mother comfort ? In three different ways, at least. Her child has been disappointed, or injured, or some treasure has been lost or broken, and the mother takes the child in her arms and presses it to her heart. It may be, no word is spoken. The sorrow is too deep for words, and words too poor, at present, to soothe. And so the only thing is to draw the child as close to her as she can get it, and make it feel that the grief is understood and shared, and that while something the child had set its heart upon has been taken away, a mother’s love remains, which is better than all. And so with God. *“ As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.”* He overshadows us with His presence ; He makes us lean upon His arm ; He allows us to find a place upon His bosom ; He hides us near His heart. Here, again, no word is spoken either by Him or us. He only makes us conscious that HE is near ; we are in His *presence* : until we realize that He covers us *“ with His feathers, and under His wings ”* we can trust, and that we *“ lodge under the shadow of the Almighty.”* When the father ran and fell on the prodigal’s neck and kissed him (Luke xv.), no word is recorded as having being spoken by him while in that attitude. It was an action which no words could enforce. It was the silence of love (see Zeph. iii. 17 margin). In the silent presence of God the heart often finds its first and deepest comfort. Until

at last we can exclaim, "*Thou art my hiding place, Thou shalt preserve me from trouble, Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.*"

"A Christian lady not long ago dreamed a dream which was not a dream, but a fact. She saw herself as surrounded with God; encircled above, beneath, and all around, as with a blaze of light. Brilliance inconceivable made a pavilion for her; and while she stood in the midst of the glory she saw all her cares, and her troubles, and her temptations, and her sins, wandering about the outside of the wall of light, unable to reach her. Unless that light itself should open and make a way for them she was serenely secure, although she could see the perils which else would destroy her. Is not the Lord a wall of fire round about us, and the glory in the midst? Is it not written, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty"? Evil shall not come near to him who is near to God."

Can we not say, "*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; FOR THOU ART WITH ME; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me*"?

A MOTHER'S SECOND WAY OF COMFORTING.

When the child is in a measure pacified, and ready to listen, the mother has a second method of comfort. She talks to it, or sings it some lullaby. Perhaps the child falls, at length, into a calm sleep and wakes up forgetting all its sorrow. This is how God comforts. Are there any more comforting words than those in the Bible? This feature, alone, gives it a superiority over every other book that was ever written. Think of David's Psalms. Think of certain passages in St. Paul's epistles. Study the closing chapters of Isaiah. Have not myriads been comforted by such utterances as these? And why? Because, although they came through men, they are not of men. They are of God. Often and often some text of Scripture has illuminated the darkness that has shrouded the soul. Only God could speak such words. They can calm the most troubled heart, give relief to the most perplexed mind, can rouse the drooping spirit and rally us again to the conflict with evil and adversity. To one, as he faced one of the blackest days that man can know, there came, as distinctly as any human voice could have uttered them, these words, "Who turneth the shadow of death *into the morning.*" "*Into the morning!*" The beginning of a *new*

day, and of new things ; the shadow of death gone with the night ; a morning without clouds. Who has not had such experience ? There is not a sinner under the sun that is beyond the comfort of God's word !

Think of some of the passages in Isaiah from chapter xl. to which we have already referred, and which opens with " Comfort ye, comfort ye, My people," and onward. Here is one. " Fear thou not ; for I am with thee ; be not dismayed ; for I am thy God : I will strengthen thee ; yea, I will help thee ; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness " (chap. xli. 10). Here is another. " I, even I, am He that comforteth you ; who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass " (li. 12). Again : " O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires " (liv. 11). " No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." " The Lord shall guide thee continually." One part of the mission of Christ is described in chap. lxi. 2-3 : " To comfort all that mourn ; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Once more, " When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ; and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee : when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned ; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee " (xliii. 2).

Yes, of Him Who " telleth the number of the stars," it is said, " He healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds." And His method of doing it is by His word. Is it any wonder the Apostle Paul writes, " That we through patience and *comfort* of the Scriptures might have hope." Or that the Holy Spirit Himself should be called the Comforter.

To how many of the tried children of God have such passages, as we have quoted, come with peculiar sweetness and power in seasons of distress. How many could testify to the uplifting power of some text in moments of peril or in some sorrow. Yes, God comforts by His word. Here is one instance from the personal experience of the late C. H. Spurgeon. We will give it in his own words : " Many years ago, when this great congregation first met in the Surrey Music Hall, and the terrible accident occurred (through

a false alarm of fire), when many persons were either killed or wounded in the panic, I did my best to hold the people together till I heard that some were dead, and then I broke down like a man stunned, and for a fortnight or so I had little reason left. I felt so broken in heart that I thought that I should never be able to face a congregation again; and I went down to a friend's house, a few miles away, to be very quiet and still. I was walking round his garden, and I well remember the spot, and even the time, when this passage came to me, '*Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour*'; and this thought came into my mind at once, 'You are only a soldier in the great King's army, and you may die in a ditch; but it does not matter what becomes of you as long as your King is exalted. HE—*He* is glorious. God hath highly exalted Him! And so I just thought, '*He* is exalted. What matters it about me?' and in a moment my reason was perfectly restored. I was as clear as possible. I went into the house, had family prayer, and came back to preach to my congregation . . . restored only by having looked to Jesus, and having seen that He was glorious."

THE THIRD METHOD OF COMFORT.

A mother has a third method of comfort:—*She comforts by presenting some fresh object to the child.* Some new toy to replace the broken one, or a promise of some special treat. Does not God comfort in a similar way? "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." God comforts often by outward things; by bringing us into new circumstances; by granting us some peculiar mercy; by some special providential dealings.

We have already quoted some words of the Apostle Paul from the first chapter of his second epistle to the Corinthians, shewing that he knew what it meant to be comforted of God. In chapter vii. 25-6 of the same epistle he makes a further statement to this effect: "*For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, COMFORTED US BY THE COMING OF TITUS.*" Here was a providential dealing on God's part: a circumstance by which God comforted His tried and harassed servant. From an earlier statement we learn that the Apostle had gone to Troas to meet with Titus, and had not seen him. "I had no rest in my spirit," he says,

because I found not Titus my brother ; but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia." And there, as we have seen, his flesh had no rest ; " without were fightings, within were fears." So anxious was he about the Corinthians, his spiritual children ; so eager for Titus to come and bring some news as to the effect of his letter upon them, that, to use his own words, he was " troubled on every side." But God knew all that His child was passing through, and He also knew all about His other children at Corinth, and He knew where Titus was ; and the whole time, unknown to His faithful servant, He was working in such a way as to bring the fullest comfort and joy to the heart of the one so sorely cast down.

" And though His comfort stay,
His help be slowly wrought,
As though He turned away,
As though He loved thee not,
And though thou sink awhile
In darkness and in pain
As though He would not smile
Or shew thee light again :
He will not always chide
But when the hope seems least,
If still thy faith abide,
Then shalt thou be released.
And when thy trust is proved,
The grief that harmed thee not
Shall wholly be removed
Thy full deliverance wrought."

(To be continued.)

THE DOOR—THE CALL

" I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven " (Rev. iv. 1).

Look up, and see the opened door,
See—see ! thy Lord is near !
The watching time is almost o'er—
Hark ! 'tis His voice I hear !

(" The voice—His voice (chap. i. 10) said : ' Come up hither ! ' ")
Rev. iv. 1.

Rise up, rise up, and come away,
I've waited long for thee ;
The night is past, and now 'tis day,
Eternal Day—with ME.

H. A. W.

THE JOURNEY.

A STUDY OF HEBREW NAMES.

Numbers xxi. 6-20.

By F. C. JENNINGS.

List, my brethren, to the story of a journey strange and long ;
 Changed from one of aimless wandering to a pilgrimage of song—
 Changed from ever-changing sorrow to the melody of springs,
 Mingling with the songs a pilgrim drawing homeward ever sings.
 'Tis of Israel, God's own people, whom He in this journey led
 Out of Egypt, through the desert, till their own dear land they tread.

Long before they were at ¹Kadesh, yet they are at ²Kadesh still,
 Intervening years recording all God's good and all their ill.
 Till the "law of sin and death" is working in the serpent's bite,
 And their only hope is centred in another wondrous sight :
 The likeness of another Serpent—sinless, yet consumed as sin,
 Lifted up on high and burning³—then their *pilgrim* ways begin.
 All their camps have been unheeded ; God does not record one name,
 Till they've seen the brazen serpent—then 'tis nevermore the same.
 But they've seen it, and the poison of the fiery serpent's bite
 Flees before its counteraction as the darkness flees from light.
 Now no longer up and down that weary desert do they roam ;
 But "set forward"⁴ for the first time, to a known and well-loved Home.
 Then Jehovah takes full note of every place they pitch their tent,
 Lingered o'er each camping ground, and naming it, as if He meant
We should gather holy lessons from these names divinely given
 For our pilgrimage from this world, to our Home which is in Heaven.

First is Oboth,⁵ "water vessels" such are we in whom there dwells
 God's own Spirit, like to water, springing from no earth-fed wells.
 Such was she, who once at Sychar, all her misery forgot—
 Thirsting quenched with living water—what cared she for waterpot ?

Then they came to IJE-ABARIM,⁶ "heap of ruins by the Ford,"
 'Tis the world as seen a ruin in the Cross of Christ the Lord.
 Paul once cried at *Ije-Abarim* : "In the light of Thy dear Cross,
 Count I all earth's wealth but refuse ; count I all my gain but loss."
 Yet 'tis desert—facing Moab—has the journey not begun ?
 Aye, most surely, for the prospect is "toward the rising sun."
 'Tis the sunrise of God's glory falling on us like a spell
 In the face of Jesus risen—here we have our Peniel.⁷

Thus they reach a watered valley : ZARED,⁸ filled with brooks that smile.
 Calling to our minds His gracious "Come apart and rest awhile."
 For we see the verdant pastures, resting flocks, and waters calm,
 All the gracious tendernesses of the well-loved shepherd-psalm.

¹ Num. xiii. 26.

² Num. xx. 13.

³ There is no word for "serpent" in Num. xxi. 8. It is "make thee a burning one"—of course it *was* a serpent ; but the main point was that the people must see that what they are suffering from is being consumed.

⁴ Num. xxi. 10.

⁵ *Oboth* : first meaning "Bottles," hence those who have a familiar spirit ; as the bottle holds the liquid, so the possessed hold the spirit—when used in a good sense—the Holy Spirit.

⁶ *Ije*, the same word as *Ai* of Josh. viii. *Abarim* constantly translated "fords" as Judges iii. 28, Josh. ii. 7) a figure of the cross of Christ.

⁷ Genesis xxxii. 30.

⁸ *Zered*, cf. Deut. ii. 13, 14, where the word for "brook" means both "*valley*" as mar. and "*brook*."

Next they cross the river ARNON¹—joy for which they've waited long,
For at once we hear the fragment of a long-forgotten song.
Like the little birds that twitter in the opening of the spring
Striving to break winter's silence, and last summer's songs to sing.

Soon the twitter grows to music, as they move and pitch at BEER,²
Springing fountains, springing waters, springing songs are all found here.
Princes' sceptres too are digging wells to meet the peasants' need.
Since they saw the brazen serpent have they not progressed indeed?
For they've learned a lesson only taught by God in His own school:
He who first has learned to *serve*, alone is competent to *rule*.

MATTANAH³ too speaks of water, for it means "a gift" and such
Is that water freely flowing, and the life we need so much.
The Spirit's last word is *Mattanah* when He bids us come and take
Water of eternal life, and all our thirst forever slake.

Oh, how sweet and how refreshing is the next place where they rest,
NAHALIEL,⁴ God's own river, floods with peace each happy breast.
So the Lord said that the Spirit those believing Him, should fill
And flow over, till each saint was of the stream of God a rill.

(Water, water ever sounding through these names; now clear, now faint,
Like a varied brook-song telling of the Life in every saint.
Always is its happy laughter by the sunlit shallows made;
But its deeper tones are hushed in pools beneath the alders' shade.
Nor must life be ever measured by the volume of the sound;
In the ripples there is little—in the pools the fish abound.)

Upward, upward, now to BAMOTH,⁵ moral heights above the world
Glories hitherto unseen are there before the eye unfurled.
Upward, upward, still to PISGAH,⁶ joyous place of far, far sight
Where their path, so often shrouded, now is seen in clearest light.
For it looks back to JESHIMON⁷—to the wilderness they've trod
Desert sorrows, desert sufferings, seen now in the light of God.
Not a tear they've ever shed, but turns, like Cana's cups, to wine
Light affliction for a moment working out a joy divine.
Have we been at Ije-Abarim with its sunrise? Then full soon
We shall surely stand on Pisgah looking back to Jeshimon.

Let us learn then, dearest brethren, we're but wand'ers till we own
All within, around, is death, and all our life's in Christ alone.
Life in Christ! It gently severs all the ties that bound to earth,
Till the new-born spirit pants to reach the Bosom whence its birth.
E'en as air, though long imprisoned in the dark depths of the sea,
Rises, when its bonds are loosed, to kindred air and liberty.
Even thus the sight of Jesus, the Holy One consumed as sin,
Frees us from the bonds of earth, and gives another hope within.
Not to die—for death may often still the timid heart appal—
But to be with all we've loved—to be with Him Who loves us all.

¹ *Arnon* from root *rahnan*, "to sing with joy"; thus *Arnon* "a joyful song"—a name in perfect accord with the fragment of song recorded.

² *Beer* means "Well" or "Spring."

³ *Mattanah*, the exact word rendered "gifts" Ps. lxxviii. 18, Num. xviii. 6, etc., etc.

⁴ *Nahaliel*. Compound of *Nahal*, "river" as Deut. ii. 24, and *El*, God.

⁵ *Bamoth*. "Heights" as Deut. xxxii. 13.

⁶ *Pisgah*. "Survey," the word may be found in Ps. xlviii. 13. *Consider her palaces.*

⁷ *Jeshimon*. "Wilderness," as margin.

THE LAST WEEK OF THE LORD'S LIFE BEFORE THE CROSS.

By F. W. CHAPMAN.

III.

THE Council of the Jews, composed of Seventy men, sat now to judge Christ as a "mover of sedition," and for blasphemy, in that "He being a man, made Himself God." Unitarians might do well to consider this fact, that, the charge against the Lord Jesus was a clearly stated one, and His condemnation and death resulted (wickedly and unjustly we know) from it.

The Sanhedrin now delivered him to Pontius Pilate, the Civil Governor, for judgment, and preferred a charge against Him that He was a dangerous person. Making Himself a King and speaking against Caesar. At this point Judas, finding the Lord Jesus condemned, brings the money, casts it into the Temple, and, full of remorse, hangs himself, and goes to his own place. Pilate sought to draw from the Lord a statement, but in vain; "Brought as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep dumb before her shearers so He opened not His mouth."

Pilate seems to have been sincerely anxious to deliver Him, specially after receiving a message from his wife urging him to have nothing to do with "that Just Man." Little did she know that "The Just for the unjust was to die on the tree" in order that God "might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Herod was in Jerusalem, and, as Galilee, in which the Lord spent most of His life, was in his jurisdiction, Pilate was glad to rid himself of the responsibility of condemning Jesus, so sent Him to him. Herod in turn was glad to see Jesus, for he had often heard of Him and hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him (Luke xxiii, 8). He questioned the Lord, but without obtaining an answer. It is well to notice that He never, in all His life, satisfied curiosity nor worked a miracle without bringing blessing. Herod and his soldiers wickedly mocked Jesus and arrayed Him in a royal robe, sending Him back to Pilate. How strangely sad that these men, Herod and Pilate, should have restored friendship through the trial of our Lord.

Pilate now has to face the whole question of the condemnation of Jesus. He shirks it. Openly declares he, as governor, can find no fault in Him, and adds, "No, nor yet Herod." Blessed, spotless Lamb of God—well may we bow in worship as we contemplate Thyself! Chief Priests, Scribes, mob unite in their cries that nothing will satisfy them but the death of Jesus. Pilate makes one more effort, and remembers the custom of releasing a prisoner to them at the Passover. He has a notorious criminal in his hands, one called Bar-Abbas (Son of the Father). Surely he will not be chosen in preference to the lowly, innocent Son of Man. The great election has to be settled. The vote must be cast—"Barabbas or Jesus." Which? And all with one accord, led on by Satan, cry, "Barabbas," "Away with Jesus, crucify Him, crucify Him."

Their cries prevail. The innocent One, the just One, the Son of God, the Son of Man is scourged—shame on Pilate's injustice—and delivered to be crucified (Luke xxiii. 25).

This was shortly before 9 a.m. on Friday morning. They led the Lord out bearing His Cross; but on the way laid hold on one Simon—a Cyrenian (a North African—a Son of Ham) to bear His Cross. How great an honour, and more so as it shadowed forth the grace that should so soon be showered on the sinners of the Gentiles. Apparently Simon's sons, Alexander and Rufus, were believers in the Lord Jesus and well known.

Many followed the Lord on that Via Dolorosa and wept and lamented and struck their breasts. In company with the Lord are two malefactors, and all go to Calvary to die.

From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. the Lord Jesus hung on that Cross bearing the inscription—which must be read in all the Gospels to get the full reading—"This is Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews." This is given also in three languages. How blessed to know that His death meets the need of all, from whatever station in life or of whatever nation. Space forbids to enlarge on those cries from the Cross; we can only call attention to the dying thief and his testimony to the Lord; to the centurion also and his testimony; to the Lord's care of Mary by committing her into the hands of John; and to the cry for forgiveness for His murderers.

What that agony was, who can tell? What the bitterness of that experience of the ever obedient one, to endure the hiding of

God's face? "Why hast Thou forsaken Me"? The three hours darkness can in some measure tell us God's thoughts of that awful scene.

The end has come. The last prophecy concerning that moment is fulfilled, and with a loud voice, at 3 p.m., "He yielded up His spirit," and thus voluntarily gave His life. "Yielded as an act of will," in the full vigour of manhood. The blessed Lord had power (authority) to lay it down, and, glorious news, power to take it again. Propitiation is made—God is glorified—and the vail of the Temple is rent in twain from the top to the bottom. Heaven's answer to the value of the Blood.

Loving hearts plead for the body of Jesus. Joseph of Arimathea asks it direct from Pilate, who would probably be surprised that a member of the Sanhedrin shou'd make such a request. Willing hands take the body, and shy Nicodemus, another Counsellor, brings 100 lbs. weight of spices, and he with Joseph swathe that holy incorruptible body in linen and the spices, for the burial. Mourning hearts follow it to that new tomb in the garden—and there leave it till the Sabbath is past. The Lord was buried before 6 p.m., and thus closed the darkest day in this guilty world's history.

The Chief Priests and Elders get a watch from Pilate; and the stone is sealed lest His disciples should take Him away. Thus to all intents and purposes they felt they had finished with Jesus; but we know that on the first day of the week, the stone is rolled away—the tomb is empty—"The Lord is risen." Victory is announced by the angel who sits upon the stone.

Ere we close, may we go with the Lord Jesus as far as to Bethany and see Him ascending from that sacred spot, the one to which He will return. Well may our hearts join in that cry, "Come Lord Jesus. Come quickly."

DIS-APPOINTMENT.

We call it *Dis-appointment*,
 When God the seeming good we craved denies,
 And expectation languishes and dies;
 Or that we longed for fails us though so nigh:
 Yet not a cloud has ever swept the sky
 Except by *His* appointment.

C. E. O.

THE KINGDOM AND THE CHURCH.

By JOHN JAMES.

TO what time do the parables of the Kingdom of Heaven apply : to the present or to some future time ? Do we rightly divide the word of truth by cancelling their application to ourselves ?

When the Lord said to Peter, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church ; and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it," He also said, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." From this we see that there is an intimate connection between the time when the church began to be built, and the time when the kingdom began to be administered by Peter. For giving him the keys is a symbol of committing to him the authority to administer it. In fact, an examination of the parables of the mysteries of the kingdom, in Matt. xiii., shows that the Kingdom of Heaven and the Church are composed of identically the same persons, whether the Church be regarded as consisting only of the true children of the kingdom, or including professors ; as in the letters to the seven churches (Rev. ii., iii.), which, while distinguishing true believers from those who have only a name to live and are dead, yet contemplate both classes. Exactly the same is true of the parables of the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew. The parable of the sower shows that more come under the influence of the word of the kingdom (that is, the preaching of the gospel), and profess to believe it, than those who received seed into good ground. On the other hand, the parables of the treasure and the pearl speak plainly of the true Church which Christ loves and for which He gave Himself. Yet they are both similitudes of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The conclusion, therefore, is indubitable that, at the present time, while the Kingdom is the Kingdom of Heaven, the Church and the Kingdom are composed of the same people. The Church can be viewed as being the body of Christ ; so the kingdom can be regarded as composed of the treasure and the pearl. The Church can also be viewed as including all who have but a name to live and are dead, to whom the Lord will come as a thief (the same as to the world), as well as of those who have not defiled their garments (Rev. ii. 1-4). So the Kingdom of Heaven includes both wise and foolish virgins.

It is only at the present time however, while the kingdom is the Kingdom of Heaven, that the kingdom and the Church are collateral. When the word shall have gone forth "gather the wheat into my barn" (Matt. xiii. 30) and the children of the kingdom, *i.e.*, those who really belong to it, are in heaven, then the kingdom will become the Kingdom of the Son of Man (Matt. xiii. 41 ; xxiv. 44 ; xxv. 31 ; xvi. 28 ; John i. 51). "The Kingdom of God" embraces both (see Mark viii. 38 ; ix. 1 ; iv. 26, 30 ; Acts. xxviii. 23, 31, etc.). "The Kingdom of their Father," is the heavenly part of the Millennial Kingdom of the Son of Man (Matt. xiii. 43 ; xxvi. 29).

Let us now turn to see Peter use the keys of the kingdom. He used them on two occasions : first to admit Jews, and then to admit Gentiles. Peter, endued with the power of the Holy Spirit from on high, preached that memorable sermon to the Jews in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, in accordance with the commission in Luke xxiv. 47. Those who gladly received his word were baptised (not with, but) in water, and they also received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Their immersion in water was their reception into the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, in conformity with the commission in Matt. xxviii. 18-20 ; which is the kingdom commission. The gift of the Holy Spirit to them was Christ building His Church ; composed of the same persons. By that they were "in one Spirit immersed into one body," and thus became the House of God and the Body of Christ (Eph. i. 23 ; ii. 22).

But, so far, this was to the Jews only ; the Lord had considerable difficulty in getting Peter to open the door to the Gentiles. He had to give him a vision of a sheet let down containing all manner of unclean beasts, and three men had to come for him, and a special message from the Holy Spirit had to be given him, before he could be induced to carry the gospel to Gentiles (see Acts x). At length he went and preached the gospel to them, and to the great astonishment of the Jewish brethren who went with Peter, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. On seeing this he commanded them to be baptised in the name of the Lord ; that is, by the authority of the Lord as in Matt. xxviii. 19. Again we see Christ building the church, and Peter administering the kingdom. Allusion is made to this in Acts xv. 7-14, in the conference at Jerusalem.

The Apostle Paul followed in exactly the same way (see Acts xviii. 8). He preached the word at Corinth; the converts received the Holy Spirit and thus became the House of God and the Body of Christ there, as in Eph. ii. 11-22; where we see detailed the way in which Christ builds His church. In the present time the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God are the same. When the Kingdom of Heaven is succeeded by the Kingdom of the Son of Man, that will then be the Kingdom of God. The gospel of the kingdom, alluded to by the Lord in Matt. xxiv. 14, is the same gospel of repentance and remission of sins through the blood of Christ; the difference being that it has not the heavenly calling in view, but the earthly Kingdom of the Son of Man. Paul went on preaching the Kingdom of God to the end of his ministry (see Acts xxviii. 23-31; Eph. v. 5; Col. iv. 11).

Another infallible guide as to the time when the parables of the Kingdom of Heaven apply, is that it must be a time to which they *all* apply. Not a time to which one of the parables, that of the ten virgins for instance, may be thought to apply, unless all the other kingdom parables apply to the same time. There are thirteen parables of the Kingdom of Heaven in the gospel by Matthew, besides some in Mark and Luke; and the only dispensation to which they *all* apply is the present. We beg the reader's attention to the following list for the proof of this:—

		Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.
1	The Sower	xiii. 3	iv. 3	viii. 4
2	Wheat and Tares	xiii. 24	Wheat, iv. 26	..
3	Mustard Seed	xiii. 31	iv. 30	xiii. 18
4	Leaven	xiii. 33	..	xiii. 20
5	Treasure	xiii. 44	..	..
6	Pearl	xiii. 45	..	..
7	Net	xiii. 47	..	..
8	Unforgiving Servant ..	xviii. 23	..	..
9	Labourers	xx. 1	..	..
10	Marriage of King's Son ..	xxii. 1	..	Supper, xiv. 16
11	Faithful and Evil Servants	xxiv. 45	xiii. 32	xii. 42
12	Ten Virgins	xxv. 1	..	..
13	Talents	xxv. 14	..	Pounds, xix. 12

These are all parables of the Kingdom of Heaven. Not one of them alone gives us a complete view of it. They all go together. When a right application is made of any of them, all the others are equally applicable. If not, if there is but one that will not apply,

then the application sought to be made is wrong. It cannot be the Kingdom of Heaven unless all the parables of the kingdom apply to it. The true doctrine of the kingdom requires all the parables reserved to itself; it cannot part with one of them to be applied elsewhere.*

These parables are also revelations, given us by the Lord, of things about the kingdom which had been kept secret from the foundation of the world; they are therefore "mysteries of the kingdom" (see Matt. xiii. 11, 34, 35). They reveal the kingdom in a form in which it is not found in the Old Testament, only in the New. They can apply therefore only to a time of which the O.T. is silent. There is but one such time, that between Pentecost and the rapture of the church, during the absence of the Lord. Whenever the Lord speaks of the kingdom in a parable, He reveals a mystery of the kingdom, not revealed in the O.T. When he speaks of the kingdom in plain speech, it is the Kingdom of the Son of Man; a kingdom already revealed in the O.T. (Dan. vii. 13). Even in the explanation of the parable of the tares, when He passes beyond the time of the parable, and speaks of what will take place after the wheat is gathered into the barn, he drops the parable and speaks in plain speech (see Matt. xiii. 40-43. See also vers. 49-50.) These passages must not be taken to be explanatory of the parables; they are additional to them. The words, "so shall it be in the end of this world," in vers. 40, 49, should read, "thus shall it be in the completion of this age." The reference is to the seventy weeks of Daniel; sixty-nine of which were completed on the day the Lord entered Jerusalem as the King of Israel (see Luke xix. 38; compare Dan. ix. 25). There remained one week of seven years to complete the age. So when the Lord said "Thus shall it be in the completion of the age" (vers. 40, 49) it was the same as saying, Thus shall it be in the seventieth week of Daniel. This seventieth week is revealed in the Old Testament. It is not a mystery of the kingdom. The things revealed in the parables cannot therefore take place in that week, for they are mysteries of the kingdom, and can only take place in the present time, between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth week; a period of time kept secret from the foundation of the world, and made known for the first time in these parables, and

* That they all apply to the present time, we believe, but it may be going too far to say that not one of them has any application to the future.

(Ed. F. & F.)

purposely spoken in parables for the reasons stated in Matt. xiii. 11, 34, 35. It is thus that the one instructed by these parables will be able to bring out of his treasure "things new and old"; that is, the old things already revealed in the O.T. and the new things in the parables.

We see the Lord using plain speech and parable with the same marked intent to discriminate between the time of the mysteries and the time of the end of the age in Matt. xxiv. and xxv. In Matt. xxiv. 1-44, we have, in answer to the enquiry of His disciples, "Tell us when shall these things be? and what is the sign of Thy coming, and of the completion of the age," the details, in plain speech, of the circumstances which the disciples will pass through during both the first and the second halves of the seventieth week of Daniel (the division between the two halves being at ver. 15), and going on to the coming of the "Son of Man," when He will appear to both Israel and the world, when His elect will be gathered together on earth for the earthly kingdom. Not a word is here said of the resurrection of the dead in Christ out from among the dead, nor of the change of the saints who will be alive and remain, nor of their both being caught up to meet the Lord in the air, as in 1 Thess. iv. 16-17; for these are New Testament mysteries (1 Cor. xv. 51). When they take place the words of the parable "gather the wheat into my barn" will be fulfilled, and then the time of the mysteries of the kingdom will be ended; and the comparison of Matt. xxiv. 30-31 and 1 Thess. iv. 16-17 show clearly the difference between the Lord's descent into the air for the risen and changed saints to meet Him there, and the coming of the Son of Man to set up His earthly kingdom. Besides which, as we have said, Matt. xxiv. 1-44 being in plain speech does not contain any mystery of the kingdom; therefore vers. 30-31 cannot be the gathering of the wheat into the barn. It is the gathering of the elect of Israel and the Gentiles for the earthly kingdom of the Son of Man. It is the beginning of his millennial reign (Matt. xxv. 31).

But before these events take place the time of the mysteries of the kingdom intervenes; consequently from Matt. xxiv. 45 to xxv. 30 the Lord speaks in parables, not in plain speech. This proves conclusively that the three parables describe features and responsibilities of Christian times, and have no application to the time of the completion of the age.

This is again followed by plain speech (xxv. 31-46) revealing that there will be a judgment of the living nations on the earth, at the beginning of the millennial reign of the Son of Man ; a judgment which must be distinguished from that of the dead at the end of that reign (Rev. xx. 11-15).

A study of the details of each parable would also show how they all consistently converge upon one, and only one, dispensation, viz., the Christian dispensation from Pentecost, and goes on continuously, along with the sowing of the tares, until the command goes forth to bundle the tares, and they are left in the field to be afterwards burnt, and the wheat is gathered into the barn. The parable reveals no Pentecostal dispensation separate from the one in which we live. The fact of miracles at the beginning, and a special testimony to Israel in the first seven chapters of the Acts, by no means marks that off as a separate dispensation. Much less do Paul's words to the Jews in Rome in Acts xxviii. 28 indicate any change of dispensation then ; nor that no more Jews would have the gospel preached to them ; for from that time to this the truth of Rom. xi. 1-2 has been amply proved, and is being proved to-day by the conversion of many Jews. It only meant that Paul would do in Rome the same as he had done in other cities, preach the gospel to the Gentiles, after having first preached it to the Jews. (Compare Acts xiii. 46 ; xviii. 6). It was in Paul's commission from the very beginning to go to the Gentiles (Acts xxii. 21 ; xxvi. 17), and Peter had already opened the door to the Gentiles before Paul's conversion. So that Jew and Gentile were immersed in one Spirit into one body under Peter's ministry, before ever Paul was called to be the special apostle of the Gentiles.

P.S.—What I conceive to be of most importance is to note that the parables are new revelations of things about the kingdom, which had not been revealed in the O.T., and are, therefore, called mysteries of the kingdom, and that therefore they can only apply to the time that was not revealed in the O.T., viz., the present time. And that while the Kingdom of God is a term that embraces the kingdom during the whole period from beginning to end ; the term Kingdom of Heaven speaks only of the kingdom until the wheat is gathered into the barn. Then it becomes the Kingdom of the Son of Man.

This is what we conceive to be "rightly dividing the word of truth." The question of the church going through the tribulation is at once settled by the fact that the tribulation is revealed in the O.T. ; it is not therefore a mystery of the kingdom ; nor is it mentioned in the parable of the wheat and tares as occurring before the wheat is gathered into the barn. But that which is now going on, the sowing of both good and bad seed, characterises the whole period of the parable. This also indicates to us that we may look for the command to go forth, "Gather the wheat into my barn," at any moment. Even so, come Lord Jesus.

THE GOD OF PEACE.

I.

The Prince of Life in triumph from the grave arose,
Justice is satisfied and silenced are our foes.
This stirs the soul, the heart with worship overflows,
The burdened spirit too finds rest, for well it knows
Our God is now the God of peace.

II.

The God of peace—what calm assurance in that name ;
How it dispels all fear and dread, for Jesus came
And paid the price of peace upon the cross of shame,
So now with Him on high and evermore the same.
Our God is called the God of peace.

III.

On Calvary in love unfathomed for His own,
He tasted death, sin's penalty, and stood alone,
Forsaken of His God in bitterness unknown ;
But now our Lord is ris'n and while He's on the throne,
Our God is called the God of peace.

IV.

"My peace," the Lord, departing, said, "I give to you,"
And peace, the purchase of His cross, He left us too.
Then nevermore need anxious care distract our view,
From Him Who is our Peace and Rest—we sing anew.
Our God is now the God of peace.

V.

The peace of God, surpassing understanding deep,
Shall garrison the heart and mind, and quiet keep,
Though trials vex and storms the path o'ersweep,
In perfect calm the Shepherd keeps His ransomed sheep.
Our God is still the God of peace.

THE CHRISTIAN'S POSITION WITH REGARD TO THE WORLD.

" They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world " (John xvii. 16).

FEW things are more important than that the Christian should understand his true and proper relation to the system called the world. On the one hand we are not called to be monks and nuns, and exclude ourselves entirely from it; on the other, we need to guard against allowing the world to rob us of our true peace, and hinder our prosperity and progress in the spiritual life. How are we to avoid these two extremes? Two things need to be clearly grasped by the believer, if he is to know what it is to be delivered in heart from this present evil age. The first, the world has rejected God's Son; the other, that a family circle has been formed distinct from the world, where the Children of God enjoy divine blessing and fellowship. This double fact needs to be realised.

1. *The Son of God has been rejected.* Let us carefully weigh this stupendous fact. In the parable of the husbandmen, Christ Himself dwells upon the portentous character of it. "*Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, they will reverence my son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard*" (Mark xii. 6-8). It may be said that this refers to the Jews. Quite true. But it would be easy to show that the Gentiles shared equally in the murder of the "Well-beloved." In an earlier chapter in Mark we read: "*The Son of Man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death and SHALL DELIVER HIM TO THE GENTILES; and they shall mock Him and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall kill Him*" (ch. x. 33-4). Every possible indignity, ending in murder!

This being so, what is the Christian's position with regard to the world? That world of which Christ said "They have both seen and hated both Me and My Father," and with regard to which the Apostle James wrote, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?"

(Ch. iv. 4). Is the Christian to *seek* its friendship ; to give himself up to its pursuits ; to become *engrossed* with its aims, politics and pleasures ? Would not this indeed be " enmity with God ? " What must God think of the one who so despises His well-beloved Son as to join hand and glove with the world that ignominiously rejected Him and gave Him a cross ? And would not such worldliness be, as one has said, "*Heartlessness to Christ*" ?

In order to gain further light on this subject, let us trace out the references our Lord makes to the world in His closing discourse to His disciples, recorded in John xiv. and onward.

In chap. xiii. we find Judas goes out from Christ's company to do His work of treachery, and St. John makes the significant remark, "*And it was night*" (ver. 30). To the company within, Christ says, further on, " Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you : *not as the world giveth, give I unto you.*" The world can give no peace ; it has none to give ; it did not give any to Judas.

Moreover, Christ plainly tells them, that, all they could expect from the world was hatred. " If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own ; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you " (Ch. xv. 18-19).

But hardly any statement reveals the true character of the world so clearly as the one in which our Lord speaks of the attitude of the Holy Spirit with regard to it. Speaking (in chap. xvi.) of the advent of the other Comforter, Christ says, "*When He is come, He will reprove (convict) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on Me ; of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more ; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged*" (vers. 8-11).

Now we must not confound this attitude of the Holy Spirit with His work in convicting the sinner and leading him, as an individual, to true repentance and faith. Here it is not the individual, but the world. It is not a saving work, but condemnation—the proper simile being the conviction of a prisoner at the bar. The Holy Ghost has come down as a witness against the world on account of its refusal and murder of the Son of God. This view

of it is made perfectly clear by a careful consideration of the language used. "Of sin," not to make them believe, but, "because they believe *not*." "Of righteousness, because *I* go to My Father." It is to show that the world killed and cast out the righteous one, not to bring righteousness to the world. And lastly, "Of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judged." This last clause stamps the meaning of the passage with unmistakable clearness. It is judgment, not salvation. And Satan is actually styled "*The PRINCE of this world*."

If the Comforter Whom Christ has sent from the Father assumes this uncompromising attitude with regard to the world, does it not determine once and for ever the attitude which alone becomes the Christian? The world is convicted of sin; that is its character. Of righteousness; it did an unlawful and wicked act in condemning Christ. Of judgment; its very prince, that led it on to this work of darkness and infamy, is judged. If we, as believers, only kept the world before us in this light, could we be so careless and frivolous as we sometimes are in its company? True it is, we are not to go out of the world, but it is also true we are not of it; and it is because this is too much forgotten that the power and comfort of the Holy Spirit are so little known. It is written, "He shall glorify Me"; but how can He minister Christ to those who are so immersed in the world's pleasures, pursuits, and fashions that there is no perceptible difference between them and it. The world goes to church and the church goes into the world. How much of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit is forfeited in consequence!

Christ's words to His own, before being delivered up, were these, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world" (chap. xvi. 33). This is what our Lord and Master said to His own. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." Many Christians interpret this as meaning, "In the world ye shall have a jolly time." No, this is not what Christ said; and He meant exactly what He did say. Why is the world on such good terms with the church to-day? There is, unfortunately, only one possible answer, if one is to have any regard for the truth; it is because of the church's unfaithfulness to her Lord.

But Christ promised something besides tribulation. "In Me . . . peace." Ah, that is worth all the world's so-called merriment. And then He adds, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

And what is this peace and this cheer that Christ gives? The very same which He had Himself. In the face of the forsaking of all, He did not murmur or quail. He had just said to His disciples, ye "shall leave Me alone," but He could add, "And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me." This is something like good cheer; this is a peace worth possessing.

Christ says, "*I have OVERCOME the world.*" And this determines the Christian's position with regard to the world: he must overcome, too; otherwise it will overcome him; and the power for overcoming it is the knowledge of Christ as the Son of God and of the truth He came to make known. "*Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*" And again, "*This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*" It almost looked the other way about. On that dark night when our Lord gave this last address, when impending disaster seemed confronting Him and His, and when impenetrable gloom seemed settling down upon them, it looked as if the world had overcome. The buffeting, and the spitting and the scorn which followed, looked like it. The crucifixion and the sepulchre, with the seal and guard of Roman soldiers, looked more like it still. But He Who had uttered those words, "I have overcome," knew that it was written, "Thou wilt not leave My soul in Hades, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew Me the path of life; in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. xvi. 10-11).

It was when Jesus had spoken these words, "I have overcome the world," he lifted up His eyes to heaven. Another world comes into view. And then right through the prayer which follows, seventeen times over He mentions the world in contrast with, and in opposition to, the Father, *Himself*, and those who had been given Him by the Father. He prays for them, not for the world (ver. 9); they have been given to Him out of the world (ver. 6); they are not of the world even as He is not of the world; the world "hath not known," but "these have known."

All through these Scriptures we have been tracing, there has been coming to light the fact that Christ was leaving a company on earth distinct from the world, to be a testimony in it of the saving power of God, but not of it. In John xiii., as we saw, Judas goes out, but within there is the company—those given to Christ by the

Father, those He could call His own. And to this company, during the last hours before the Cross, he unfolds His mind and will. This is the second fact which enables the Christian to appreciate his position with regard to the world. Within the Christian circle he finds his company, his home, and all his spiritual needs provided for. There God dwells; there Christ comes; there the Holy Spirit bears witness of Christ's glory; there the Father's love becomes the joy of every heart. Within that circle is a peace the world knows nothing about. The reason these are so little realized to-day is because the world has crept in, and because Christians are not obeying the one and only command of their Lord, "That ye love one another as I have loved you." Yet, in spite of all, the fact remains, there is a company on earth which is "not of the world." They have been born of God; they have been given to Christ; they are indwelt by the Holy Ghost; they wait for Christ's coming; their future—to be with Him where He is and behold His glory.

Over and over again in his first epistle, the Apostle John refers to the distinction between the world and the Children of God. In this short epistle the world is mentioned some twenty-two times. It is interesting to notice that the first reference brings to light the mercy God has shewn to it. His Son is the propitiation for the whole world. And almost the last, this: "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."* Nevertheless its true character is exposed; it is antagonistic to the Father and to His children. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." It is not of the Father, and it passeth away. While, just as in the gospel, Christ speaks of overcoming it, so, in the epistle, we are to overcome. Finally, we are told, "the whole world lieth in the wicked one." If such is its character, what can the child of God find in it?

May Christ be so precious to us, and the provision the Father has made for us within His family circle be so realised by us, that the world may lose its attraction—our hearts more than satisfied because of what they find in Christ and in the Father's love.

R.E.

All trials are opportunities given to the believer to prove to himself and others what he can do for God, and what God can do for him.

* It is, of course, necessary to distinguish between the persons and the system.

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

CHAPTER II. VERSES 13-27.

By WALTER SCOTT.

A THREE-FOLD CLASSIFICATION OF ALL CHRISTIANS.

(Continued).

FIRST ADDRESS TO THE BABES, VER. 13.

" I write unto you, little children (babes), because ye have known the Father."

KNOWLEDGE of the Father marks the *commencement* of the Christian life, and this inward personal knowledge—for it is that of which the passage treats—is not the result of matured, patient progress. Knowing the *Father*, is the start. Knowing "Him that is from the beginning," is the goal. The former, specially characterises young Christians—*young in the faith*—in the family of God; the latter, is the distinguishing feature of advanced saints. All believers know the Father, but we refer now to what is prominent *in the Christian life in its several stages*. Knowledge of the Father, energy and conflict with Satan, and knowledge of Christ—Him that is from the beginning—are the respective and progressive stages in the life of the Christian. Accompanying the forgiveness of sins, the babe in Christ enters upon a filial relationship with God. Freedom, liberty and happy consciousness of being a Child of God is the assured portion of the youngest Christian. In the new birth he is constituted a child with the feelings and affections in keeping therewith. "Abba, Father" is the cry of the babes. The relationship thus entered upon is an *eternal* one. You can never cease being a Child of God. Your after state may be a sad and humbling one, but the combined forces of hell and earth cannot sever *that* link of divine relationship—God is your Father. You are God's child. Seek grace to walk in holy love, joying and rejoicing in the present and eternal fact that you are God's child for ever. Let the warmth and affection of your soul flow out un-hinderedly to God. Habitually walk and live in the display of His character and nature, for to this you are called (Eph. iv. 32; v. 1; 1 Peter i. 14-17).

SECOND ADDRESS TO THE BABES, VERS. 18-27.

“ Little children (babes) it is the last time : and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists ; whereby we know that it is the last time.”

In the Antichrist yet to come, the horror of horrors is reached. Can there be anything in wickedness beyond or exceeding the advent and career of this Devil-inspired Jew, the Antichrist of John's Epistles ? There is only one Being worse than the Antichrist, and that is Satan himself.

“ It is the last time.” *The Antichrist signifies the total rejection of Christianity. God on earth has been revealed in the Person of His Son. The Incarnation and the Cross are essential verities of the Christian faith. The Father, the Son, the Incarnation, and the Cross have ever been the objects of Satanic hatred, and these were the subjects of denial by the antichrists in John's day—precursors of the yet more awful crisis at hand, when not a few, but the mass of an already godless Christendom will reject Christianity in toto. “ It is the last time.” Christendom's last days, marked by the last dealings of an angry God in judgment, were in principle present in John's day. We have “ the last time ”—twice repeated.*

The antichrists “ went out from *us* ” (ver. 19), not from *it*, the Church. The profession of Christianity was departed from. Apostolic doctrine was given up. There were, and are, four essential verities of the Christian Faith which antichrists in all ages absolutely deny. (1) The Revelation of the Father ; (2) The Revelation of the Son of God ; (3) The Incarnation and consequent holy Humanity of our Lord ; (4) The Cross, or atoning and substitutionary sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now in going out *from* Christians, these apostates necessarily gave up the whole system of Christianity, of which the four essential verities, just named, constitute the kernel, the strength, the foundation. Christians derive their life, their name, their character from Christianity, hence the antichrists in separating from Christians, *i.e.*, *from us*, deliberately apostatised from the Christian faith. But it is also proved that “ they were not of us ”—never really Christian in heart. These antichrists had been *professors* in name only ; *possessors* of eternal life they never had been. A true saint of God cannot become an apostate. It is an impossibility. Sinning wilfully (Heb. x. 26),

is deliberately and with set purpose giving up Christ and His sacrifice. This no Christian could do. When a Christian man sins his renewed will cries out against the sin (Rom. vii. 15-20). His true will is ever on the side of good ; whereas the will of the apostate is altogether set on evil, and his very acceptance of Christianity, without being born anew, only tends to harden the evil nature, and makes him ten times worse a child of the Devil than he was before his intellectual acceptance of the Truth. A Christless profession of Christianity—a lifeless, dead formalism is soul destroying. These antichrists and seducers were of special danger to the babes in Christ ; it is to such that the beloved and aged Apostle writes, and not to the advanced and scholarly class of saints. The young are in special danger. The moral atmosphere is charged with poisonous vapours, and all have to be on their guard, especially the lambs of the flock.

The Antichrist—so termed only in John's writings—is spoken of by Paul in one of his earliest writings, as the " Man of Sin," " the Son of Perdition," that " Wicked One."* By Daniel, as " The King " (in Palestine).† By John, in the Apocalypse, as " The False Prophet," amongst the Jews ; and as " Another Beast " in contrast to his fellow in crime, the apostate beast, in civil and political power‡ in the wider domain of Christendom. Daniel xi. 36-37 would intimate the Jewish descent of the Antichrist. The apostasy precedes the rise and appearance of the Antichrist, or Man of Sin. We are within measurable distance of the *general* departure from the Faith on the part of the professing Church.

May God preserve us each to the obtaining of the grace of Eternal Life !

" The moment I turn to God, it is all melody and joy with me ; I am in the element that satisfies me."

* * * *

" Maturity, is a person distrusting himself and leaning upon God."

* * * *

You cannot " love the Lord " without " hating evil," and you cannot " hate evil " till you " love the Lord " (Ps. xcvi. 10).

* 2 Thess. ii. † Dan. xi. 36. ‡ Rev. xvi. 13 ; xiii. 11.

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY:
SINNER, SAINT AND SERVANT.
THE SAINT.

“I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.”

WAS the Apostle Paul ever liberated from prison? It is generally supposed that he was, and that he again visited some of the scenes of his former labours, and even carried out his intention of taking a journey into Spain. In writing his epistle to the Christians at Rome, it will be remembered, he twice records the fact that Spain was his ultimate objective. In Chap. xv. 24 we read, “Whosoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you.” And again, ver. 28, “I will come by you into Spain.”

No detailed record, either in the pages of inspiration or elsewhere, remains to us of this latter mission, but a “Muratorian Fragment states that the Apostle fulfilled his expressed wish of visiting Spain—a journey which certainly necessitates his release from his Roman imprisonment—and that Clement of Rome tells of his reaching ‘the bounds of the West’—a phrase which, used by one resident, as Clement, in Rome, can only mean Spain. We may hold without misgiving that St. Paul was released . . . that he was again arrested and suffered martyrdom in Rome, and that between . . . he visited Spain in the West, and various churches in the Eastern Mediterranean, and that during this period he wrote the Pastoral epistles.”

There also exist in St. Paul's epistles brief autobiographical references which seem to leave little doubt that, after his first appearance before Nero to answer the charges laid against him, he was set at liberty and once more engaged in public labours. There are two very definite statements in the epistle to the Philippians which leave little doubt on this head, coming as they do from one who lived in such close communion with God. In Chap. i. 25-6, we read, “*Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you for your furtherance and joy of faith; that your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me BY MY COMING TO YOU AGAIN.*” In Chap. ii. 24, he returns to the same subject, and says, “But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.” Thus the Apostle seemed, even before the event of his trial was

known, to have the conviction that he would see the faces of his beloved Philippians again. Nor need we try and account for this premonition on any grounds of special inspiration or Apostolic privilege. It is common to all those who walk with God to receive such indications of the Divine will. Does not the experience of God's people throughout all ages attest the truth of this? Are they not often able to thank and praise God that a certain answer to their prayer will be given, before the thing becomes true *de facto*?

These statements in Philippians seem abundantly corroborated by autobiographical notes contained in subsequent epistles. Thus in 1 Tim. iv. 13 we read, "*Till I come, give attendance to reading, &c.*" In 2 Tim. iv. 20, we have the information about Trophimus being left at Miletum sick; which could scarcely have happened before Paul's first imprisonment, for that would make his statement about Trophimus refer to something which had happened years before. For we know from Acts xxviii. 30, that Paul dwelt two whole years in Rome, in his own hired house. In Titus iii. 12, written after being first brought as a prisoner to Rome, we read of Paul's determination to winter in Nicopolis, a reference which seems unaccountable unless he had been released; while further, in his letter to Philemon he says, "Prepare me also a lodging, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you." Why the Acts should close, leaving the Apostle still a prisoner in Rome, and with no reference to his subsequent journeys, we cannot explain, but the bare fact of an omission of this kind is not sufficient of itself to outweigh the Apostle's convictions, coupled with such definite statements of his own and that of others. And we may therefore conclude that the hopes of release he expressed, in writing to the Philippians, were actually realised.

We have already said that St. Paul refers to himself in his epistles in a way which is characteristic of no other inspired New Testament writer. It is this which makes it possible to speak of his autobiography; and we would now direct the readers' attention to one of the most important of these personal references. It is to be found in the Epistle to the Philippians, chap. iii. vers. 4-14. In this passage the Apostle uses the personal pronoun no less than sixteen times. And while in Chap. ii., of the same epistle, he presents Christ as our pattern, in this third chapter he presents himself as a pattern: "Brethren, be followers together of me."

It is worthy of inquiry, in what respect is Paul our pattern as well as Christ, and worthy to be so? We shall see that this autobiographical note can scarcely be matched for its instructiveness and importance.

It need hardly be insisted upon that no rivalry is possible between Christ and Paul. Our Lord has the pre-eminence in all things. Yet the fact remains, that, while in the second chapter we read, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," in the third chapter it is stated, after Paul has given us some autobiography, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded"; and then, "Be followers together of me."

One great difference between Chaps. ii. and iii. is this: the former presents our Lord's pathway downward to the Cross: the latter, the pathway of the Christian upward to the glory. And it will be seen that we could not have a pattern of this last except in the Apostle or some other Christian. And for this reason. The record of Christ's life ends, practically, with His death. We have the fact of the Resurrection historically stated, of course; but little beyond; and all that it really means to be a Christian, as Christianity is presented in Phil. iii., remained to be seen in the lives of those in whom the Holy Ghost came to dwell. Until Christ was in glory as the object of the soul, and as the *goal*, there remained one phase of Christian life which could not be lived. This God has now given us perfectly expressed in the Apostle of the Gentiles. And so, while in chap. ii. we have Christ as our perfect pattern with regard to our life here—we are to look on the things of others and be content to be nothing ourselves; yet this is not the whole of Christianity, for there is something more even than being conformed to Christ's moral likeness, it is the being conformed to Him—even as to our bodies—as He is up there, glorified. And so, to complete our Christian life, we need the truth of both Chaps. ii. and iii., for the latter presents to us the goal—the prize—full conformity to Christ in everything; not merely as He was, but as He is. For He "will change our body of humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto His body of glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (ver. 21).

Let us see how this affected the Apostle. It gave him energy—he pursued one thing. Christ expressed down here the mind we are to have; but Christ glorified expresses the state to which we are to be conformed. It is One in glory; a man worthy to be

placed at God's right hand ; Who is the pattern of our place and portion. This One, Paul had seen. He eclipsed everything. In the passage before us (vers. 4-14) it is not a question of sin, it is *self* that is displaced. It is a question, not of superiority to evil, but of complete indifference to what men covet most. "What things were *gain* to me," he says, "those I counted loss for Christ."

Yet he had more to cause him to trust in the flesh than most. He was circumcised, and thus had an outward position of favour and privilege. His own words, on another occasion, had equal application to himself. "Who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises ; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever" (Rom. ix. 4-5). And in addition to this, he was of the tribe of Benjamin—the tribe that gave Israel its first King ; he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews ; which probably signifies that he was not brought up as a Greek-speaking Jew or Hellenist, but as a Hebrew, and accordingly spoke Aramaic fluently. As he tells us, he was "brought up in this city (Jerusalem) at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the *perfect manner of the law of the fathers.*" Moreover, he belonged to the strictest sect of the Pharisees ; and according to the law, he lived a blameless life. Could anyone produce a better record ? Yet it availed him nothing, for all the time he was ignorant of Christ, and became a persecutor of God's people.

When all was changed, and Christ became everything to him, he saw all that he had before coveted, in a different light. Everything that attracted attention to him, and everything that belonged to him as born after the flesh was only loss. He came to know Christ as his righteousness, and then a righteousness of his own became repugnant to him. He saw that if self were allowed in any form, it only became a rival of Him Who alone was worthy. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord eclipsed everything else. Christ was made to him the righteousness of God.

Then he desired, as well as knowing Christ as his righteousness, to have the personal knowledge of Him. To know Him and the "power of His resurrection." Did not the Apostle mean here, the power of the resurrection—the same power which God had put forth to effect that—working in him now ? As he says, in writing to the Ephesians, "What is the exceeding greatness of His power

to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead"; though here, of course, it is regarded from another point of view. Still, it is the same power; and the Apostle was anxious to realise two things in connection with it; one was, to know its *present* power in his life; the other, what it would effect for him eventually, perfect conformity to Christ in glory, even to the fashioning of his body anew.

These two things, then, filled the Apostle's soul with ardour: to know Christ; and to know the power of His resurrection. The knowledge of Christ is inexhaustible. So that though we know Him, there is ever more to be known.* Paul had found that knowledge so excellent, he had willingly suffered the loss of all things: he had found it so excellent that everything else was as it were mere refuse. And was this only for Paul? Not so. The same knowledge is within our reach. And the same results may be produced in us. It made Paul even desire the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, and to be made conformable unto His death. He did not mind what might be the appointed way to reach the goal—Christ as He is. Already he was tasting the one. He was about to taste the other. But he knew there was to be an *out*-resurrection—where, beyond the reach of man, imprisonment and death could never return to molest him nor sorrow of any kind touch him again; but in a region where Christ, Who already possessed his soul, would be everything and in all, he should be fully and completely like Him. To this he pressed; desiring to apprehend that for which Christ Jesus had laid hold of him. Yes, he realised—and the realisation became increasingly powerful the nearer he approached the end—he realised that when Jesus met him on the Damascus road, it was not merely to arrest his mad career, but for the highest ends. The glorious One Who had revealed Himself was the measure and pattern of his own blessing. No wonder Paul pursued with energy the path that led to it. "I want to reach it," he said, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Is it any wonder St. Paul should close this autobiographical note in this strain: "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded"?

* Think of how Paul presents Him in Chap. ii.; and he knew that same One now as worthy of the highest place in heaven.

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“SURELY I COME QUICKLY.”

By ALFRED H. BURTON.

FEW sober-minded Christians will question that we are living in serious times. Dark days they have been. Infidelity has been flooding the land for some years past, and the ordained ministry both of Church and Dissent have been almost vying with one another for the foremost place in this soul-destroying work.

Christian men have been tampering with this very evil, instead of standing out in bold decision, and in loyalty to Christ their Master, denouncing it, and purging themselves from all association with those who fearlessly proclaim their unbelief from pulpit, platform and press. A falsely called Christian charity has led many to temporize with the heretical teachers of the day, and these have become well-nigh swamped by the rising tide of apostasy.

We are warned by the Word of God that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, and these times are upon us indeed. It is vain to expect a recovery or a remedy. Things will get darker instead of brighter, and “evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Tim. iii. 13).

But the Lord is coming! That bright and blessed hope has been revived in many hearts of late, and the cry is still going forth to wider circles, “BEHOLD THE BRIDEGROOM.”

In Rev. xxii. 17 we three times find the word “Come.” First, “The Spirit and the Bride say, Come.” This is an invitation to the Lord Himself. He had just announced Himself as “the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.” In this we get the two-fold aspect of His coming, as it affects Israel and the earth, and as it affects the Church and the heavenly saints.

The hope of earthly blessing for the Jews and for all the nations is bound up with Christ as the root and offspring of David. Christ is the source from whence all the earthly promises flow; He is

also the One in Whom and by Whom they will all be fulfilled. He is thus the "root" and the "offspring."

But for the Church higher and better things are in store; and to her, the Bride, Christ is presented as "the bright and morning star." Where do we look to see the morning star? Is it not into the heavens? So for the Christian, Christ's coming is a heavenly hope and not an earthly one. Again, when does the morning star appear? Is it not at the very darkest time of the night, and just before the break of day?

Christian reader, the night is dark indeed! Infidelity is sweeping through Christendom; the Word of God is being given up by thousands of professed Christians; worldliness and godlessness are spreading, but the Lord is at hand. "Surely I come quickly" is His promise.

The Bridegroom is at hand. Does not the bride long for His return? Listen: "The Spirit and the bride say, come." These words have often been wrongly applied by earnest preachers of the Gospel, as though they contained an appeal to the sinner to come to Jesus. But no, it is the language of the Church. It is the desire awakened in the heart of the Bride by the announcement of Jesus Himself, "I come quickly." The ready response from her heart is—Come! In this first "Come" we find the true and proper language of the Church as a whole

But there are many individual Christians, who form a part of that spiritual Bride, who have never had their attention called to the blessed hope. They have been looking upon death as a certainty. To these the second "Come" refers—"Let him that heareth say, Come." This second "Come" is likewise addressed to Christ. It may be that for the first time since some of our readers were brought to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, they are now reading about His coming again. For the first time do they, perhaps, hear that the coming of the Lord and not death is the proper hope of the Church. Instead of turning away and saying, "These are strange and peculiar views," acknowledge with grateful and overflowing heart that it is the truth of God; join in the Church's cry. The Bride, led by the Spirit of God, cries to her absent but returning Lord, Come! Well then, you, too, take up the same cry—"Let him that heareth say, come."

But now we reach the third "Come." This time it is addressed to the sinner. Oh, thirsty souls, ye who are finding out that the world with all its empty pleasures, its fleeting joys, its passing vanities, does not and cannot satisfy you; ye who have drunk at the religious fountains of the world as well as at its sinful fountains; ye who have sought in vain from the forms of religion, from its rites and ceremonies, for that peace of conscience, that rest of heart, that assurance of salvation, that certainty of heaven with the present joy of the hope of the glory of God, all which blessings can only be had through living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and personal acquaintance with that once crucified but now risen and glorified Saviour—come to Him! "Let him that is athirst come." The invitation goes world-wide; it extends to all, rich and poor, high and low, learned and ignorant; none are excluded—"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

And is not this last gospel appeal going forth to-day? Side by side with the revival of the hope of Christ's return, a special gospel activity may be seen reaching to all the dark corners of Christendom and the heathen world. Gospel missions in theatres, public halls, and in various ecclesiastical buildings, constantly held in the towns and cities; tent missions, open-air missions, &c., in villages and country places. These are some of the signs of the times that are multiplying around us, reminding us that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

The gospel in its clearness is familiar to us all. What are we doing with it? To whom are we carrying it? What sacrifices of time, money, or comfort do we make to spread it in the localities where we reside, or in the districts beyond? The Lord is coming! "Surely I come quickly" He testifies, and adds His sure "Amen." Do we want to meet Him with joy? Do we desire in truth to say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus?" Then let us not be found sleeping, but watching; and not only watching, but working for Him, Who is worthy of all we have and are! The Lord Jesus Christ, our divine Master, has work for us each to do, and He wants to use us. Let us each be ready and prepared.

Oh, use me, Lord, use even me,
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where;
Until Thy blessed face I see,
Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share.

PROSPERITY AND ADVERSITY.

ARE MORE PEOPLE LED TO GOD BY PROSPERITY OR ADVERSITY?

IN answer to the above question, we should say, without hesitation, by adversity. We think this conclusion is backed up by the testimony of our own experience and also by the teaching of Scripture. There is something about prosperity which tends to make the individual who has been the subject of it independent and self-satisfied—though (paradox as it may seem) often at heart discontented. We have lately come across a remarkable instance of this in the life of a celebrated American author, which has recently been published.

He began life without much means and his struggle at first was keen. But when he took to writing, prosperity flowed in upon him. As someone said, "Fortune not only smiled, but laughed." His books and lectures brought in a very large income. He was successful in other ways. He was made much of, courted, lionised, and the incense of praise and popularity awaited him wherever he went. In addition to this, he married well. His wife was rich, not only in material wealth, but in good qualities. Yet, in spite of all this, what was the result? One who met him in the height of his popularity says of him: "But never, either then or on other occasions, did I hear him speak as one in a contented or genial mood. Notwithstanding the praises and the entertainment that were lavished upon him, he remained restless, feverish and bitter." Again, "He was continually denouncing Christianity in all its forms. When his literary work was done, he spent such time as he did not give to billiards in writing tirades against religion." Yet this same writer tells us "he was fortunate in no ordinary degree. Money poured in upon him; thick, stupefying incense smoke entered his nostrils. He had the love of one of the best of wives. He was unusually rich in helpful and patient friends, and yet he never seemed for a single moment grateful for the fullness he received. When first he was married, his wife induced him to establish family prayers, but he soon told her he did not believe in the Bible, and ultimately her faith gave way." As he lived, so he died, apparently without faith, and consequently without hope. His last words were, "If we meet——"

On the other hand, how many could testify to the truth of the Psalmist's words, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept Thy word." Adversity brought the prodigal back (Luke xv.). The elder son never seems to have been really near to his father, though always at home. In the end, he was outside, and his brother inside. Christ said to the Pharisees, "The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." Many have never thought of God until their sin and misery made them think.

There are cases, no doubt, where adversity hardens people. But as a general rule, it would seem that where adversity slays its thousands, prosperity slays its ten thousands. Better to lose all in this world than all in the next. The worst is to lose all in both. The best, to be a possessor of the godliness which has "the promise of the life which now is and also of that which is to come."

THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT.*

II.

(Concluded).

By R. E.

WHO would have thought that a man of such intellectual powers and iron purpose as the Apostle of the Gentiles needed comfort? Ah, even he could be cast down. Therefore do not be surprised if you are the same. Remember that the God of all comfort, "comforteth those that are cast down." A well-known Professor once said, not long before he died, to one of his dearest friends, "What people need most is comfort." Yes, if we could look into people's hearts, and get beneath the external indifference they often assume, that is what we should find. All their intellectual greatness and culture; all their wealth and influence; all their philosophy and activity are not enough; and the reason is that most people have *feelings*, and this world is a very trying world on that account. There are a few people who seem to have no feelings, and they neither want comfort nor can they give it; but the most

* To be had in separate form (complete) from the Author, 34, Cliff Road, Leeds. Price 2d., or 1/3 per doz. Post free.

of us have feelings, and there is much that happens in this rough and tumble world to lacerate them. Is not God, then, the very One we need?—the “God of *all comfort*.”

Someone who knew God in this character and what it was to trust Him, once said: “During the last two years, though I have said little about them, I have had many a crevasse open up before me. The ice has seemed to split asunder, and I have looked down into the blue depths. . . . It is a glorious thing to have a big trouble, a great Atlantic billow, that takes you off your feet and sweeps you right out to sea, and lets you sink down into the depths, into old ocean’s lowest caverns, till you get to the foundation of the mountains, and there see God; and then come up again to tell what a great God He is, and how graciously He delivers His people.”

Let us then carry all our cares to Him and bring away the comfort. Is there a tired, harassed, disappointed soul reading these lines? Turn to the God of all comfort. Just *let* Him do His blessed work. Just let the sense of His presence steal into your soul—a calm, still, mellowed light of unutterable peace. Listen for His voice, He can breathe words of comfort such as no mother ever spoke. Be on the look out for some unexpected mercy. The God Who gave Christ for your sins, Who allowed His own and only Son to suffer in your stead, is He Who can give you all the comfort you need just at this present moment. Bring every cause of *dis-*comfort and trial to Him.

“The little sharp vexations,
And the briers that catch and fret—
Why not take them to the Helper
Who never failed us yet?
Tell Him about the heartache,
And tell Him the longing, too;
Tell Him the baffled purpose,
When we scarce know what to do;
Then, leaving all our weakness,
With the One divinely strong,
Forget that we bore the burden,
And carry away the song.”

Yes, God knows all our trials: and more, He knows just how they affect us. *He knows our feelings*. He Who guides the eagle in its flight and makes a way for the lightning; He Who marks the sparrow’s fall and numbers the hairs of our heads, knows everything we feel, and how we feel it, and is able to comfort us. He knows likewise how to correct our feelings, for we often feel wrongly about things, and He uses all for our discipline and highest good.

Often we have to challenge ourselves as to this. To ask ourselves, Am I feeling rightly about all this that has been allowed to happen? Do my feelings arise simply from pride or mortification, because my will has been crossed or my hopes disappointed? As someone has finely said, "*What disturbs us in this world is not trouble, but our opposition to trouble. The true source of all that frets and irritates and wears away our lives is not in the external things but in the resistance of our wills to the will of God expressed by external things.*" Oh that we could be more like the one of whom it was said, "He sold a bit of tea, and staggered along the road on the hot June days afflicted with a serious malady, and prayed as if he had a fortune of £10,000 a year, and were the best-off man in the world."

THREE KINDS OF SORROW.

Just as there are three kinds of comfort so there are three special sorts of trial. 1. There is that which is known only to yourself and to God. 2. There is the trial you are able to *tell* to others. 3. There is the kind which everybody can see.

We find all three mentioned in Exodus iii. ver. 7, where God refers to the sufferings of His people in the land of Egypt. "*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, and I am come down to deliver them.*"

Which particular form of trial is yours at the present moment? Is it one which everybody can see? Is it some serious illness? Has death come to your household, and are the blinds drawn? Or is it some commercial disaster? Well, remember this, *God* sees it. "He that formed the eye, shall He not see?" "I have surely *seen* the affliction of My people." And is He not the same as ever? Will He not do for you what He did for His people long ago? "I am come down to deliver them." As surely as Christ of old touched the hand of Peter's wife's mother and the fever left her; as certainly as He brought comfort to the bereaved home at Bethany; as effectually as He fed the hungry multitude by multiplying the loaves and fishes, so surely can He comfort you, and, if deliverance is necessary, in due time deliver you; if you trust Him.

2. There are trials which are not so patent to everybody, but we can speak of them, at all events to a select few, if to no more. What a comfort to be able to speak to God about it. To think He will listen; and be the most attentive and sympathetic listener of

all. We can surely do that which the children of Israel did in Egypt. "They cried, and their cry came up unto God." And in due time we hear God saying to Moses, "*I have heard their cry.*" God was planning their deliverance long before they knew it. If they had only known what God was saying to Moses, would they not have been comforted? But we do know it. Shall we not say to ourselves, then, "God has already given attention to my cry; some word of command has already gone forth; He is raising up a deliverer. Some special mercy; some hand stretched out to deliver; or some word is to be spoken which will tune our hearts to sing His praise."

3. But there is the third trial. That which no one sees, no one knows, and you cannot talk about; or if to some extent it can be seen and known, no one can know all that you feel about it. Is there anything to meet this? The dull aching pain at the heart; the sorrow that has gone right down deep into the very soul with a weight like lead, which nobody seems able to touch, is there any alleviation for this? Yes. There is balm in Gilead. There is a physician there. The God of all comfort says, "*I know their sorrows.*" He not only sees, He not only hears, He *knows*. How often you have sighed, when no one was near, with a sigh too deep for words. God heard, God knew even what you yourself could not express. "And the children of Israel *sighed* by reason of their bondage." And what was the Divine answer? "I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."

Thus we see there is not a single trial or sorrow or discouragement which does not come within the scope of God's comfort. It is remarkable how many shades of meaning this word "comfort" contains within itself. The Hebrew and Greek words, with their roots, involve the ideas of *sympathy, strengthening, refreshment, to encourage or make bold, to be near, to solace, to put in good spirits, to stand by your side and speak to you*. When God is declared to be the God of all comfort, think how much it means. He enters into all your feelings, for He sighs with you; when prostrate with grief, He strengthens you; if weary with constant anxiety, He refreshes you; if you are timid, He makes you bold; if friends forsake, He nears Himself to you; if depressed and downcast, He can solace you in your dreariness and put you in good spirits; above all, if friends forsake and enemies multiply, He will stand by

your side and speak to you. The word comfort includes all this. There was one, a man of like passions with ourselves, who passed through every phase of anxiety and trial, and never found this comfort fail him. He never found himself in a situation or in an extremity where this comfort could not reach him. Hear what he says: "The God of *all* comfort; Who comforteth us in *all* our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in *any* trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." And having known what it was to be comforted of God he is able to say: "*We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.*"

TO BE ABLE TO COMFORT OTHERS.

Some words just quoted indicate another aspect of the subject of the utmost importance. "*That we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble.*" Let us never forget it: God comforts us that we may comfort others. The comfort of God reaches us oftentimes through human channels. The whole comfort of the Bible reaches us, in one sense, by that means. And those inspired penmen, such as David, and Isaiah, and Paul had to pass through the greatest stress and privation in order that God's comfort might flow through them to others. Job, in his distress, found little solace from his three friends, and he at last exclaimed, "Miserable comforters are ye all." It was because they had never passed through the mill themselves, and they knew not how to comfort. If we know, let us not hold it back. Often and often we should find our own sorrows grow less, if we would seek to pour the wine of consolation into the troubled heart of another.

It was the blind and broken hearted George Matheson who wrote that hymn "O love that wilt not let me go." In early manhood, when full of promise, God took away His sight, and at the same time he lost an earthly love, which perhaps affected him still more. And so he wrote, "O love that *wilt not* let me go." That hymn has comforted thousands. We mention one remarkable incident in connection with it, and then close. It happened at an English service on the continent where people had met from all quarters, either on holiday or for other reasons. We give the account in almost the identical words of an eyewitness. After speaking of the uneventful character of the first part of the service,

the narrator thus proceeds. "While the minister was reading the first verse (of the above hymn—a gentleman in the audience had specially asked for it), I noticed a man of perhaps fifty change seats with the organist. We stood and sang:—

' O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give Thee back the life I owe,
That in Thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be!'

"Was the change in me or in my environment? I cannot tell. The lost chord seemed to have been found. . . . The organist seemed in the third heaven. He sang and played and carried us on irresistibly. . . . We reached the second verse:—

' O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to Thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in Thy sunshine's blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be!'

"I could not fail to notice the deep emotion of a lady close by, for she stood in the next pew in front. She had ceased to sing, her trembling was manifest. The music was like the sound of many waters. . . . The third verse was reached:—

' O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain,
That morn shall tearless be.'

"With a strange suddenness the lady in front fell on her knees . . . and the husband bowed in prayer at his wife's side. The sight was beautiful, and there were many wet eyes near where I stood. But what of the organist? Down his furrowed face tears made their way. Bending over the keys, he poured out his very soul. Of time and space he seemed ignorant. . . .

"When we reached the last verse, I, for one, wished blind Matheson had provided us with more. And yet we might not have been able to bear it.

' O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from Thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.'

". . . . When the congregation rose to disperse, several went forward to thank the organist. In the group were several Americans, and one said to him, his face still bathed in tear marks,

'We knew your wife.' The answer was a quiet smile, followed by a quick retirement. . . . Two years before, his wife lay a-dying. . . . She had asked him to sing to her, as she entered the valley of the shadow of death, 'O love that wilt not let me go.' He did so, but had not ventured to sing it again until that memorable morning. Ah, that was a sufficient explanation. Sorrow had wrought the power."

Yes, we can only comfort others with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

"BEGINNINGS."

VIII. THE FIRST PRIEST.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

THERE was no formal institution of priesthood until the time of Moses. For until that time there was no "people" in relationship with God. Believing individuals there were from the beginning, but in Israel was first established the principle of a "people" in special relationship with Jehovah. Priesthood, when set up in Aaron and his family, was designed for the help and sustainment of a people so wondrously placed. Every detail connected with Aaron's exalted office was typical of Christ and His present gracious ministry on behalf of His saints.

But long before Aaron's day, while his father Levi "was yet in the loins" of Abram (Heb. vii. 10), we have Melchizedek brought before us in Scripture as "priest of the Most High God" (Gen. xiv. 18). Christ is typified in Melchizedek as surely as in Aaron. But the differences between the two ministries are very marked. Aaron's was a service of sacrifice and intercession. With blood and incense he had to do. But we read of no sacrifice offered by Melchizedek, nor of incense burnt upon the altar of God. His was essentially a ministry of blessing. On God's part he blessed Abram, and on Abram's part he blessed the Most High.

Who was Melchizedek? Men's speculations have been various. An angel, the patriarch Shem, and even the Son of God Himself have been suggested. Such speculations are as unprofitable as they are foolish. The omission of his pedigree was divinely planned

in order that he might stand upon the page of Scripture as the more emphatic type of Him who indeed has "neither beginning of days nor end of life." But Melchizedek personally was a man as any other.

In Gen. xiv. we have a remarkable picture of what will happen at the end of the present age. The Christ of God—King and Priest in one person—will shew Himself from heaven with blessing in His hands for Israel and the earth. He will establish the divine supremacy ("the Most High God"), and will insist upon the divine claim to everything ("Possessor of heaven and earth")—verities so long disputed. Righteousness and peace will characterise His sway (Psa. lxxii. ; Isa. xxxii.). Melchizedek means "King of Righteousness," and Salem means "Peace" (Heb. vii. 2).

But the scene in Gen. xiv. has also its application for to-day. Christians already enjoy by faith what Israel and the earth must wait for until Christ appears.

We have two kings coming forward to meet Abram as he returned from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and his allies. They were Bera, King of Sodom, and Melchizedek, King of Salem. In the wisdom of God, Melchizedek was suffered to act first. He "brought forth bread and wine." What are these but the memorials of Christ slain? What so strengthening to the man of faith as to be vividly reminded of Calvary's mighty work? Too often, however, we think of Christ's death merely as that which has brought us salvation from coming wrath, and fail to understand that it has put us completely outside of all things here. The joy and gladness which the living Priest on high would minister to our souls is incapable of being comprehended by us if our hearts are suffered to cling to this death-doomed scene. The whole object of the present ministry of Christ (the Holy Spirit co-operating) is to lead us in spirit even now into that other world of which He is the light and the glory.

"Blessed be Abram." Hear the King-Priest. Put your own name into the passage, beloved Christian reader. "Blessed be ——" Who and what is the God from whom all blessings flow? He is "the Most High God, Possessor of heaven and earth." He is thus higher than the highest, and richer than the richest. And this is my God! One's heart feels satisfied, elevated, energised at the thought of it

Then on Abram's part Melchizedek blessed God for the victory which had been granted. "Blessed be the Most High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand." Let us pause and ask ourselves a question here. Is the Lord on high able to give thanks for victories we have gained? Does victory or defeat characterise our lives? Are we like Abram, overcomers of the world, or are we like Lot, overcome by the world? Let each heart return its answer.

Now mark the effect upon Abram. He is thoroughly in the Spirit of that to which he had listened. When the King of Sodom presently offered to him to keep the captured spoil for himself, he replied, "I have lift up mine hand to the Most High God, the Possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich." Has he merely caught up Melchizedek's phraseology in speaking thus of God? How easy it is to acquire mere forms of speech—words and expressions of which we know neither the meaning nor the power! How far are we prepared to be held responsible for the language of even the hymns we sing?

Abram *acted*. How is it with us? The recovered spoil of five cities was doubtless a goodly pile, but the man of faith surveyed it all with supreme contempt. He had seen Melchizedek first. Else he might have said, "What harm?" Paul in Phil. iii. calls all his religious gains rubbish; what then would he have called the world's follies? We read of one that "he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat" (Luke xv. 16). Are we even in the smallest degree like that man?

How often believers say concerning this thing and that: "I really cannot see the harm in it!" They probably speak truly. But how is it they cannot see? Perhaps the Lord's word in Rev. iii. 18 will explain: "Anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest see." A neglected Bible will account for the lack of spiritual perception on the part of the many. The eye that sees Christ on high in the power of the Spirit of God, the ears that hear His heavenly ministry as the true Melchizedek is proof against all the wiles of the flesh and of the devil. The moral victory gained by Abram in the neighbourhood of Sodom was greater far in the divine account than the physical victory gained in the neighbourhood of Dan. Satan is more to be feared when he comes smiling than when he comes scowling.

THE BIBLE OF CHRIST.

THE OLD TESTAMENT ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.

By WILLIAM LUFF.

JESUS had a book which He called "The Scriptures," and which He constantly quoted as having final authority. "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner : this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes " (Matt. xxi. 42). "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures " (xxii. 29). Two verses further on He declares these were the divine voice. "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you BY GOD, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob ? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living " (vers. 31-32).

The New Testament is not grafted on to a dead root : the Old Testament stock is as divine as the Gospel Fruit which afterwards sprang from it. Christ and the Old Testament are one. Keeping only to the Gospel of Matthew, we shall seek to learn in what estimation Christ held the Scriptures as they then existed.

His genealogy embraces the whole of Old Testament history, and contains the leading characters therein named.

Christ was born according to an Old Testament prophecy. "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name, Emmanuel, which, being interpreted is, God with us " (i. 22-23). Not only was the person, so honoured, revealed, but the place : "In Bethlehem of Judæa : for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda : for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel " (ii. 5-6). His removal for a time into Egypt was also named, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son " (ii. 15).

The murder of the children was not omitted, " Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not " (ii. 18).

The removal back again was likewise predicted, " And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth : that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene " (ii. 23).

A later removal was also the subject of definite prophecy, " And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephtholim : that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephtholim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles " (iv. 13, 14, 15).

The Lord quoted the Old Testament to Satan three times, saying, " It is written " (iv. 4, 7, 10).

His first sermon vindicated the Old Testament, " Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets : I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven : but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven " (vers. 17, 18, 19). Having thus vindicated the letter of the law, Christ enlarged upon the spirit, which few had grasped (vers. 22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44).

Christ defended His parabolical teaching from the Old Testament, " And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand ; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive." " That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables ; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world " (xiii. 14, 35).

Christ wrought miracles with an eye to the Old Testament, " That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses " (viii. 17).

Christ avoided publicity for the same purpose, " And charged them that they should not make Him known : That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen ; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased : I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry ; neither shall any man hear his voice in the street " (xii. 16-19).

He silenced enemies by quoting the Old Testament, " Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips ; but their heart is far from me " (xv. 7-8).

He entered Jerusalem according to Old Testament programme, " All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass " (xxi. 4-5).

He quoted it to the sellers in the temple, " It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer ; but ye have made it a den of thieves " (xxi. 13). And to those who murmured at the song of the children, " And Jesus saith unto them, Yea ; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise " (xx. 16).

He kept the passover according to the Old Testament institution (xxvi. 18).

The death of Christ was according to the Scriptures, " But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be ? " . . . " But all this was done, that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook Him, and fled " (xxvi. 54 and 56). " And they crucified Him, and parted His garments, casting lots : that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots " (xxvii. 35).

Even the betrayal was upon Old Testament lines, " Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value " (xxvii. 9).

Thus from one end of the Lord's life to the other, it was according to the law and the prophets. Was not this why Moses and Elias appeared talking " with Him " at the transfiguration ? (xvii. 3).

II.

Still keeping to the Gospel by Matthew, we find Jesus more than once quoting the commandments. 1. To the man who said " Good Master " (xix. 16). " He said unto him, Why callest thou Me good ? there is none good but one, that is God : but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto Him, Which ? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother : and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto Him, All these things have I kept from my youth up : What lack I yet ? " 2. To the lawyer. " Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting Him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law ? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets " (xxii. 35-40). These Jesus speaks of as " The commandments of God." " For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother, etc." (xv. 4). Christ even went so far as to ascribe these divine laws to their human writer, Moses. " Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat : All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do ; but do not ye after their works : for they say, and do not " (xxiii. 2-3). Also to the cleansed leper, " And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man ; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them " (viii. 4).

Christ also quotes the Psalms and fixes one at least upon David. He was, " the Son of David " (ix. 27, xii. 23, xv. 22, xx. 30) and as such " He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool ? "

Nor did Christ omit from His authorized Bible the prophets, for in xi. 13 He speaks of " all the prophets."

More than this we find in Christ's teaching most of the leading persons and incidents are referred to, so that He taught Pentateuch, Psalms and Prophets, and all between.

Going back as far as Gen. ii. 24, our Lord sets His seal to the marriage institution. " And he answered and said unto them, Have

ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife : and they twain shall be one flesh " (xix. 4-5).

He also refers to the murders of Abel and the faithful martyrs following, " That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar " (xxiii. 35).

Noah and the disputed flood were also mentioned by the Saviour, " But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away ; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be " (xxiv. 37-39).

The next great judgment was by fire, and the Lord mentions it. " And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell : for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee " (xi. 23-24).

Abraham and his seed were real persons in Christ's Bible, " And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven " (viii. 11).

Nor are the twelve tribes of Israel left out, " And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel " (xix. 28).

An incident in the life of David introduces us to the tabernacle, the priests, and the sabbath, " But He said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him ; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests ? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless " (xii. 3-5).

“Solomon in all his glory,” passes before us as Christ bids us, “Consider the lilies” (vi. 29) : and the queen of Sheba is not forgotten, “The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it : for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon ; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here ” (xii. 42).

Not only does Christ introduce us to Daniel, but to a special prophecy, “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand) : Then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains ” (xxiv. 15).

Tyre and Sidon are also marked upon the map of Christ’s Bible, “Woe unto thee, Chorazin ! woe unto thee, Bethsaida ! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes ” (xi. 21).

Even Nineveh is marked, “The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it : because they repented at the preaching of Jonas ; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here ” (xii. 41). As for poor despised Jonah and the fish, our blessed Lord uses this very incident to illustrate the foundation truth of the whole Gospel, “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly ; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth ” (xii. 40).

As if to shew us that Jesus had the Bible just as we have it, He quotes from another minor prophet, Zec. xiii. 7 : “Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of Me this night : for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad ” (xxvi. 31). And as if to finally link the Old and New Testament, He quotes Mal. iii. 1, referring to John the Baptist, “For this is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee ” (xi. 10).

Thus we find, only in one Gospel of the four, an epitome of the whole Scriptures of the Old Testament. Divinely measured, cut, and put together, they are like a glove, into which Jesus put His hand, giving life and power to every part, so fulfilling or filling them full.

The law and prophets without Christ are in a sense lifeless : they are like the Shunammite's son. Christ the true Elisha lays Himself upon the Old Testament, His mouth upon its mouth, His eyes upon its eyes, His hands upon its hands, touching it in every part : and lo, it begins to breathe and live, and we take it up as a new thing, speaking to us, our comfort and our joy.

Blessed old Bible ! the very words Jesus read in the synagogue, stored in His memory, quoted, fulfilled, and then passed on. The Bible of Jesus, the old Bible as He left it, is my Bible.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND ON PERSONAL AND PRIVATE COMMUNION WITH GOD.

By the late Dr. E. B. BROOKS.

IN reply to your enquiries, I may say, that ever since I was brought to the Lord, which is more than fifty years ago, I have always been impressed with the value and importance of prayer ; secret, and as far as could be, continued prayer, that is, lengthened seasons of prayer. In my early christian days I used to find opportunities for this, and those times were most enjoyable and helpful, and I am thankful to say that it is the same still, although I don't feel able to give the same length of time to it. In those early days secret prayer was a most delightful exercise, and I am sure I owe much, very much, to the habit of prayer then acquired. As the duties and responsibilities of life increased, of course, time could not be found for long seasons of prayer, but all through my christian life I have felt unhappy and condemned if I neglected prayer, and more than that, I felt the serious loss and injury to my own spiritual welfare and happiness. I thank God, that now I have more quiet time, I try, but brokenly, to keep up this excellent habit. I used to rise early for prayer, but that is now too much for my physical powers. Now I find the quiet of evening the most favourable time. I go into a quiet room, often in the dark, and sit down for a time endeavouring to realise the Lord's presence. I speak to the Lord and ask Him to let me find Him speaking with me. I use short, broken petitions, and, if I may so say, I find myself quietly and reverently talking with Him. After a time, I kneel down and pray more definitely and specifically, not only for myself but for

all who are laid on my heart, *e.g.*, relatives, friends, saints, mentioning them by name, servants of the Lord, &c., &c. I recognise that persons are differently constituted in many ways, physically and mentally, and we do not all, and cannot all, act alike, but, for myself, I must say that spiritual declension inevitably results from the neglect of private prayer and secret communion with God.

I attach the greatest importance to what I used as a boy to hear my dear father speak of as "ejaculatory" prayer, and I could not live without it. But it will not act as a perfect substitute—for me at least—for set times of prayer. When I was young, I used to read a good deal of the biography of godly men, such as Baxter, Doddridge, Howe, &c., and those were men of prayer; and I also read their books, *e.g.*, Baxter's "Saints' Rest." That was one of the first books I read, and I read it with intense interest. I owe more than I can say to that book, and thank God He ever led me to read it. The impressions then made will never be effaced.

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY :

SINNER, SAINT AND SERVANT.

The SAINT.

By R. E.

"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."
 "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 11, 13),

THE Epistle to the Philippians is a very remarkable one. Even externally it is so. It is divided into four chapters; each chapter presents a distinct aspect of truth; while altogether we have a four-sided and complete presentation of Christian life and experience viewed in its most practical character. As to its subject matter, it may be said to be, Christ in Christian experience. First of all, in Chapter I., we have the gospel mentioned over and over again, for it is that message which brings Christ to the soul. Christ Himself is, indeed, the message. He then becomes the object of the life He imparts. "For me to live is Christ," says the Apostle. But we need a pattern; and in Chapter ii. Christ is that Pattern. But we also need to have the goal before us; and in Chapter iii. we have full conformity to Christ in glory as the end—the finish—the climax. But do I not need something for my everyday life?

Can I not have Christ with me in my present circumstances? Yes. This, Chapter iv. gives me. As to all the difficulties and dangers that confront me, Christ is Lord. Knowing what that means—the power and help of One in supreme authority—I can rejoice, and be careful for nothing.

Thus these four chapters give us Christ as the sum and substance of the gospel message: Christ down here, as our Pattern; Christ up there, as our goal; and Christ *for* us and *in* us, as our strength all along the road. While, running through them all, we have glimpses of the Apostle himself—not only as the writer, but as the exponent of the truth he writes. This feature is just as prominent in the last chapter as we have already seen it to be in the others.

This is how he speaks: "*I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*" Another version may help us to grasp more fully the grandeur and significance of these utterances. "I have learned, whatever be my outward experiences, to be content. I know both how to live in humble circumstances and how to live amid abundance: I am fully initiated into all the mysteries both of fulness and of hunger, of abundance and of want. I have strength for anything through the help of Him Who gives me power."

Such was Paul: such is a Christian. A Christian is one (regarding Christianity from its practical and experimental side) who realises the meaning of the words, "I have strength for all things in Him that gives me power." We may feel this to be very high. To some it may be an unknown experience. Is it not of value to know that it was the normal experience of one who, in everything else, was the same as ourselves? How valuable are these personal references. We search the writings of the Evangelists and of St. John and St. Peter in vain for anything of the kind. In St. Paul we are permitted to see Christianity in action: we see what Christ actually made of His arch-enemy—one, who, as he looked back upon his past, thought of himself as worthless—we see one who considered Christ worthy of his entire devotion, and who

laid all his powers and all his love at His feet. It is a sight of this, that these autobiographical notes give us.

St. Paul never thought that Christ was only for him, or more for him than for others. He only tells us, and we know it was true, what his Saviour and Lord had done and was doing in his own life. Others were experiencing the same power in his day and have done since, if not altogether in the same measure. St. Paul, great as he undoubtedly was naturally, would have been nothing but for the grace of the One Who had entered his heart and life. That same One is for each believer. Nor need we think that this lofty experience—this superiority to circumstances—came to the Apostle all at once. He himself tells us he had learned it and become initiated into the secret.

The excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord had put every thing else into the shade. It was not stoicism. It was not trying to consider one thing as good as another. *It was the finding one thing so excellent that the others did not count.* Had the end the Apostle describes been reached by hard drilling, by energy of will, merely, and by a course of long self-abnegation, we might be inclined to give up the pursuit. All these may have been to some extent contributaries to the grand and full result, but there was one thing that made all these others possible and easy—the attractiveness, the power, the sufficiency of Christ.

Two main features characterise the Apostle's statement. He was content: and he received power. The idea contained within the word "content" is, an island containing within itself everything that is necessary. In other words, the Apostle had that within himself which made him satisfied. In this respect it may be helpful to contrast St. Paul with Solomon. The wise king undertook to test everything under the sun; to find out what there was in folly as well as in wisdom and in work of every kind; and in Chap. ii. of Ecclesiastes we have a detailed record of his undertakings, his achievements and possessions, and across them all he writes, "Behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." And why was this? There was nothing in the outside world that could give Solomon satisfaction. When Christ came, He promised that whosoever drank of the water which He gave should never thirst. Why? Because it should be "*in*

him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." It was this satisfying source in him that St. Paul had, and which Solomon had not, which made all the difference between the two men; and which, we may add, made all the difference between their writings—between Ecclesiastes and Philippians. God coming down in the Person of Christ and becoming man, and exhibiting what the life of man should be; and Christ as man gone up into the glory of God: made the one into a paean; while the other is but a dirge. From Solomon there comes to us only a wail: from Paul, we "catch from his joyance the surprise of joy." What made the difference was the revelation of Jesus Christ.

And this Christ Who so satisfied St. Paul that outward circumstances made little difference to him, also gave him power. He had strength for all things in Him. Whether it was in active service or in suffering, that strength proved sufficient. In all this how we learn the true life of a saint. He is independent of all that which men covet most, and rendered superior to all vicissitudes. And the power which enabled St. Paul to live this life is at our disposal too.

Notwithstanding the Apostle's superiority to circumstances he gracefully acknowledges the gift received from the Philippians, not only because their care for him was grateful, but because it was fruit which would abound to their account. And not only so, but such ministry was fragrant to Him Who was the Source of all—"an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God." "But my God," he adds, "shall supply all your need." Is not a peculiar emphasis intended to be placed upon the "my"? As though Paul had learned to know God and proved Him in a special way. It was God, after all, Who had supplied His servant's need, and He would supply all theirs; and all according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. To what an elevation does this raise all the gifts of the saints. For sovereigns do not drop from the skies, they come through human channels. Yet it is God Who supplies, "according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus;" and all returns to Him again as "an odour of a sweet smell." In chap. i. it speaks of "the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God," and here at the close of the epistle we see what those fruits of righteousness are. Oh the dignity of the Christian life! If it is a question of a saint's need, the

supply is from God by Christ Jesus ; if it is a saint's life, it is for the glory and praise of God—something ascending to Him—“ the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ.”

There are just a few personal touches in some of the last epistles he ever wrote which throw further light upon St. Paul as a saint. He tells us in his first epistle to Timothy (chap. i. 14), “ The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” A saint is one who proves that the grace of his Lord is exceeding abundant. This was St. Paul's experience. And the practical effect was “ faith and love.” We learn from this it is through grace that the characteristics of Christ mark us. Faith and love are said to be “ in Christ Jesus.” They were the features of His life ; they ought to be the features of ours. And so we find the Apostle, in writing to the saints, repeatedly refer to their *faith* in Christ Jesus and *love* to all the saints. It is grace, known and enjoyed in the soul, which produces this.

Another characteristic of this saint was his trust in God. “ We trust in the Living God,” he says, “ Who is the Saviour (Preserver) of all men, specially of those that believe.” This trust in God as the Living God is a fundamental belief which lies at the back of everything. It is of the essence of godliness. Psalm xvi., which presents to us the godly man, begins with, “ Preserve me, O God, for in Thee do I put my trust.” There are times when we are forced back into this citadel of our faith. We seem surrounded by the enemy and attacked on every hand. It seems as if Satan would overwhelm us. Then the soul retires into its place of strength—the belief that God is ; and from that high tower it looks forth and sees God everywhere, and realises that He is the Living God, “ the Preserver of all men, *specially of those that believe.*” It was this that gave Paul strength to labour and to suffer reproach. And if ever we need to put our trust in God it is when our labours for the Church and for God bring upon us reproach. Strange that it should be so ; yet it is as true as it is strange ; St. Paul's chief reproach came from those he loved best and sought to serve most. Then it is the soul needs to gather itself up in God and say, “ The Lord is my light and my salvation ; whom shall I fear ? the Lord is the strength of my life ; of whom shall I be afraid ? For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion ; in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me ; He shall set me up upon a rock.”

It is this godliness—this trust in God—which has, St. Paul tells us, “promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” And he adds, “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.” It is interesting and instructive to connect this with the other faithful saying, mentioned earlier in the same epistle, “*That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*” How much is covered by these two faithful sayings: the one for the sinner, and the other for the saint. Though sinners, Christ will save us; yes, though the chief. But He saves us that our lives may be completely changed by putting our trust in God and seeking His guidance and help in all the details of practical, every-day life. Thus it had been in the life of St. Paul. In his arduous and varied career he had learned, not only that Christ came to save sinners, but that God “preserveth the feet of His saints.”

This subject of Trust is not exhausted. In St. Paul's second epistle to Timothy (chap. i. 12), we find him saying, “I know Whom I have believed (trusted), and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.” Here this trust connects itself with the future. In another place, the Apostle tells us he had “suffered the loss of all things.” Doubtless he committed everything to God “against that day.” There is in the future a definite day of rewards, when we shall more than get back anything we have sacrificed here for Christ. So that both as to the present and the future we see St. Paul's trust was in the Living God. And in all this, is he not a pattern for us? What a *saint* he was! At the close, and with the goal almost in sight, he is able to say, “Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured; but out of them all the Lord delivered me.” “And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom; to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen” (2 Tim. iii. 10-11, iv. 18).

And here we part with St. Paul as the Saint, and pass on to consider him as a Servant. It may be said, the life of St. Paul is little short of a miracle. To believe that the way in which he is presented to us is merely fictitious is to suppose an even greater miracle. Who could paint such a picture merely from imagination? The reality must have existed. And if it did, then St. Paul himself

becomes a convincing argument as to the truth and power of Christianity. Is this one reason why the Apostle to the Gentiles deals so much in autobiography and draws so much attention to himself? The marvel is that we never feel that he obtrudes himself upon us. Guided by the Spirit of truth, and under its all-pervading influence, it seems as natural as possible for him to make these personal allusions. *He tells us of his sufferings*—how he was pressed out of measure above strength so that he despaired even of life; of the thorn in the flesh which was like the agony of impalement; and how he realised it was all for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in his mortal flesh; and he gloried in his infirmities that the power of Christ might rest upon him. *He tells us of his revelations*—how he was caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words. We are made to see *how he was opposed, misunderstood and misjudged*, so that he needed all the comfort of God. We see him with undiminished love anxious about those who had despised and belittled him, so that his spirit had no rest until he knew of their welfare. We hear the words he wrote to them: "*I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.*" And then, through what he himself tells us, we discover what it was enabled him to be and to bear all this; and we learn it was the grace of God—the revelation of Christ. "The Son of God Who loved me and gave Himself for me;" this carried him through and above all.

At the same time, his sober spirit and common sense were just as conspicuous. He knew the proper attitude to assume towards the world, and the things of everyday life. He knew on the one hand that all things were lawful; on the other, he would not be brought under the power of any. A Christ-controlled heart made him superior everywhere. Whether chained to a Roman soldier or declaring his testimony before kings; whether in affluence or in want; whether honoured and recognised or despised and forsaken, he had learned to be content. He could do all things in the strength of Him Who gave him power. Such was Paul the Saint.

Let us, in closing this section, adore Him Whose grace made such a life possible, while we also remember that the same grace waits upon us.

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