

THE DISCIPLE

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CALM AND CARE

*The unruffled blue of the cloudless sky
Meets the rippling waves of the restless sea,
As the peace of God and the fret of earth
Often seem at once in our life to be:
For the peace divine of the God of peace
Is eternal calm, like the boundless sky,
While the heart of man, in its restlessness,
Like the heaving sea cannot peaceful lie.
Yet they do not touch, and can never blend,
This most precious peace and most painful fear;
As the sky and sea do but seem to meet,
And are distant far, nor can e'er draw near:
So however long thou dost sail the sea
Thou canst never come to the azure sky,
And however long thou dost cling to care
On the Father's breast thou canst never lie.
It is upward only for evermore.
That the soul must soar if it peace would find:
In the love of Christ, in the heart of God,
Is untroubled calm for the troubled mind.*

L.

(from *The King and Other Verses*).

**The Editor offers to readers Hearty Greetings
for 1955. May it be to them and to him
a year of inward CALM, free from
distracting CARE.**

AN IMPORTANT TEXT (4)

There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God.
(Heb. iv. 9.)

What rest is this? Its noblest feature is that God calls it "My rest." Therefore it cannot be that rest of conscience received by the sinner upon faith in Christ, nor that rest of heart which the saint gains when he casts all his anxieties upon God Who cares for him. These are *our* rest in God, but this is God's own rest, which cannot be that of a purged conscience or of peace of mind after turmoil.

Nor can it be that unbroken tranquility which is the eternal condition of God, for here it is a rest after work; wherefore it is termed a sabbatism, for sabbath rest is cessation of work.

God's first work was the act of creating: "the heavens are the work of Thy hands" (Ps. cii. 25). The result of that work was disturbed by pre-historic rebellion, which brought judgment and chaos. In due time God wrought again and in six days refitted the earth for man to inhabit and restored the stellar world for man's benefit. This finished, God "rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made" and declared that day holy (Gen. ii. 1-3).

Then sin disturbed this fair realm also and brought disorder and ruin. But God is indefatigable. Again He set to work to reduce this world to order, to further which work the Son of God came here, and said "My Father worketh even until now, and I work" (John v. 17). This work being still in progress (for the past intervention of the Son of God did not complete it), God is not yet resting, and therefore what He calls "His rest" cannot be a present experience. His servants are called and privileged to share His work. "We are God's fellow-workers . . . working together with Him" (I Cor. iii. 9: II Cor. vi. 1); and therefore this is not the period of our rest, as here meant, but of our toil and suffering until the time shall come when God will again rest. Thus it is written by the apostle, "to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven" (II Thes. i. 7). And therefore it is said here that "there remaineth a sabbath rest for the people of God."

The English Versions obscure this by inserting without warrant the tiny word "do," "we who have believed *do* enter." Delitzsch gives the sense aright as being that, we who at the time for entering in shall be found to have believed will enter.

It is further clear that not peace of conscience or rest from care is meant because these are gained by *ceasing from work*, whereas this rest has to be gained by *all diligence*, and may be missed by unbelief and disobedience, even as Israel of old

failed to enter the earthly and physical rest in Canaan. Yet those men were the redeemed of the Lord and heirs to that land, even as those here addressed are "holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling" (Ch. iii. 1). It is not *title* that is gained by diligence, but realization and enjoyment of the property inherited. The one is a gift in Christ, even as Israel's title to that land was a gift to them in Abraham ; but *possession* has to be won by strenuous effort, by a faith that perseveres to the end.

Of what, then, was Canaan a type ? What is its antitype for the Christian ? It is (1) something to which the redeemed of the Lord hold a title ; (2) but actual possession of which must be won by the sword ; and (3) it may be forfeited by misconduct. Therefore it cannot typify salvation in the popular sense of the term, eternal life, for this is a gift of grace free of conditions (Rom. iii. 24 ; vi. 23), and therefore unforfeitable when once accepted by faith. It cannot be rest in the *eternal* kingdom, for each and all of the saved must share that, or he would not be of the saved, but of the lost.

Moreover, Canaan was not a type of complete, unbroken, eternal rest. For a short time the land had rest from war, but as our chapter itself shows, Joshua did not bring Israel into enjoyment of what God here calls " My rest." Of many of Israel God had sorrowfully and sternly declared on oath that they never should enter His rest. Yet they were His people, His children, and He did the best He could for them, but *in the wilderness*, not in the land of promise (Isa. lxiii. 8-10).

But as God's rest here in view is neither present nor eternal, it can be only that age which is to intervene between the close of this age, at the coming of the Lord in glory, and the eternal ages to commence after the final judgment and the creating of new heavens and earth. That Millennial age is frequently set forth in Scripture as a prize to be won by diligence, patience, endurance, and as being forfeitable by negligence or misconduct. As William Kelly said on this passage : " We are called now to the work of faith and labour of love, while we patiently wait for rest in glory at Christ's coming " (*Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 73).

At His second coming " the Lord will speak peace to His people, and to His saints " (Psm. lxxxv. 8), and He Himself will enter His rest, " He will rest in His love " (Zeph. iii. 17). " Let us fear therefore, lest haply, a promise being left of entering into His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it . . . Let us therefore give diligence to enter into *that* rest, that no man fall after the same example of disobedience " as was seen in Israel of old (Heb. iv. 1, 11).

For a full discussion see my *Epistle to the Hebrews*, 75-83.

THE WAY BACK
By JAMES L. STANLEY

Introduction

At the beginning of this century, J. L. Stanley was a beloved elder of the church at Bethesda Chapel, Bristol. He died in 1917. We were neighbours and friends. The Head of the church had given to him the heart of the shepherd and the gift of the teacher, with a gracious spirit in the exercise of these gifts. Thousands of such servant-rulers are needed in the assemblies of saints today. Fay Inchfawn kindly permits me to give her portrait of him from her pleasant *Book of Remembrance* (137, 138) :

At family prayers, when Mr. Loveday [that is Mr. Stanley] prayed for his family by name, he never failed to add a petition for "our dear friend who is with us, that she may be blessed and strengthened, and that the joy of perfect service may be hers."

At the table we were often "very merry," for Mr. Loveday had a fund of anecdotes and a great sense of humour. He was a writer of considerable gift, as well as a preacher. In some ways he was the most mystical of all our preachers, and also one of the most practical. One could trust him to take a level-headed view of bewildering situations. He felt an intense and loving sympathy for those who were otherwise-minded, and could not bring himself to condemn them.

I well remember the doubtful indignation with which certain folks among us received the utterances of an eminent divine. The feeling spread like an epidemic, the good man was stigmatized and written down as "unsound," for it was reported on excellent authority that he had stated in public : "God has not yet said His final word about the wicked."

Mr. Loveday, questioned as to his opinion, put on a quizzical look and said, "God has not yet said His final word about the *righteous*, has He?"

And those of us who loved the eminent divine breathed again !

So that Mr. Loveday in his own house was naturally a jovial influence. There were times when he effervesced and his wife and daughters put him down as though he had been a schoolboy. He submitted to their correction with a droll look which proved him to be unrepentant.

This is a lifelike portrait from a late-Victorian Christian home. It is worth studying. There were then thousands of such homes. Christ whose name we bear will be pleased and glorified if He is permitted to create thousands more. But

parents must turn resolutely from the satanic scramble of today, for such homes take time and quiet to create, and love and prayer to maintain.

If I rightly divine who was the "eminent divine" mentioned I know that he taught the everlasting punishment of the finally impenitent rejector of Christ. Nevertheless his remark quoted is just, and it should be kept in mind when we declare that solemn truth.

(Ed.).

Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. (I Peter iii. 18).

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me. (John xiv. 6).

CHAPTER I

"IN THE BEGINNING GOD . . ." THE IMAGE OF GOD

"So God created man in His own image." (Gen. i. 27).

*. . . in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure;
Severe, but in true filial freedom placed.*
(Paradise Lost).

The practical aim of the Bible is stamped on its surface, being indicated by its proportions. A very few lines are devoted to the subject of human origin: many chapters and books are occupied with the more important subject of human salvation. It was not written to satisfy a prying curiosity, but to teach moral and spiritual truths. Yet, by a strange perversity, that subject which concerns men most deeply, and about which the largest information is given, is the one about which they display the greatest indifference; while they manifest an insatiable craving for details on subjects which Scripture touches but lightly.

Just so much as the Author of Scripture considered necessary, and no more, does He tell us on the subject of human genesis. It is not necessary that the Bible should contain an answer to every question which an inquisitive science can raise; but since it comes to tell us of our fall and possible recovery, it is needful that we should have an authoritative statement on the subject of man's original condition. This is given us in the declaration, "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him." To this statement no explanation is added. We

are, therefore, left to ascertain from other parts of the Bible the meaning of the announcement. This is not difficult, as there are three lines of light converging on the subject from different parts of the Word of God. There is

(1) *The description of the renewed man.* This is given us in Eph. iv. 24 : " And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Again in Col. iii. 10 we have a similar statement : " And put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." From these passages it is clear that the " image " relates not to outward form, but to *moral* likeness and intelligence—observe the qualities named : " righteousness," " true holiness," " knowledge."

By looking at these descriptions of man in his regenerated condition we obtain a clear idea of what he was originally as he came from his Maker's hand, and was pronounced " very good." The matter may be illustrated thus. Suppose that an ancient cathedral had been partially destroyed by violence, or has fallen into decay ; but it so happens that perfect copies of the original plans are preserved, and by means of these the building is restored in every part. Although the re-erection may take place centuries after its original construction, yet, the plans being faithfully followed, the generation of that day would know exactly how it first appeared. This illustration is defective, but it will serve to make clear the point in question. Regeneration, through the " riches of grace," transcends primeval innocence, but the contemplation of the one will help us to form correct ideas of the other. Again, further light is cast on the subject by considering

(2) *The Person and Character of Christ.* He is presented to us in the Word as the perfect ideal of humanity, and as " the image of the invisible God." Without forgetting for a moment the fact of His Deity, and the mysterious union of the two natures in Him, we must give full weight to all that is said concerning His humanity. His manhood was as real as His Divinity : He was " in all things made like unto His brethren," thus sharing the common attributes of our nature, and yet at the same time being " holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." In Him, as man, the moral likeness to God was complete, without flaw or deformity ; perfectly symmetrical, and everything in just proportion. In thought, affection, volition, action, He was entirely conformed to the will of God. And we may further strengthen this argument by pointing out the identity which in Scripture is indicated between the image of God and the image of the Son. Thus, while in Ephesians and Colossians believers are said to be renewed in the image of God, in Rom. viii. 29 we read, " For whom He did foreknow, He also did foreordain to be conformed to the *image of His Son.*" The two are one : to be conformed to the image of Christ is to be conformed to

the image of God.

The perfect man, Christ Jesus, the Second Adam, stands then before us as the embodiment of God's purpose concerning man ; in Him we see a vivid exhibition of the meaning of the words " the image of God." But there is yet another quarter from whence light is reflected on this interesting theme, namely

(3) *The relics of the original state.* Man is in ruins. But, as in a ruined temple, so in ruined man, there are traces left of the original structure and design. As John Howe says, " That God hath withdrawn Himself, and left this temple desolate, we have many sad and plain proofs before us. The stately ruins are visible to every eye, that bear on their front ((yet extant) this doleful inscription: ' Here God once dwelt.' Enough appears of the admirable frame and structure of the soul to show the Divine Presence did sometime reside in it ; more than enough vicious deformity to proclaim that He has now retired and gone . . . Look upon the fragments of that curious sculpture which once adorned the palace of the Great King ; the relics of common notions ; the lively prints of some vast truth ; the fair ideas of things ; the yet legible precepts that relate to practice. Behold with what accuracy the broken pieces show these to have been engraven by the finger of God, and how they lie torn and scattered, one in this dark corner, another in that, buried in heaps of rubbish ! There is not now a system, an entire table of coherent truths to be found, or a frame of holiness, but some shivered parcels. And if any with great toil labour to apply themselves to draw out here one piece, and there another, and set them together, they serve rather to *show how exquisite the Divine workmanship was in the original composition*, than for present use to the excellent purposes for which the whole was first designed."

" Old man and blind, Michael Angelo in the Vatican used to stand before the Torso, the famous fragment of a statue, made possibly by one of the skilled chisels of antiquity, and with his fingers upon the mutilated lines, he would tell his pupils how the entire figure must have been formed when it was whole " (Joseph Cook). And thus it is with fallen humanity—the image is shattered, but the fragments serve even yet to indicate what it originally was.

Some plain hints of this are given in the Word of God. When Paul, writing to the Romans, was seeking to establish the responsibility of the heathen world, although not possessed, like the Jews, of a written revelation, he pointed to the moral sense evidenced by their conduct, and recognized in it the handwriting of God. " For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves : which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the

meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another ” (Rom. ii. 14, 15). Here, four thousand years after the Fall, are found men destitute of any revealed religion, exhibiting some relics of the original state in the sense of justice which they manifested one toward another.

Another feature is touchingly alluded to by our Lord Himself when imparting to His disciples important instruction on prayer. Thus He speaks : “ If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him ? ” (Matt. vii. 11). Here, amid the wreck and ruin of the Fall, our Lord recognizes human kindness, as exercised between parent and child, among the broken fragments which tell something of the original image. The very way in which He uses the fact adds to its importance, for He reasons upwards from the imperfect affection in man, to the great Creator in whose image he was originally made ; as though He would say, “ If this marred portion be so beautiful, what must be the excellence of the Divine original and model ? ”

Again, with a shade of difference, we have the same feature alluded to by Luke, in his account of the shipwreck in Acts xxviii. He says, in verse 2, “ The barbarians showed us no little kindness.” In this island of the sea, cut off from civilization, and destitute of a written revelation, the shipwrecked passengers and crew find a touching tenderness which constitutes another fragment of the broken image.

Aided by these Scripture examples, we may, by the use of observation, find other instances for ourselves. They are all around us ; the ruins of the Fall are on every hand, enough to show what man once was ; enough to show how complete the work of destruction has been. The words of lamentation uttered over disobedient Israel might aptly be applied to the whole human race—“ Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed : how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto Me ? ” (Jer. ii. 21).

In the minds of those who accept the authority of Scripture there can remain no doubt that when Adam came from his Maker’s hands, he was a perfect being ; any other belief would be dishonouring to the Creator. But while he was perfect, it is equally evident that he was peccable, or liable to sin. The original condition of retaining God’s favour is set forth in Gen. ii. 17 as *obedience*. Endowed with reason and conscience, Adam was responsible for the maintenance of that condition in which he was placed. From the terms of the temptation, “ Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil,” a strange mistake has arisen in the minds of some, who suppose that Adam did not possess a conscience until he fell—that, in fact, sin introduced the faculty of conscience. A little consideration will soon show the erroneousness of this

idea. The bait held out to them was "Ye shall know good and evil." This does not mean, Ye shall know good *from* evil. That is a very different thing. To know good *from* evil is to be able, as a normal being, to distinguish between right and wrong, and this power Adam undoubtedly possessed from the first. If not, how could he have been a moral being at all? And how could he have properly appreciated the distinction indicated between keeping and breaking the command of God? He could have had no sense of his obligation to his Maker, and therefore could not have been responsible. To know "good *and* evil" is synonymous with possessing all knowledge. The temptation, therefore, consisted in the offer of universal intelligence, as a gratification to the intellectual powers, and as a source of vanity.

With a nature set originally towards God, tending to holiness, and with a will free to determine and act, Adam was left at liberty to do the will of God. There was thus in his position an element of precariousness. Upon his own decision depended his future happiness or misery. In constituting a creature thus, and endowing him with the power of will, there was perfect justice and goodness in the act of the Creator. The inferior creatures, endowed with lower gifts, and guided by unerring instincts, fulfil mechanically the purpose of their being; but this is not the kind of service which God requires and expects from man. To have created him so as to make sin a moral or physical impossibility, would have been to rob his obedience of everything that would render it morally valuable. The service that God requires from His intelligent creatures is not that of slaves, or mere machines, but the free, filial obedience of loyal and worshipping spirits.

"But obedience is a habit, and has to be learned," and in order to be learned it has to be tried. As has been well remarked, "for this purpose, the barer the school the better" (Dr. Candlish). The test appointed was admirably well fitted to prove the creature man, since the command given appealed to nothing in conscience or reason, "to no sense of the sublime, pathetic, honest, or good." It was a positive command, without any apparent reason, and therefore the better calculated to test the principle of subjection. If Adam obeyed, it would not be because he perceived the reason or propriety of the act, but because God had commanded it. This, then, was the condition of his innocence, of continuance in that happy state into which at his creation he was introduced.

We know what the result has been. It is not for us to say what might have been had man proved faithful to his obligations. And yet Scripture seems to give us a hint, a sort of dim and far-off glimpse of something in reserve, had the period of proof been successfully passed. What mean the words of the Psalmist, quoted in Heb. ii. 7, "Thou madest

him for a little while lower than the angels"? (A.V. and R. V. margin). Do they not suggest the thought that faithfulness in the station assigned would have been subsequently followed by elevation to higher rank and loftier employments? Such an idea is in perfect harmony with later revelations of the purposes of God, and would furnish an answer to one of the objections of sceptical opposers.

The Scripture account of man's creation stands out in direct opposition to the modern scientific theory of evolution. Modern science prefers to account for man's existence and present condition by a theory which represents him as a result of innumerable developments from the very lowest forms of organic life, and as still proceeding towards yet higher stages of existence. According to this notion, man was never made in the image of God: indeed, he was not made at all, but only became what he is by the mysterious exercise of some blind unconscious forces. That being so, he has never fallen; in fact, the advocates of the doctrine do not hesitate to affirm that "every fall is a fall upwards."

This much is clear—that the two doctrines are mutually exclusive: if such a view of evolution be true, the Bible is false; but if the Bible be true, then the popular scientific doctrine is a dream. Whom shall we trust? To whom shall we look for a reliable account of our origin?—for an answer to that anxious question, which ever and anon looms through the mists of earthly things—"Whence came I?" Surely our appeal must be to Him who hath made us and fashioned us, and who has emphatically told us that man was originally formed to be "the image and glory of God."

CHAPTER II

AWAY FROM HIM 'ALL HAVE SINNED'

"They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Psalm xiv. 3).

"I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me . . . They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger, they are gone away backward." (Isaiah i. 2, 4).

The work of destruction is more easily and rapidly accomplished than the work of construction. Many years of laborious skill may be spent on the erection of some magnificent castle; but the guns of an enemy could reduce it in a few hours to a heap of ruins. It requires the genius, culture, and manual skill of the artist to produce the masterpiece of painting; but the hand of a fool could apply the torch which

should turn it into ashes. Character requires years to build ; but the act of a moment may destroy it. " Dead flies," said Solomon, " cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour : so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour " (Eccl. x. 1).

Made " in the image of God," man was a masterpiece of the Divine workmanship. But the act of a moment was enough to deface that image. The subtle tempter succeeded all too well in his artful and malicious scheme, and man fell from his position of purity and honour.

Imagine some celestial visitor coming to this earth, but wholly unacquainted with its history. It would not require a long period of observation to acquaint him with the fact that there is something wrong. There is discord and disorder everywhere : among men, suffering, sorrow, death, cruelty, oppression, injustice, and a long trail of evils, physical and moral, are to be seen on every hand. What does their presence mean ? They could not have had a place here when the Creator looked upon everything which He had made and pronounced it very good. We cannot suppose man's present condition to have been his original one ; for it is totally opposed to any ideas we can form of a wise, just, and beneficent Being that He should make a creature like man to live in a state of misery and wretchedness. There must be a cause for all this, and that cause the Bible declares to be *sin*.

" By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." What is this hideous thing which we know as " sin " ? It is not a new faculty in man's nature, but a disorder among all the faculties. To illustrate this, suppose that a watchmaker has completed a watch, every part being perfectly finished and adjusted, and all working smoothly for the designed end. But someone violently thrusts an instrument into its delicate machinery, displacing some of the wheels and throwing the whole out of gear. The effect, of course, would be immediately to arrest its action and render it useless. That is what sin has done for man. His nature is complex, made up of numerous faculties, all designed originally to work together for one common end—the glory of God. But sin has disturbed everything. The understanding is darkened, the conscience corrupted, the will biased, the affections alienated. Thus man has become like a kingdom in anarchy, a system dislocated, a body diseased.

In Psalm xxxii. 1, 2, we find a cluster of terms used to designate sin ; they are—" transgression," " sin," and " iniquity." Each one of these presents some different aspect of the great evil.

1. *Transgression* denotes a deviation from the prescribed path. The term " way " is a common and familiar one in the Scriptures for a rule or line of conduct. So we read, " The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." " In the way of righteousness is life,

and in the path thereof there is no death." The law which God has laid down for the guidance of man's conduct is His "way," and transgression is a departure from it. In I John iii. 4 it is said, "Sin is the transgression of the law," *i.e.*—a departure from the Divine rule of life or duty. And the passage just quoted has even a stronger meaning, being rendered in the R.V. "Sin is lawlessness." This is not merely a declension from the right line, but an utter repudiation of Divine authority.

2. *Sin.* The word "sin" means "a missing of the mark"; like a man aiming at a target but failing to reach it. This idea is forcibly expressed in the words, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23). The glory of God is the end for which man was created, but he has failed to reach it. "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God" (Rom. i. 21).

3. *Iniquity*, or in-equity, a departure from equity, justice, uprightness. Not only the violation of a positive command, or a written law, but the disregard of all right principle and moral obligation.

The story of the way in which man fell and how sin came into the world is recorded in Genesis iii. The aim of the tempter in the first place was to shake confidence in God; and in its place create distrust and suspicion. By isolating the one prohibition from all the permission given, and inducing Eve to bestow exclusive regard upon it, he succeeded in awakening discontent, which quickly resulted in disobedience. The command of God was looked upon as a barrier arbitrarily laid in the way of human happiness: behind that prohibitive law, it was thought, a largely augmented enjoyment lay concealed; carnal ambition was aroused to seek equality with God, and pride at last procured the fatal fall. The poisonous germ whence all the evil fruit has come was unbelief. Had Eve maintained her faith in the goodness and wisdom of the Creator, she would never have listened to the suggestions of Satan. But the doubt dropped into her mind quickly germinated, and rapidly developed its fearful results.

The period of probation thus ended in failure, and a breach was made between man and God. Righteous displeasure on the part of God, and dark suspicion and dread on the part of man, placed a gulf between the two. The relationship which had hitherto existed was no longer possible; righteousness could have no communion with unrighteousness; light could have no fellowship with darkness.

The breach thus made has been widening ever since. Still it seems as if the tempter were whispering in the ears of men, "Ye shall be as gods."

*"The wish to know, that endless thirst
That e'en by quenching is awaked,"*

is not even slaked. Not content with inquiry within the bounds which the Creator has assigned, men daringly pursue their investigations into the hidden secrets of life, to the violation of laws human and Divine, and impiously presume to fetch their information from the regions of the spirit-world. "The lusts of the flesh" and the mind hold their sway over mankind at large. The first downward step has been multiplied beyond the power of numbers to express, and the tendency of the natural man everywhere is away from God.

The conduct of the prodigal in Luke xv. exactly illustrates the attitude and action of man toward God. Having grasped at his father's possessions, his next step was to get away from "him into a far country." This is what man has done, and what he continues to do. The language of his heart, if not of his lips, is, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways" (Job xxi. 14).

What are the reasons for this alienation? Sin is the efficient cause, but there are various exciting causes. There is

(1) *The dread of God's anger.* True it is that "Conscience doth make cowards of us all." The sense of guilt and ill-desert makes men dread to meet the God whom they have insulted and disobeyed. This feeling is often experienced in its greatest strength when sickness brings a man down to the borders of the grave :

*"In that dread moment, how the frantic soul
Raves round the walls of her clay tenement;
Runs to each avenue and shrieks for help,
But shrieks in vain!"*

(2) *Uneasiness in God's presence.* The sense of unfitness becomes overpowering. If a man, destitute, dirty, and illiterate, were to be brought suddenly into the company of the polite, refined, and cultivated ; or if one of a coarse and impure mind and habits were to be placed in the society of the chaste and good, such would instinctively feel the disparity between themselves and their society, and would be distressed until they could be released from it. Something like this is the feeling of the unregenerate toward God. His presence is intolerable. In their present condition, the purity of heaven would be to them as the torments of hell.

(3) *Suspicion of God's intentions.* Men have a vague notion, which they scarcely venture to formulate in words, that God is bent on opposing their interests and inflicting suffering. Having offended God, they conceive of Him according to the distortions of their own imagination. They think of Him as a revengeful being waiting to launch His fiery bolts at them, and blast all their happiness. The Gadarenes, when they saw the destruction of the swine, entreated Christ to leave the place, evidently fearing that their temporal interests would greatly suffer if He remained. Surely it is nothing but the blindness sin has caused which prevents men perceiving how entirely opposite is God's character to their mistaken

view of it. Though they are His enemies, He feeds them and gives them water to drink, in order that He may thus lead them to repentance.

Thus sin has disordered and corrupted everything ; displacing right principles, desires, and affections, and substituting for them all kinds of evil passions and lusts. And this depravity is not local or partial, but universal. The Divine verdict is solemn, explicit, and final : “ All have sinned.” Before this statement many have staggered, and against it not a few have revolted. That the refined, moral, and religious should thus be grouped in one common class with the coarse, immoral, and profane, is an idea utterly repugnant to many minds. Yet no amount of indignant protest can alter the fact or set aside the Divine declaration. From this verdict there is no appeal, and to refuse to accept it is to fly in the face of the tribunal of heaven.

Let it, however, be observed, that while Scripture asserts the common guilt, it does not affirm that all are *equally* guilty. “ All have sinned,” but not all in the same degree. “ All we like sheep have gone astray ;” but not *equally* astray. There are those who have wandered long, and are “ far off ” from the fold ; and there are those who have gone but a few yards away. It would be contrary to Scripture, reason, and fact to say that all mankind are equally guilty in the sight of God ; to say that the child just entering upon life is as great a sinner in the sight of God as the hoary-headed sinner, steeped in vice, sensuality, and crime. No, the Scripture makes no such statement ; but what it does declare is this, that whatever may be the differences among sinners, when compared with one another, all are alike in this, that they are *astray*. The one who is just outside the fold, and the one who is miles away, are all alike in this—they are both outside.

When the fiery serpents were sent into the camp of Israel, the man just stung by one of the venomous creatures was poisoned as really as the man expiring in the agonies of death.

It is said that in the olden times there was a certain game played called by the strange name of “ Saints and Sinners.” The players formed two sides, and the game consisted of shooting arrows through a hoop elevated at some distance. If a player succeeded in sending all his arrows through, he took his place among the “ Saints,” but if he failed only in one case he had to stand among the “ Sinners.” Thus it would happen that one player would miss the mark with every arrow, while another succeeded with all but one ; yet they were both placed in the same class.

Two men are standing, one of them in an Alpine valley, another on the top of the loftiest peak ; yet they are both equally unable to touch the sky. There is a great difference in their altitude : the one being many thousands of feet

above the other, but in the one respect indicated they are both alike.

From all the differences that exist among sinners as to the degree of guilt, the Scripture turns our attention to the fact which it is far more important for us to recognize, viz., that we are all "guilty before God." Of what use is it for us to contend one with another over questions of moral superiority or inferiority? We are all involved in the general rebellion; all are stained with the pollution of sin; all have wandered away from God.

Instead, then, of endeavouring by comparison to make ourselves appear better in our own eyes, is it not our truest wisdom to recognize the nature of the evil itself? No colours can paint too deeply the awful character of this evil. It is the source, the parent of all others. The head and front of the offending, the chief item in the charge is this, that it is *against God*. It is a revolt against His authority, an insult to His truth, an impeachment of His justice, a contempt of His wisdom, an abuse of His gifts, a despising of His love.

The universality of the Fall, as a matter of fact, is abundantly and painfully evident. Experience fully corroborates the testimony of the Word. The nations of the world differ one from the other in many ways, but wherever we look the one common characteristic—moral depravity—is everywhere present.

A common effect must have a common cause. This is no mere accident, not a feature confined to a few localities, but abounding everywhere. It is not that you find it in heathen lands, and in uncivilized countries, and lose it among the polished and cultured races of mankind. No: history plainly shows that among the latter sin has often exhibited the greatest virulence. Education and refinement have changed the *form*, but they have not altered the nature; the Ethiopian may be better dressed, but he is an Ethiopian still.

It is the fond theory of some that sin is not original and inherent, but that men become sinful by contamination. If this is so, then how is it that these philosophers have never succeeded in developing a race of pure beings? And how can they account for the fact that evil dispositions manifest themselves in children before they are old enough to understand, or even have the sense to imitate? And again, how can they account for the fact that children who have been educated with the greatest care, instructed in Divine truth, and shielded from all evil influence, have yet, in spite of all, developed the same evil propensities which mark the rest of mankind? The fact is, that there is no escape from the verdict of Scripture.

Sin is the great moral epidemic which has infected the whole race. We are "born in sin and shapen in iniquity." The leprosy is in us all, covered in the case of some by a fair exterior, in others openly declared by ghastly signs of

corruption ; but in each case it is *there*. Like the poor creatures of Scripture story, our place is "outside the camp" ; shut off from the purity of heaven, while our lips utter the mournful cry, "Unclean, unclean." Better is it that we awake to the consciousness of the fact *now*, terrible though the discovery may be, than that the knowledge be reserved for the Day of judgment, when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and the opportunity of grace has departed for ever. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in Me is thy help."

PAGES FROM AN ORDERED LIFE (3)

G. H. LANG.

On April 12th, 1898 I took rooms in No. 8 Merchants Road, Clifton, Bristol. To all eternity that small house will remain a sacred spot, for there some momentous experiences came to me.

First ; a vicious habit had continued to master me for ten or eleven years. I was a slave to a cruel slavemaster. Desperately had I struggled, dismally had I failed. Bitterly I mourned, sincerely I confessed, sweetly was I forgiven. I knew the unfailing grace of God in fulfilling the promise that "if we confess our sins He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins" (I John i. 9). But pardon so freely accorded did but make me the more ashamed of my sin. The way of pardon I knew ; the way of victory I knew not. I had been well instructed and was well assured as to justification ; the means of sanctification I had not been shown. I could tell the lost how to be saved, but could not tell the saved how to be holy. Calvary was a precious reality, of Pentecost I had no experience. Before God I was in Christ by faith ; now Christ was to be formed in me by His Spirit. The hour of deliverance struck.

Kneeling at my bedside in an agony of conflict, fighting a desperate but losing battle, suddenly, with overwhelming authority, the Voice spoke to me these words : "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. vii. 18). Instantly the whole situation was illuminated. The truth of the words had been burned into my soul by years of dismal failure. In the intensity of the moment I exclaimed : "Then, Lord, victory over sin will never come out of me, for that is a very good thing, and there is no good thing in me, and you can't get blood out of a stone : *now, Lord Jesus, I will see what Thou wilt do for me.*"

At that instant I was free, completely free, free for ever. One moment I was the slave, the next moment the master. One moment I was a weakly infant in the grip of a giant, the next moment I was Samson rending the lion as a kid. Long had I toiled in vain to draw water out of a dry well ;

now I drank of the water of life, and knew in power the word, "the law of the Spirit of the life which is in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death" (Rom. viii. 2). From that great hour I have known experimentally what Charles Wesley declared in the matchless stanza,

*Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.*

Along what routes He has led, and I have followed, these pages will show.

A second momentous event connected with that little house is that there I commenced consecutive reading of God's Word. I had been reading the Bible since I had read anything, but desultorily. It occurred to me that perhaps I had not read it all and that therefore there might be things which my God and Father wished to say to me which I did not know. Obviously the simple remedy for this was to read it straight through. I had breakfast and tea alone before and after office. It was my twenty-fourth year. Without stopping to ponder the difficult passages I read straight through in five months.

The first impression was that I had gained a bird's eye view of the history of the world from God's point of view. It was observable that He said little or nothing about ancient events upon which human histories said, and say, much, but said much as to persons and events that they ignore. Abraham and Moses were instances. Only events of importance in the purposes of God were selected and recorded. Human wisdom could not recognize the importance of these persons and doings and disregarded them.

On reaching I Cor. ii. 12 I read: "But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God," including "the *deep* things of God" (verse 10). This meant that the Author of the book, the Spirit of truth, was with me to open to me the deep mysteries of God therein stated. It was as if a student should have as tutor the writer of the text book in use. Obviously the latter could explain all written in his book. It was only a question of the capacity and diligence of the pupil. From that hour I addressed myself with confidence and resolution to the minute study of the Bible.

Since the Old Testament is so much longer than the New it seemed inadvisable to read always from Genesis to Revelation, for one would be so long without studying the parts addressed directly to Christians. This was rectified by reading the two Testaments side by side, returning when

finished to Genesis and Matthew. This practice I have maintained daily for well nigh sixty years, nor have I felt the need or advantage of any other scheme or arrangement of Bible reading. It is both simple and comprehensive. It has this further distinct advantage that every topic of Scripture is considered in the proportion assigned to it by the Holy Spirit, and the student thus surveys each topic as often and as long as it is found in the Book. By this the mind is preserved from one-sidedness, and the evil is avoided of being a man of one subject. Truth is one complete whole, and each separate truth needs to be understood in relation and proportion to the whole. Thus does the child of God advance to being a man of God, fitted fully for every good work and able to encourage and equip others (II Tim. iii. 14-17).

It was at that first consecutive reading that I began to read the Revised Version. I knew at once that I had found a translation vastly more exact and lucid than the Authorised Version. Whole ranges of truth opened up from single changes. This conviction of superiority has deepened by over half a century of ever more exact study, especially when some years later I gained an elementary acquaintance with New Testament Greek and could compare the two. Twenty-five years later, when about fifty years of age, I learned to read the Bible in German. It has been my habit to read daily the same passage in the three languages. It is illuminating and valuable, abundantly worth the time and labour.

The third determining event in my life connected with 8 Merchants Road is that there I met my wife. Some fifteen years after our union in 1893 I had been preaching for some time in a town in Scotland when one asked me if I was married. I said, "Yes, and I have a daughter; Why?" "Well, we never hear you mention your wife." "Oh," I replied, "that is easy to explain. If I once started talking about *her*, I should not know when to stop; so it is best not to begin." Whoso findeth a wife [as Adam did when he awoke from his sleep] findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of Jehovah" (Prov. xviii. 22).

In 1897 the Crown Accident Company was bought by The Norwich and London Accident Company. Their Manager asked me to join their Head Office staff in Norwich and offered to double my salary. Natural reasoning would have led to immediate acceptance of the offer. God had used such an amalgamation to bring me to Bristol: it might readily be concluded that by the same means He would send me to Norwich. I had not sought this advantageous opening; it would surely be stupid to refuse it. Thus reasons nature; such was the voice of "common sense."

But some time before this my daily reading had been in

II Sam. v. 17-25. Soon after David had been made king over all Israel the Philistines determined to smash the new monarchy and reassert their supremacy. They pressed up the valley through which the railway now runs from Lydda up to Jerusalem, and halted near the city in the valley of the Rephaim, the name being reminiscent of the ancient days when giants held the land. Now David was a seasoned and experienced commander, yet was he too wise and too devout to rely on himself, but asked counsel from his God. It was given. He made a fierce frontal attack, and the victory promised by God was secured.

But before long the enemy renewed the assault and took up the same position at the same valley. David might well have reasoned that this was the same military situation and to meet it he might rightly follow the former directions. But this he did not do ; on the contrary, he sought fresh guidance from God, and was given quite different instructions. He was to make a flank attack. The wisdom of this is evident. The Philistines would naturally have strengthened their front to meet another attack there ; but the new assault succeeded and they were signally defeated.

From this I stored in my mind the lesson not to follow former guidance even though circumstances might be repeated. Consequently I asked for a week to consider the proposal to go to Norwich. The whole week passed, but I gained no assurance of the will of God. My Managing Director arrived and went to his room. At any moment he might ring to learn my decision, so I went to an empty room and reminded the Lord that I had waited for His promised direction, that it was now needful that it should be given ; would He graciously tell me what to say. Looking at a tiny New Testament I was immediately arrested by I Tim. iv. 15 : " Be diligent in these things ; give thyself wholly to them ; that thy progress may be manifest to all." Seemingly remote from the matter in hand the words nevertheless gave immediate and clear light. From the former experience I knew that for the first year or two after an amalgamation I must give much more time to merging the affairs of the old Company into those of the buying Company, and should have less time for the things of God. But as by the verse the Lord called me to be diligent in these things, and to give myself wholly to them, it could not be His will for me to take the post offered and I declined it.

Somewhat vaguely I wondered at the moment whether the verse might intimate that some day I might be called to leave business and give all my time to the work of God. The idea did not persist. The time had not arrived, and I sought another post.

One offered quite soon. It was a promising appointment with a public Company. The salary was good, the position permanent, with a pension in due time. But it carried the

condition that every night of the month of January must be given to the preparation of the balance sheet. In the light of the guidance recently given I was not free to devote annually a twelfth of my spare time to business, thus reducing the time already given to things divine.

My late Managing Director gave me this letter to the Secretary of that Company :—

March 9th, 1897.

I understand that Mr. Lang is applying to you for an appointment and I have pleasure in stating that he served under me for about four years and I found him honest and straightforward in all his work. I found him very capable in his department, which consisted of claims. Generally he is intelligent and possessed of tact, and he can be thoroughly trusted to carry out anything he agrees to carry out.

This commendation is to be viewed as coming from the man for whom I had refused to tell a lie. God had made my righteousness to go forth as the light because I had committed my way unto Him and trusted in Him (Psm. xxxvii. 5, 6). The last sentence of the letter gives the exact meaning of the word *pistis* in Gal. v. 22, rendered ambiguously in the A.V. by "faith," but more adequately in the R.V. by "faithfulness." It is not here "the faith" as something one believes, nor equivalent to "trust" as an attitude of heart; it means here dependability, trustworthiness. This is a fruit of the Spirit of God's Son, upon whom the Father relies implicitly to carry out all His will and purposes. That Spirit had wrought in me so far as to produce in measure this fruit. No young Christian lives in vain if he so addresses himself to daily duties as to develop by the Spirit this fruit of reliability.

An introduction brought me into the service of The London and Lancashire Insurance Company in Bristol. The salary was a little lower than that with my last Company, but for the first time I had the pleasure of a Christian employer. Mr. David Dundas Chrystal was an elder of the church at Bethesda Chapel. I was the only Christian in the office and we were soon on personal terms. He was a helpful teacher of the Word of God, simple, solid, weighty, though his style was the reverse of fiery.

This last feature gave rise to a humorous incident. The Company had an agent who was facetious. He asked the Chief Clerk if we had heard of a fire at Pill, a village near Bristol. He then inquired if we knew how it was caused, and, with a twinkle in his eye, said, "I don't know whether it was because your Mr. Chrystal was preaching in the Chapel there a fortnight before!" Being the only one who had heard the good man preach I could enjoy the joke more than the others.

Mr. Chrystal was an exemplary Manager who commended his religion to his irreligious staff. Consequently he was much

respected by them, and when he retired they not only presented to him a token of esteem, but listened attentively to a pointed homily upon the benefits of diligence, morality, and the fear of God.

From the windows of that office in Corn Street, I watched the vast funeral procession of George Müller on March 14th, 1898, and on the 20th May following I listened to Welsh miners play in the street the *Dead March* upon the death of Gladstone. They were two of the greatest men of their period, the one in the kingdom of heaven, the other in the kingdom of England. He that is least in the former is greater than the greatest in the latter.

In the spring of 1899 I was writing a letter to the Manager of a local brewery upon their fire insurances. It was by no means the first time, but on this occasion the Voice suddenly said in my heart : “ If you were to meet this gentleman outside the office, and a fair opportunity came, you would not mind telling him that if his premises were burned down and never rebuilt it would be a public benefit. Yet you are taking part of your salary for arranging to do what you think ought not to be done.”

At once I realized that this was a first-class crisis. If I should leave the insurance business on this ground, what calling, for which my training had fitted me, would be open ? For this ruin-spreading trade, like a giant and deadly octopus, had its cruel tentacles almost everywhere. If I went into a bank I must keep its accounts, or on a railway I must handle its traffic sheets.

The weeks that followed were full of deep thought and anxious inquiry. It was certain that few, even Christians, would be likely to sympathize. My esteemed Manager would not agree with the step. To justify what seemed like condemning better Christians than myself I must produce some better reason than my own opinion or preference, even some warrant from God for wrecking my prospects in life. This was equally necessary for my own peace and strength. The exercise of mind thus caused was at once profitable by sending me more than ever to the Lord. One evening I left my room in Clifton to go to a beloved friend and seek his advice. On Richmond Hill the Voice said distinctly, “ *I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go : I will counsel thee with Mine eye upon thee* ” (Psm. xxxii. 8). The stress on the “ I ” was heavy. I replied, “ Very well, Lord,” and went home, without consulting my friend.

After some period of self-examination and searching of the Scriptures the promised guidance was granted on May 27th 1899. Once again the Voice said distinctly : “ Whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him ” (Col. iii. 17). This illuminated and determined the matter.

My heart said instantly : “ You dare not go to that vile public house in that slum, which you surveyed three weeks ago, where men and women are helped to hurry to hell faster than they need go, and say to that poor bloated barman, *In the name of the Lord Jesus* I am come to arrange that this place be rebuilt if it be burned down, so that you may carry on this business, and *I thank God my Father* that I am able to do this.”

I was also impressed by I Cor. vii. 24 : “ Let each man wherein he is called, therein abide *with God.*” As I now saw that God was *not* with me in this part of my work I could not abide in my situation.

My duty and course were now fully warranted, yea demanded, by the Word of God. On June 1st, 1899. I wrote my letter of resignation and the ink of my signature was not yet dry when there stole softly into my heart a restful all-pervading quietness. Not the least sense of care was left : henceforth it might have been somebody else’s affair, not mine, so richly was the promise fulfilled, “ Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee ” (Isa. xxvi. 3). And throughout the fifty-five and more succeeding years of dependence upon my faithful God and Father for daily supplies, for my home, as well as for long foreign journeys and many emergencies, that peace has guarded my heart from anxious care. Thus are all the energies of the soul preserved from distraction as to ways and means, from being corrupted by and dissipated upon unworthy measures, and can be concentrated upon high and heavenly ends in the power of the Holy Spirit. Later events will illustrate this.

The psychology of such an experience is quite simple. A man has legal tangles that baffle and harass him. He goes to a lawyer in whose skill and energy he has confidence, places the matter in his care and feels relieved, believing that his affairs are now in competent hands. Peter exhorts troubled saints to commit the keeping of their lives unto a faithful Creator by doing what is right in His eyes (I Pet. iv. 19). Having done this the heart receives the comfortable assurance that all must be well. How can it be otherwise when GOD is ordering all ?

Isaiah and Paul use similar military figures to teach and explain this. The former pictures a countryside overrun by a cruel foe and the people fleeing from their unprotected farmsteads to the fortified city : “ We have a strong city ; salvation will He appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates that the righteous nation that keepeth truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee ; because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in Jehovah for ever ; for in JAH, Jehovah, is an everlasting Rock ” (Isa. xxvi. 1-4). The word “ mind ” may be read “ imagination.” Many of our anxieties come not from actual circumstances but from what we fear may arise ;

they are fictions of the imagination : “ I have had a great many troubles in life, but most of them never came.” Faith fills the future, the morrow, not with phantoms but with GOD, and is at peace.

Paul varies the figure. He looks upon our own inner life as the city, whereinto fear and care seek to rush as raiders and work havoc, and the peace of God is the garrison that defends our hearts and thoughts. The Lord is personally at hand, that is, near by ; turn to Him, tell to Him your needs and trials, thank Him for the ten thousand mercies of the past and present ; and the sense of His nearness, faithfulness, sufficiency will fill you with that same peace which God Himself enjoys because of His consciousness of illimitable power and resources to meet every situation (Phil. iv. 5-7).

My business career was almost ended.
(to be continued)

ATONING BLOOD

WHAT IT DOES AND WHAT IT DOES NOT DO

The taking of life in the service of God and to the advantage of man began immediately after man sinned. It appears that the Creator Himself originated the practice. That the fallen pair might not be always exposed to His indignation as naked, and thus unsuitable to His eye, and that their nakedness might be hidden from each other, “ Jehovah God made for Adam and his wife coats of skin, and clothed them ” (Gen. iii. 21). It is presumed that this involved the death of victims to provide the skins.

While the basic instinct to worship the Deity is inherent in man it could scarcely have been otherwise than by Divine instruction that Abel slew a firstling of his flock and offered this, including the richest element, the fat (Gen. iv. 4).

When the judgment of the Flood had swept away the wicked, and a new era opened for the cleansed earth, Noah consecrated all to God by offering clean beasts and birds, and these must die and be burned in fire on an altar.

This distinction between living creatures, that some were “ clean,” suitable to and acceptable to the Deity, and some were not, continued in the remembrance and observance of the race, even after mankind had again revolted from the only true God. Of early Babylonian sacrifices Sayce says : “ It is noticeable that it was only the cultivated plant and the domesticated beast that were thus offered to the deity. The dog and swine, or rather wild boar, are never mentioned

in the sacrificial list*

This essential distinction was revived and amplified by Moses.

In the same way Abraham drew near to God at altars he built, and God's covenant with him was ratified by the sacrifice of clean animals and birds (Gen. xii. 7, 8 ; xiii. 4 ; xv. 9, 10). This ground of approach to God culminated in the offering of Isaac his son on an altar and the substitution of a clean animal, a ram, for the deliverance of Isaac (Gen. xxii). Isaac and Jacob similarly drew near to God at altars (Gen. xxvi. 25 ; xxxv. 3, 7). During that same period Job likewise offered burnt-offerings on behalf of his family, in case their hearts had failed in reverence to God (Job i. 5).

All this is Biblical and historical evidence that from the very beginning of man's history God had taught him that, being a sinner, he could draw near to God only upon the basis that a death had taken place to redeem him from death as the consequence of his transgression of the Divine law. Death as the penalty of sin cannot be remitted but must be exacted ; only it may be exacted by means of an innocent substitute dying instead of the culprit.

Down to this stage the Divine records have summarized two and a half thousands of years of man's history, and no mention has been made of *the blood* of the sacrifices. But it were wrong to infer from this that the use of the blood in sacrificing was unknown in earliest times and that the emphatic use of the word is a later addition not warranted by primitive usage. When writing this brief summary of the salient events of most ancient times Moses knew well (1) that the sacrificial use of blood was practised universally and known by his hearers and readers ; (2) that he had already, before writing his records, explained and enforced this usage upon Israel ; and (3) that in the next following sections of his history (*Exodus* and *Leviticus*) the theme would be enlarged. Thus no one of those times would make the false inference suggested, or would regard the extensive use of the blood as an innovation.

This leads to our first topic,

WHAT THE BLOOD DOES.

But before considering its atoning virtue it is most necessary to notice first its opposite power, as the background of its atoning power.

* A. H. Sayce, *The Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia*, 466, 467. The learned author showed various other parallels between that earlier Babylonian religion and the Mosaic ritual. Ch. ix, "The Ritual of the Temple" is of great interest, but his conclusion is wrong : "The Mosaic Law must have drawn its first inspiration from the Abrahamic age." Rather was the human religion a debased survival of the original God-appointed arrangements by which man could approach Him, and the Mosaic system a revival and extension by Divine instruction of that original system of worship.

I.—BLOOD CRIES FOR VENGEANCE.

This God had sternly emphasized in the earliest years when He said to Cain : “ the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto Me from the ground. And now cursed art thou from the ground, which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother’s blood ; when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee its strength ” (Gen. iv. 10-12). This, as other first events in man’s history, must have been well known to Noah, seeing that for 600 years he was contemporary with Methusaleh who had been contemporary with Adam for 243 years, and that during that period the race formed but one society in one region. The memory of those words of God to Cain would, it may be taken for granted, be fresh in Noah’s mind when, directly after the Flood, God added this declaration fundamental to human society : “ Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you ; as the green herb have I given you all. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. And surely your blood, the blood of your lives, will I require ; at the hand of every beast will I require it : and at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man’s brother, will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed : for in the image of God made He man ” (Gen. ix. 3-6. R.V.).

These early Divine statements are basic to the affairs of earth and man as viewed by God. They have never been abrogated but rather amplified. These essential points are to be observed :

1. *That blood shed unrighteously brings Divine judgment on the very land it stains.* This was incorporated into the Mosaic law. Speaking of murder Moses said : “ blood it polluteth the land ” (Num. xxxv. 33). Considering the torrents of blood that have been shed without Divine warrant how defiled this earth must be before God, and what judgments must hang over it. How heavy must be the wrath of heaven accumulating against, say, the United States of America with over 13,000 murders annually, and only a few punished, and 21,000 suicides.

2. *Blood is the vehicle of bodily life.* This also forms the basis of sin being atoned by blood, which will be considered later from Lev. xvii. Life is the gift of God alone. No one else can impart it, though one may rob another of it. To take life therefore is to rob God. He sets upon human life such value that He exacts reparation from the man who takes it and even from the beast who takes it. Such is the control of the Creator over every creature, even the wild creatures. What an awfully solemn title of God is this : “ He that maketh inquisition for blood ” (Ps. ix. 12). It is said that when Metternich urged Napoleon to agree to peace and to spare human life, the Emperor replied by cursing human life. “ He that maketh inquisition for blood ” could not overlook

this.

3. *The penalty of shedding man's blood*, so taking his life, is that the murderer's blood must be shed. Capital punishment is by express Divine command. It is not simply a deterrent against murder, though it is this : much more it is demanded by equity. Life is of higher value than anything else ; as Satan truly said, " all that a man hath will he give for his life " (Job ii. 4). Therefore nothing else could be accepted from the murderer in place of his life, for nothing else could be equivalent to the other man's life he had taken (Num. xxxv. 33).

4. *Hence arises the prohibition against eating blood*, or flesh with the blood undrained from it. It is self-appropriation of an article which belongs exclusively to God, its only Giver, its permanent and solitary Owner. The prohibition was heavily enforced upon Israelites (Lev. xvii. 10 : Deut. xii. 16, 23), and duly re-enacted upon Gentile Christians (Ac. xv. 20 ; xvi. 4 ; xxi. 25). The ground for it admits of no exceptions.

In its highest aspect war is a Divine judgment upon peoples for their sins (Ezek. xiv. 21). Yet even so, David, the God-fearing soldier who executed this judgment on the surrounding nations, and was supported by God in his campaigns, was disqualified from the honour of building God's house at Jerusalem because he had shed much blood (I Chron. xxii. 6-8). Let the soldier who is a Christian ponder this. It emphasizes the value that God sets on human life, and that, even when war is viewed ideally, it is a lower service that disqualifies for the highest service. Suppose that the extermination of some degraded tribe or nation be a Divine judgment, required for the general moral good of mankind, yet clearly a Christian soldier who, by order of his superiors, carries out that extermination cannot build up God's spiritual house, the church, among that people he destroys.

Thus does blood shed defile man and land and cries aloud for vengeance, which cry God hears.

This being the case when any common man is murdered, how much louder must be the cry for vengeance of the holy blood of the murdered Son of God. What an incubus of guilt and penalty His murderers accepted when they shouted in a frenzy of rage " His blood be on us, and on our children " (Matt. xxvii. 25). That penalty is not yet exhausted because, as a people, the descendants maintain the attitude to Christ of their ancestors. The observant sojourner in Palestine can note how the above cited curse upon the soil is in force, for the nearer one gets to Jerusalem the more sun-scorched and barren is the land.

II.—BLOOD PROTECTS FROM VENGEANCE.

Some fourteen centuries B.C. God was dealing judicially

with the richest and dominant nation on earth, the Egyptians. The visitor to the monuments of that period can see the damning records the people left of their vileness and cruelty. These make fully credible the account of Moses in *Exodus* of the enslavement and bitter oppression of Israel by Pharaoh, with the order to kill all infant boys. This is the judicial background for the severe penalties exacted from them by the Judge of all the earth. The culminating crime of Pharaoh and his people was this : The supreme and only God, the Creator of all men, had seen fit to choose one race to be to Him among the nations what a firstborn son is to the father of a family, even the senior member of the circle under the father. Pharaoh was enslaving that chosen race and had designed their absorption into his people, by killing the boys and marrying the girls to Egyptians. To this tyrant Jehovah sent the message : “ Israel is My son, My firstborn : and I have said unto thee, Let My son go that he may serve Me ; and thou hast refused to let him go : behold, I will slay thy son, thy firstborn ” (Ex. iv. 22, 23).

The haughty monarch of the ruling nation on earth was not prepared to see his supremacy pass to this hated race of slaves and he doggedly rejected the demand. After much patience, and when it had become evident that the king and his people would not yield, the execution of the Divine decree was ordered, which Moses announced in these words :

“ Thus saith Jehovah, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt : and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill ; and all the firstborn of cattle.” (Ex. xi. 4, 5).

1. *God acts personally.* It is to be noted that : A judgment so extensive and terrific was superintended by God personally : “ I will go out into the midst of Egypt.” This had been the case at four earlier crises recorded : (a) God had Himself dealt with Cain : (b) “ Jehovah sat *as King* at the Flood ” (Ps. xxix. 10) : (c) when at Babel the whole race was set on its own exaltation, “ Jehovah came down to see the city and tower which the children of men builded ” (Gen. xi. 5), before He confounded their speech and scattered them: and (d) when two great cities were to be destroyed by fire from heaven Jehovah said : “ I will go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it [angelic report concerning it, with application for judgment], which is come unto Me ; and if not, I will know ” (Gen. xviii. 21).

Lesser situations on earth might be left to angel or human rulers in the execution of powers entrusted to them by God as the universal Sovereign, but on such solemn and fearful occasions He personally superintended for the securing of strict and impartial justice. See further Josh. v. 13- vi 2 : Ezek. viii ; ix, esp. 3, 4 : Rev. v ; vi. 1 ; xix. 11-16 ;

xx. 11 : etc.

2. *The Destroyer acts.* The recognition of this personal presence of God is essential to a true understanding of the events in Egypt that fateful night, even as Jehovah said : “ I will go out into the midst of Egypt,” and as Moses added, “ *Jehovah* will pass through to smite the Egyptians,” but he adds, “ Jehovah will pass over the door, and will not suffer *the Destroyer* to come into your houses to smite you ” (Ex. xi. 4; xii. 23). This great Destroyer is a distinct figure in Holy Scripture. He acts here ; he smote Israel in the days of David (II Sam. xxiv. 15, 16 : II Chron. xxi. 14, 15) ; he destroyed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night (Isa. xxxvii. 36) ; and in Rev. ix. 11, in connection with one of the appalling judgments of the End days, his very name is given in its Hebrew and Greek forms, Abaddon and Apollyon, both meaning Destroyer. All the ancient world knew of him and dreaded him. To him they attributed the unexpected deaths of men, as the Greeks said, “ Apollo has shot him with his arrow.” Abaddon is here described as the angel ruler of the Abyss, the world of the dead. The word is found at Job xxvi. 6 ; xxviii. 22 ; xxxi. 12 : Ps. lxxxviii. 11 : Prov. xv. 11 ; xxvii. 20 only. In each case it is associated with Death and Sheol, the world of the dead ; and the passages range from about 1000 B.C. to 1700 B.C., which includes the period of the Exodus.

It was therefore a terrible threat that this mighty Angel of Destruction should be let loose on Egypt and kill in every house. All the preceding plagues had been inflicted by angels, as it is said of God : “ He cast upon them [the Egyptians] the fierceness of His anger, wrath and indignation and trouble. A sending of angels of evil ” (Ps. lxxviii. 49) ; not merely “ evil angels,” as A.V., but as R.V., “ angels of evil,” angels who because evil by nature would eagerly inflict evil. This last judgment would be the culmination of the dread work of the Destroyer and his hosts.

This is not past history only. Pharaoh and his servants had hardened their necks, and had not obeyed the truth as to the true God, Jehovah, and His will, brought to their knowledge by Moses. On the contrary they had obeyed unrighteousness ; upon them had been poured out God’s “ anger, wrath, indignation, and distress. ” Romans ii. 8 denounces against all in every age who so defy God “ wrath and indignation, tribulation, and anguish,” the same solemn terms with which the Psalmist described the judgments on Egypt of old. And the agency is the same ; for when the Lord comes down again for the judgment of His foes who have not acquainted themselves with God, nor obeyed the good tidings of the Lord Jesus, nor received the love of the truth that they might be saved, then shall the same supreme Judge who dealt with Egypt be accompanied by “ the angels of His power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance ” (II Thes.

i. 7-9 ; ii. 9-12) ; even as He said, " so shall it be at the consummation of the age ; the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire : there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth." It was thus in Egypt that awful night of old when " there was a great cry in Egypt ; for there was not a house where there was not one dead " (Matt. xiii. 41, 42, 49, 50 : Ex. xii. 30).

3. *Justice distinguishes.* The words of our Lord just quoted from Matthew show that when God executes judgment His wrath is guided with strict discrimination. He distinguished between Abel and Cain : He saved Noah and his family : He delivered righteous Lot from the overthrow of Sodom. In the days of Ezekiel He set a mark upon each who sighed and cried over all the abominations that blighted Jerusalem, and He forbade the destroying angels to touch these, though no others were to be spared (Ezek. ix.). It must always be thus, and it was to be so that night in Egypt.

But upon what ground in Divine law could the Israelites be rightly exempt ? Morally and religiously they were no better than the Egyptians. The strict laws and severe penalties which Moses had to impose on them after their deliverance from Egypt show that their moral life was in general as low as that of their Egyptian tyrants. Slavery ever debases. Ere Joshua left the next generation, which he had led to victory in Canaan, he reminded them that their first ancestors had originally served false gods in Chaldea and that their immediate ancestors had worshipped the gods of Egypt. For a time there were exceptions, such as the parents of Moses and Moses himself (Heb. xi. 23-26). But forty years after his flight he had to remind the God of Abraham that the patriarch's descendants in Egypt did not even know the name of Abraham's God (Ex. iii. 13). It is a natural tendency with slaves to accommodate themselves to the opinions and practices of their oppressors, if they may thereby gain a lightening of their lot. From Ezekiel xx. 7-9 we learn the same : for God tells the Israelites of that time that, in the day when He made Himself known unto their fathers in Egypt, He had been obliged to say to them " Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt," but that at first the people rebelled against the moral deprivations and the change of religion. Therefore they were legally under sentence of death with the Egyptians, and on what ground could they be justly spared ?

4. *The Passover Blood.* The answer given in the famous account found in Exodus xii is that for each house a lamb without blemish was to be killed, and " they shall take of the blood, and put it on the two side posts and on the lintel, upon the houses wherein they shall eat it . . . And the blood shall be to you a token upon the houses where ye are : and

when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and there shall no plague be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt . . . ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin : and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning. For Jehovah will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, Jehovah will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come into your houses to smite you ” (Ex. xii. 5-7, 22, 23).

The term “ pass over ” in verse 13 is distinct from the “ pass through ” of verse 12 (A.V.), which distinction the R.V. indicates by its rendering “ go through.” The latter means to go through in judgment ; the former to pass over and preserve. Yet “ passover ” obscures the picture and the manner of deliverance. The real sense is found in Isa. xxxi. 5, which speaks of a deliverance of Jerusalem yet to come. Here Jehovah compares Himself and His preserving action to a mother bird fluttering over her young, darting to and fro, to defend them from some beast or reptile that would attack them : “ As birds hovering, so will Jehovah of hosts protect Jerusalem ; He will protect and deliver them, He will *pass over* and preserve ” (A.S.V.) ; or as Darby : “ As birds with outstretched wings, so will Jehovah of hosts cover Jerusalem ; covering, He will also deliver, *passing over*, He will rescue ” ; or Delitzsch : “ Like fluttering birds, so will Jehovah of hosts screen Jerusalem ; screening and delivering, *sparing* and setting free,” on which this learned commentator writes : “ The word *passoach* recalls to mind the deliverance from Egypt (as in ch. xxx. 29) in a very significant manner. The sparing of the Israelites by the destroyer passing over their doors, from which the passover derived its name, would be repeated once more . . . Jehovah’s attitude [is] . . . one resembling the action of birds, as they soar round and above their threatened nests.” Upon this Hebrew word Canon Cook (Speaker’s Commentary *in loco*) says : “ In Egyptian the word Pesh, which corresponds to it very nearly in form, means to ‘ spread out the wings over,’ and ‘ to protect ’ ; see Brugsch, ‘ D.H.’ p. 512.”

This gives significance to the phrase in verse 23 above that “ Jehovah *will not suffer* the destroyer to come into your houses to smite you.” That great Destroyer, being an evil angel prince, would have gone into every house blood or no blood, but God Himself restrained him as to the houses sprinkled with blood. Hence the prophet as he recalls the past says of Jehovah, “ So He was their Saviour ” (Isa. lxiii. 8). And He spared and saved solely out of regard to the blood.

It must not be supposed that this striking method of preserving a house from danger of death was new at that

time. On the contrary it was practised in early Babylonia, whence both the Hebrew and Egyptian races had migrated. Prof. Sayce writes :

“ Still more interesting it is to find in the ritual of the prophets instructions for the sacrifice of a lamb at the gate of the house, the blood of which is to be smeared on the lintels and doorposts, as well as on the colossal images that guarded the entrance.”

And he shows that the most ancient customs may persist the ages through, long after their meaning may have been lost, by adding :

To this day in Egypt the same rite is practised, and when my dahabiah [sailing boat on the Nile] was launched I had to conform to it. On this occasion the blood of the lamb was allowed to fall over the sides of the lower deck. (*Religions* 472).

It is evident that neither Moses, nor a supposed later redactor or imposter, invented this story to serve some imagined religious end. God on this occasion was reviving, purifying, and applying a primeval rite, one which we must presume had formed part of an original body of instructions given by Himself as to how sinful men could be granted Divine mercy without dereliction of Divine justice. This means of grace was that life must be sacrificed that life might be spared, an unblemished substitute dying in place of the death-doomed sinner. And in this history of the Passover there comes the heaviest possible emphasis upon the use of the blood as the agent of salvation : “ When I see the blood ” I will spare and preserve.

Thus in the one case the blood cries for just vengeance, yet in the other case protects from just vengeance.

*Abel's blood for vengeance
Pleadeth to the skies,
But the blood of Jesus
For our pardon cries.*

(E. Caswell).

On July 21st, 1914, with the Egyptian summer sun at full blaze, I stood alone, in the stillness of the desert, amid the roofless, ruined houses of Pithom, the treasure city built by Pharaoh's cruelly oppressed slaves of Israel. One could somewhat estimate the severity of their work in such heat ; and also, gazing at the broken doorway of a small brick house, one pondered whether perhaps that was a lintel that had been splashed with blood and where Jehovah arrested the steps of that fierce Destroyer. Does my reader know in personal heart experience the meaning and power of the events of that far off stirring night ? or is it all to him but one among other curious items of antiquity ?

III.—THE BLOOD GIVES ACCESS TO GOD.

Before morning dawned the whole redeemed people of Israel, with their cattle and chattels, were on the march to

freedom. At the Red Sea their old tyrant was destroyed and they went through into the life of liberty, to walk with God in the desert. Yet, though redeemed and liberated, in themselves they were very much what they had always been ; vices and habits, stiff necks and hard hearts, were still there. How then shall their holy God be able to bear with and bless them ? How shall their sins in the desert be pardoned ? By precisely the same process as they were forgiven that night in Egypt. God appointed a permanent institution of worship and service, and this too had atoning blood as its legal, sacrificial basis. Innocent substitutes were perpetually to forfeit life to redeem the human lives forfeited by sin, and their blood was to be sprinkled openly on the altar of sacrifice where God and the sinner met.

But as yet the time and the people were not ripe for open unrestricted access to the immediate presence of God in the Most Holy Place of the building where He graciously dwelt among them. This defect would one day be rectified, even when a Sacrifice should have been offered adequate to the putting away of sin for ever. Yet once in the year there was provided a foresight, an anticipation of that better thing which was to come. There was appointed in Israel an order of priests, and the head of this privileged order, the high priest, was the official religious representative of the whole nation. Annually he was privileged to draw aside the veil behind which Jehovah dwelt in glory and to enter that sacred Presence. Yet as a sinner he was liable to die there ; the Presence of God is a fatal spot for a sinner. But he took there precious atoning blood, sprinkled it before and upon the golden cover of the ark above which shone the Glory, and thereby he was rendered safe from destruction. In him all whom he represented were kept secure.

The need for and benefit of that annual atonement, as distinct from and in addition to the daily, weekly, and monthly sacrifices, was this : These latter provided forgiveness for all sins of which individuals were conscious, which they confessed and forsook, as well as for general corporate guilt and defilement. But over and above such acknowledged transgression there remained the accumulated guilt of the multifarious sins and failures which God alone detected and which He must punish. This guilt and defilement would have prevented Divine favour being upon the people : but God in grace made provision for removing it by the atonement of this chief day of the year. The Chief Priest laid his hands upon the head of the goat that was to bear away the sin, and confessed “ over it *all* the iniquities of the children of Israel, and *all* their transgressions, even *all* their sins . . . and the goat shall bear upon it *all* their iniquities unto a solitary land ” (Lev. xvi. 22, 21). And the blood of accompanying sacrifices was taken into the holy Presence and sprinkled.

But this plenary atonement did not permit an Israelite

to commit sin wilfully and conceive that the annual sacrifice would protect him from penalty incurred. No, he must do all that he knew of the will of God, must avoid conscious transgression, must offer every personal atoning sacrifice prescribed for failure recognized, and only so would his unrecognized transgressions, iniquities, and sins be held covered by the annual atonement. For us today this is the truth stated in I John i. 6, 7 : " If we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth : but *if we walk in the light*, as He is in the light, we [we and God] have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." But when we know that we have sinned it is vain and wicked to presume that the full atonement of Calvary renders it needless for us to desist and be humbled, for the Scripture goes on in verse 9 to assure us that it is "*if we confess* our sins He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from *all* unrighteousness." The plenary virtue of the death of Christ is not available that the Christian may be careless and presumptuous. In all times and for all persons the holiness of God demands this inflexible rule : " He that covereth his transgressions shall not prosper ; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall obtain mercy " (Prov. xxviii. 13).

This subject will be enlarged later.

IV.—WHY THE BLOOD SAVES.

Even if we did not or could not know the reason for any command of God it were still our duty and safety to obey it ; but God desired men to be intelligent as to His requirements and appointments ; therefore when He ordained in Israel the sacrifice of blood He explained the ground of His orders. This is found in Leviticus xvii. Giving to Noah the ancient prohibition against eating flesh with the blood in it God had said that the blood is the life of the flesh. This prohibition was repeated to Israel by Moses seven times.* They as a people were to maintain the rights of God by keeping His laws, which the other nations had long since rejected, and this law against eating blood was prominent and its re-enactment was emphatic. It was again solemnly stated that God Himself would exact the penalty of death : " I will set My face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people " (verse 10).†

The basis of this is now declared in three concise sentences (Lev. xvii) :

* Gen. ix. 4 : Lev. iii. 17 ; vii. 26, 27 ; xvii. 10-14 ; xix. 26 : Deut. xii. 16, 23, 24 ; xv. 23.

† This shows that the phrase to " be cut off from his people " meant death, for this was the penalty of eating blood, as before announced to Noah (Gen. ix. 5, 6).

“ For the life of the flesh is *in* the blood ” (verse 11) ;
“ the blood thereof is *all one with* the life ” (verse 14) ;
“ the life of all flesh *is* the blood ” (verse 14).

After 3000 years man’s investigations have informed him that what the Creator said to Noah and Moses was fact, even that the blood and the life are inseparable. There is therefore physical reality under the notion of the savage that by drinking the blood of his slaughtered foe he becomes possessor of his vigour and courage. Blood transfusion is further proof that the blood and the life are one.

Therefore, when on that dread night in Egypt blood was seen all round the door of a house, that was visible proof that death must have occurred to provide so much blood ; therefore life had been taken, the sentence of death had been already executed in that house, and justice did not permit that the Destroyer should exact the penalty again.

It was essential that there should be proof indisputable that Jesus, the Son of God, the sinner’s Substitute, had really died. Without positive certainty of this there could be no assurance that the penalty of sin had been met and deliverance from eternal death secured. The Gospel narratives of the crucifixion supply distinct proofs of His actual death, leaving no possible ground for any such suggestion as that perhaps the Sufferer sank into a coma, was taken down only apparently dead, and later revived in the tomb. Had this been so there had been no atoning death and no life-imparting resurrection : we should all be still in our sins. But the details given exclude this notion. (1) At the moment of His death the Lord was still strong and conscious, for He “ cried with a loud voice ” (Matt. xxvii. 50 : Mk. xv. 37 : Lk. xxiii. 46). (2) He dismissed His spirit by His own act, saying, “ Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit ” (references as before). (3) He bowed His head of His own will : it did not sink helplessly as in a faint or coma (John xix. 30). It was when the centurion saw that the Crucified “ *so* gave up the spirit ” that he was convinced that somewhat supernatural was involved. He had seen many die, but never a death like this (Mk. xv. 39). But (4) the final proof that the Saviour had literally died was that, upon the piercing of His side there flowed out a stream of blood and water (John xix. 34). John most explicitly asserts that he saw this take place and gave true witness to the fact ; and on another occasion he emphasized that “ Jesus Christ came not in [the power or virtue of] water only, but in [that of] the water and in the blood ” [I John v. 6).

Of course, God the omniscient did not need visible proof that the lamb had been slain in the houses of the Israelites or that Jesus had really died. As to the latter fact, He had received back the surrendered spirit, devoid of which the bodily life of man cannot be maintained. But the Supreme Ruler carries on the administration of the universe under the

scrutiny of men and angels, and of these many are His enemies and critics. No ground must be allowed for these to complain that His government is not always and wholly just. Fallen man and fallen angels are ready so to complain. Adam promptly hinted that God was to blame that he had been tempted : “ The woman that THOU gavest me ” led me astray (Gen. iii. 12). Adam’s descendants are still all too eager to blame the Almighty as to His ordering of affairs. Satan did not hesitate to suggest that God had been unduly favourable to Job, making life too easy for him (Job i. 9-11).

In particular, Satan, as the chief executioner of the Divine sentence of death against the sinner (Heb. ii. 14 : “ the one having the power of death, the devil ”), must be left no right to complain that some are withdrawn from his sphere of action without warrant in law and against justice. And even as in Egypt the blood was the proof of sentence having been executed and that the Destroyer had no right of entry, so the blood of Jesus delivers the believer on Him from the jurisdiction of the Devil. They are translated out of the sphere of authority of the Prince of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of God’s love (Col. i. 13).

Thus by means of death Christ annulled the power of Satan over those who rely on Him and delivers them from fear of death ; for these “ fall asleep through Jesus ” (I Thes. iv. 14) and are in His charge and company as was the repentant thief (Lk. xxiii. 43), for they “ die in the Lord ” (Rev. xiv. 13). Of this real and blessed deliverance by death the blood of the Victim is the justification, being proof that death, the penalty of sin, had been exacted, for Jesus on the cross had made Himself answerable (Isa. liii. 7, Lowth, Newberry).

When the debt is paid the court bailiff loses right of entry and execution. If by a miscarriage of justice an innocent person was executed for a crime, and later the real culprit should confess or be discovered, the latter would escape execution. The law would hold that its full penalty having been actually paid another could not be made to meet it. And

*“ God will not payment twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety’s hand,
And then again at mine.”*

The blood is the proof of death, and death delivers from death. As an epitaph reads :

*“ Unless the death of death
Had given death to death
By His own death,
The gate of eternal life had been closed.”*

V.—WHOSE BLOOD SAVES ?

In the moral grading of creation a beast ranks lower than a man. If a murderer were to offer to redeem his life by the slaughter of a thousand sheep or bullocks justice would reject

the proposal. Therefore "it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Heb. x. 4). The sacrifices from Abel onward had no inherent saving virtue. They did indeed secure a real benefit to the devout offerer: "Jehovah had respect unto Abel and to his offering" (Gen. iv. 4). On the basis of such sacrifices He made an eternal covenant with Abraham (Gen. xv). Out of regard to the blood of the lambs He spared the firstborn in Egypt (Ex. xii). The burnt offering was accepted by God as atonement for the offerer (Lev. i. 4), and the sin-offering was accompanied by the guarantee of forgiveness (Lev. iv. 20, 26, 31, 35; v. 10, 13, 16, 18).

Yet because the life offered was not a just equivalent for the life forfeited the former could not provide for the latter a complete redemption, and the offender, though pardoned for that offence, did not attain a permanent righteousness before God. Hence those sacrifices needed to be constantly repeated, because the worshipper did not acquire consciousness of having been completely cleansed from sin (Heb. x. 1-4). The inadequacy of those sacrifices could have been justly inferred from God's declaration to Noah that nothing less than the shedding of the murderer's blood could expiate his guilt for having shed a neighbour's blood (Gen. ix. 5, 6); human life could be balanced only against human life, for man having been made in the image of God transcends in dignity the lower creatures, the death of which cannot therefore in law correspond to his death which that law demands against his sin. This was made specially clear under the law of Moses by there being a long catalogue of major crimes for which no sacrifice could be accepted to deliver the culprit from the capital penalty. Murder, adultery, idolatry, blasphemy, and sabbath breaking were among these crimes.

The holy God could grant that former measure of pardon without dereliction of justice because He foreknew that in due course a Sacrifice would be offered which would carry that inherent saving virtue which all other sacrifices lacked. These were but anticipatory of that, and derived from it what benefit they brought. Any discounting of the future by man is of necessity a speculation since he cannot guarantee the future; but this is not so with God, for He can certainly bring to pass the event on which He counts and in anticipation of which He acts. His lamb was foreknown before the foundation of the world (I Pet. i. 20). The absolute certainty of His atoning death justified God in "passing over sins done aforetime," that is, before the sacrifice of Christ at Golgotha (Rom. iii. 25). On this principle David, upon repentance and confession, was pardoned for adultery and murder and the capital penalty was remitted (II Sam. xii. 13). This forbearance of God was justified solely, but fully, by the atoning death of His Son.

From the same declaration of God to Noah it could have

been further inferred that the substitute needed for the sinner must himself be man, since only human life could answer for human life. This had been announced by God in Eden when He promised that the foe of man should be crushed by "the seed of the woman" (Gen. iii. 15). Yet no mere man could suffice, for only one human life could be redeemed by a life which was only human; by strict justice one man could be the substitute for but one man. It was therefore a necessity in Divine law that the promised Substitute should be of a moral rank and worth that should surpass the worth of all mankind, not of one or a few or even many sinners, but Who should be a "propitiation for the whole world" (I John ii. 2). This demand could be met only by the Creator in person, since He alone transcends in moral dignity His whole creation and could alone offer the indispensable plenary sacrifice. Therefore God in love assumed humanity in the person of His Son, and was born of a woman, becoming Jesus Christ the Son of God.

But as no sinner could offer his life to redeem another sinner, his own life being already forfeited by his own sin, therefore this Redeemer-Man must be without sin, inherited or committed. This necessitated such a birth as should prevent the transmission to Him of a sinful nature and grant to Him a pure nature which, being without sin, could live without sinning. His birth of a virgin by the direct act of the Spirit of God was a necessity. Without deity the Substitute could not act for all the race of man; without humanity He could not represent mankind at all; without sinlessness He could not atone for sinners. To deny either of these features is to leave the human race without a Saviour, exposed to the inflexible justice that demands death as the inescapable and just penalty of sin.

*There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin,
He only could unlock the gate
Of Heav'n and let us in.* (C. F. Alexander).

"But now once at the consummation of the ages hath He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. ix. 26). Whose blood saves? "Ye were redeemed . . . with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ," "in Whom we have our redemption, through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His [God's] grace" (I Pet. i. 19 : Eph. i. 7).

VI.—WHOM DOES THE BLOOD SAVE?

(a) In the possibility, the whole human race, indeed the whole creation. It is declared distinctly that the sacrifice of Christ cleanses the heavenly things, defiled by the sin of angels (Heb. ix. 23), and that the whole creation is to be relieved from the curse which sin has brought (Roms. viii.

18- 25). This defiling of the heavenly regions where God dwells by the sin of angels has its earthly counterpart, in that the Holy Places of Tabernacle and Temple, where God dwelt, had to be purified annually on the day of Atonement from the defilement occasioned by the sins of Israel (Lev. xvi. 16, etc.).

It is shown beyond doubt that the love of God, which provides eternal life for sinners, is toward "the world" (John iii. 16), and that the Righteous One is the propitiation not only for such as have already believed on Him, but "for the whole world" (I John ii. 2). It is false dealing with the Word of God to make this last passage mean that He is the propitiation for the world *of the elect*. In ch. v. 19 of the very same Epistle the same Apostle uses again the same contrast between believers and others when he says, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the Evil One." Evidently the "whole world" is all of the human race in contrast to those who have been born of God. Who would think of adding here that it is the whole world *of the elect* that are in the sphere and power of Satan?

It is contrary to the infinite dignity of the Divine Substitute to imagine that He *could* offer a *limited* redemption; it is derogatory to the divine virtue of His precious blood to attach any restriction to its scope. Since the Creator transcends the creation, so must His sacrifice transcend its need. Therefore that His saints should intercede for "*all men*" is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, Who wishes [*thelo*] *all men* [emphatic] to be saved"; unto which end the one Mediator between the one God and men, Christ Jesus, Himself man, "gave Himself a ransom for *all*" (I Tim. ii. 1-6). As Anselm, in a passage to be given later, long since argued, a payment which more than covers the debt must needs justify complete remission of it.

Words could not be more explicit. Salvation through the blood of Christ is available for *all* men. He who knows this has strong confidence as he announces the good news to every man, and he feels also that he is "debtor" to all men, for he holds a treasure intended for every man (Rom. i. 14, 15).

(b) But this universal possibility can become effective to those only who repent of sin and are willing to be delivered from its power and penalty, and who for this purpose accept personally the benefit of the atoning blood of the Lamb of God. "He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe His holy gospel." God has not changed His mind as to the gifts and calling bestowed on man (Rom. xi. 29). Therefore He uniformly respects the grant to angels and men of freedom of action. Man sins willingly and therefore must repent and believe willingly. God constrains but does not coerce. He persuades but does not force.

The essence of the faith that saves is seen in the action of the man in Egypt who splashed the protecting blood around his doorway. He accepted the declaration of God that (1) death was due as the punishment of sin, (2) that it would be executed, (3) that the death of the substitute would be accepted for deliverance. His godly fear and his faith were displayed in his obedience to the direction to shed and sprinkle the saving blood. By doing this he publicly declared his danger and his faith, and God attested his faith by granting deliverance. In our case also it is thus : “ if we confess our sins He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins ” (I John i. 9), “ because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved : for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness ; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be put to shame ” (Rom. x. 9-11).

This shows that obedience is of the essence of faith. Therefore the gospel requires “ *obedience* of faith,” and “ a great company of the priests were *obedient* to the faith ” (Rom. i. 5 : Ac. vi. 7). Salvation includes of prime necessity deliverance from the unsubdued will. Obedience alone can prove saving faith. God *commands* all men everywhere to repent, to believe on His Son, and to love one another (Ac. xvii. 30 : I John iii. 23).

VII.—BENEFITS SECURED BY ATONING BLOOD.

(1) *Atonement*. The principal, because the basic, benefit of atoning blood is that it atones. Of it God said : “ I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls [lives] : for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life,” with which it is all one (Lev. xvii. 11).

The Hebrew word translated “ atonement ” has the picture “ to cover.” Thus the ark was covered with pitch (Gen. vi. 14), where the same noun and verb are used as “ atonement ” and “ atone.” That which is covered is hidden from sight, and true here is that saying “ out of sight, out of mind.” The same thought is expressed by another word meaning to smear over, and so erase a record. It is used negatively and positively as a term of judgment : positively, “ let their name be blotted out ” (Ps. cix. 13, 14). In Neh. iv. 5 : “ let not their sin be blotted out ” is parallel with another word meaning “ to cover,” “ cover not their iniquity.” This word for “ to cover ” has the picture of clothing which covers, and so conceals, the person of the wearer. It is therefore similar in meaning to the former word for “ to cover,” to render unseen, and it is used in Isa. xliv. 22 in connection with yet another picture of hiding from sight : “ I have *blotted out*, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins : return unto Me, for I have redeemed

thee.”

Thus there is a triple picture of the hiding of sin from sight, the pitch hid the wood of the ark, the substance smeared on the book hides the record of the offence, the cloud hides the earth from the view of one on the mountain top. By words and pictures God has taken pains to encourage the repentant and believing sinner to be assured that He removes the guilt which hinders fellowship and demands punishment. It is the atoning blood which effects this saving change of status Godward.

The first of the words for “to cover” has an unique application. One form of it is used exclusively of the golden lid that covered the ark of the covenant in the Most Holy Place, It hid from sight the tables of the law which man had broken and which cried against him for vengeance. This covering is called “the mercy seat” (Ex. xxv. 17, and twenty six times later). In the Greek translation of the Old Testament (LXX), used by Christ and the apostles, this word is rendered by *hilasterion*, which word is shown in the New Testament to point to “Christ Jesus, Whom God hath set forth to be a *propitiation*, through faith, in His blood” (Rom. iii. 24, 25); and a cognate used in I John 1, 2 says that “Jesus Christ, the Righteous, is the *propitiation* for our sins.” Therefore the true covering that really hides from view the outraged law of God is His Son, Whose divine nature was typified by the pure gold of which the lid of the ark was made.

That the Hebrew word “to cover” is the equivalent of the Greek word “propitiate,” used in the Septuagint and the New Testament, shows that the truth of atonement is in the New Testament though the word is not.

But though that golden covering sufficiently hid from sight the tables of the law, this did not by itself secure the sinful people from the judgment of God, for not gold but blood is that which shows that death, the full penalty of sin, has been executed and the broken law repaired. Therefore that golden lid had to be sprinkled annually with the atoning blood that erased the record of the sins of the people and hid these from the sight of God as a thick cloud blots out the landscape, being proof visible that the sins had been expiated by equivalent penalty. The divinity of our Lord could not by itself save sinners, it being no equivalent whatever for the forfeited life of men. It was indispensable that He, being God, should become man so as to meet the whole legal demand of God that death must follow sin. Therefore, as the passage quoted from Romans iii. 25 says, “God set Him forth to be a propitiation . . . in [the virtue of] His blood.”

Israel’s high priest could only stand safely in that holy place by virtue of the blood that covered the sins of the people. So Christ, having in grace assumed legal responsibility for our sins, was while bearing them debarred the presence of

God and constrained to cry " Why hast Thou forsaken Me ? " But His death discharged the penalty for both Him as well as us ; His blood shed proved that the penalty has been met, and it is in the virtue of His own blood that He entered once for all into the holy place in heaven itself, having by death obtained a redemption of eternal validity and virtue (Heb. ix. 12).

That precious blood covers for ever the sins of those who truly repent and unfeignedly believe. Upon this their submission God puts His laws in their hearts as the rule of life and writes them in their minds as moral light and the instinct of duty. Of such He says, " their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more " (Heb. x. 15-18). Blessed, indeed, is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered (Ps. xxxii. 1), being hidden from the eye of God, as the body is hidden by clothing. Precious, indeed, is the atoning, covering blood of Christ, which only can hide ought from Omniscience and cause the Infinite Mind to forget.

(to be continued)

EXTRACTS

J. HUDSON TAYLOR.

The question is frequently asked, Who are represented by the daughters of Jerusalem ? (Song of Songs, iii. 5).

They are clearly not the bride, yet they are not far removed from her . . . they describe very fully the beauty of the bride, but, on the other hand, we never find them occupied with the *person* of the Bridegroom ; *He* is not all in all to them ; they mind outward and earthly things . . . are for the present more concerned about the things of the world than the things of God. To advance their own interests, to secure their own comfort, concerns them more than to be in all things pleasing to the LORD. They *may* form part of that great company spoken of in Rev. vii. 9-17, who come out of the great tribulation, but they will not form part of the 144,000 " the first fruits unto GOD and the LAMB " [Rev. xiv. 1-5). They have forgotten the warning of our LORD in Luke xxi. 34-36 ; and hence they are not " accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the SON of Man." They have not, with Paul, counted " all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS the LORD," and hence they do *not* " attain unto " *that* resurrection from among the dead, which Paul felt he might miss, but aimed to attain unto.

We wish to place on record our solemn conviction that not all who are Christians, or think themselves to be such, will attain to that resurrection of which St. Paul speaks in Phil. iii. 11, or will thus meet the LORD in the air. Unto those

who by lives of consecration manifest that they are not of the world, but are looking for Him, "He will appear without sin unto salvation."

From *Union and Communion*, p. 84.

SISTER EVA of Friedenshort.

The Holy Spirit, Who is given unto us, is the pledge (II Cor. i. 22) that God will finish His work of transfiguration, if we do not hinder Him through our impatience and lack of reverent stillness. Through resistance and any form of self-assertion one can in the end make it impossible even for Him, the great Master Builder, so that He must lay us aside.

The aim of it all is that we may be ready to be clothed upon, changed, whether it be that He calls us with the sound of the trumpet or by the mouth of the angel ; whether a few clods of earth cover us, or whether it will be a straight path upwards, when those who remain are caught up to meet the LORD in the air at His Coming (I Thess. iv. 17) ; it all centres in this—we may, we should be, "*waiting ones*."

We must not lose sight of the expectancy of the wise virgins. Our vessel must be full of the oil of the Spirit, so that our lamp may not go out in the storm. Let us entrust ourselves absolutely to the transfiguring work of the Holy Spirit until He possesses our entire bodily life, so that the "change" (II Cor. v. 4 : I Cor. xv. 50-57) may at last be possible. It will not be possible for all. He who is still carnally minded, and will not give up the self-life, but holds it fast and nourishes it, will hardly attain to the "change" on the Day of the LORD. He can indeed be saved and go into blessedness (I Cor. iii. 11-15), but to be called unto the Glory is something different ! There are conditions attached to the Glory, and these conditions are : to be crucified with Christ, and risen with Christ, to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

It goes from one deliverance to another. Spirit, soul, and body entirely—not piecemeal. Many people would indeed like to get rid of a gross fault that is always bringing them into difficulties—irritability, carelessness, unfaithfulness, and the like—but that is not the right motive. The point is simply this : that we should become something that is to the praise of His Glory, that we may be a trophy of His Grace and that we may not disappoint Him. We should be still before Him, that He may perfect in us His great work.

From *The Working of the Holy Spirit in Daily Life*, pp. 99-102. (By kind permission of Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton Ltd.).

INEXPRESSIBLE COMPASSION

*Who like Thyself, O Lord, dost pity,
So many wants and faults endure !
Who like ourselves, O Lord, so guilty,
By wasting many an idle hour !
Oh work in us in some new fashion,
From sloth awake by quickening Breath;
Thy inexpressible compassion
Give wings to all our life of faith !*

*Oh turn to us with grace refreshing,
And draw our hearts yet nearer Thee,
Our hands relaxed new power possessing,
And strengthened every weary knee !
Like eagles always upward rising,
With strength and courage ever new,
To men it shall be all surprising
What Thy strength can in weakness do.*

*Oh grant what we have brought before Thee:
Thy Father shall be further praised;
And Thy great name shall have the glory
In Thine own people thus displayed;
That not through us Thy foemen scorning
Shall e'er revile Thy glorious name,
Oh show that Thou art every morning
To all eternity the same.*

(SPITTA)

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NOT WITHOUT BLOOD

*Water cannot wash thee, rain
Ever make thee pure again;
Rarest ether, deepest sea
Not rare or pure enough for thee.
Thou hast a blemish which the sun
Is darkened when it looks upon.
All nature's yearly births of green
Can never, never make thee clean.
So great thy sin, if thou shouldst hide
Upon the snowy mountain side,
The very snows, with spotless quilt
(Not pure enough to hide thy guilt),
The very snows would prate, and would
Thy trespass write in deepest blood.
The world is sick: beneath her skin
There lurks the leprosy of sin;
And virtue none in earth or heaven
By which such sin should be forgiven.*

*But lo, the Lamb, and lo, the Blood!
And lo, the sacrificial Rood!
Oh hush, the life of Jesus falls
Down Zion's blood-embattled walls;
And "Come," and "Come," the Spirit saith,
All ye that dwell in dark and death,
Unto the Blood of Him in whom
The flower hath eternal bloom;
The Blood that raiseth all that died,
And putrefactions purified.
The Blood, the Blood, the blessed Blood,
Whereby the leaf breaks from the wood;
Whereby creation all renewed,
Delivered from the servitude
Of sin's corruption, and the pain
Of hopeless travail, shall attain
Unto the fair similitude,
Unto the glorious liberty
Of all God's ransomed family;
Of them in heaven and them on earth
Who sing the song of Jesus' worth,
Who sing the praise of Him who died
To save them by a second birth,
And worship Him the crucified,
And bless God for that Riven Side
Whose "blood and water" can alone
For thy sin and the world's atone.*

R. REEVE

ATONING BLOOD

What it does and what it does not do. (2)

ATONEMENT includes other features connected with salvation. (2) *Propitiation*. This word is not used in the English Old Testament to translate any Hebrew word connected with atonement. It is used in the New Testament to render certain Greek words with the same meaning, and these Greek words were used by the Seventy to translate Hebrew words. Thus the truth expressed by the word "propitiation" is found everywhere in the Bible. This truth is that, on the ground of atoning sacrifice, the Holy One is propitiated, is warranted and enabled to take a favourable attitude to the culprit He must otherwise have rejected and punished.

Our Lord described a tax-gatherer coming to the entrance of the temple, standing in humility some distance back, expressing contrition by smiting his breast, acknowledging his utter wickedness, and appealing for Divine mercy by crying, "God, *He propitiated* to me the sinner" (Lk. xviii. 13). On the brazen altar before him, and between him and the holy God, there was consuming away in the fire of judgment the innocent victim which had died on his account, and the meaning of his prayer was, "O God, out of regard to the death of my substitute be favourable to me!" The choice of the word "propitiated" showed that his prayer was intelligent.

The appeal was granted because the lamb spoke to God of His Lamb Who would shortly die for the tax-gatherer's sins, and Who would do so by express provision of God, for it was He Who sent Christ forth to be "a propitiation, through faith, by His blood" (Rom. iii. 25). Thus the Son of God "became a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people" (Heb. ii. 17). "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world," and "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John ii. 2; iv. 10). He is the divine reality typified by the propitiatory, the mercy-seat, in the tabernacle and temple, where of old the atoning blood was sprinkled to secure the safety of Israel and the continued favour and presence of God.

(3) *Reconciliation*. The tax-gatherer's prayer "God, be propitiated to me" was an appeal for a change of attitude on the part of God. Propitiation brings reconciliation. The Greek noun and verb (*katallagee*, *katallassö*), translated in the New Testament "reconciliation," are not used in the

Septuagint in connexion with atonement, but in the New Testament are very definitely so connected.

The passages are :

- (i) Rom. v. 10, 11 : “ For if, while we were enemies, we were *reconciled* to God through the death of His Son, much more, being *reconciled*, we shall be kept safe (Moule) in His life . . . through Whom we have now received the *reconciliation*.”
- (ii) 2 Cor. v. 18, 19 : “ But all things are of God, Who *reconciled us to Himself* through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of *reconciliation* ; to wit, that God was in Christ *reconciling* the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of *reconciliation*.”

These statements make evident that

- (a) God is the Reconciler ;
- (b) Christ is He Who effects the reconciliation ;
- (c) It is by His death that He effected this ;
- (d) The scope of the reconciliation is universal, cosmical (*kosmon katallassoun*) ;
- (e) The gospel is the proclamation and appeal of this reconciliation ;
- (f) The individual must personally avail himself of it by responding to the changed attitude in God made possible by the death of Christ.

The meaning of the Greek word is certain. In 1 Cor. vii. 11 it is directed that a Christian woman living away from her husband is to remain unmarried “ or else be reconciled to her husband.” A change of heart is indicated in the Septuagint at Jer. xlvi. 39 : “ how has he *changed* ! How has Moab turned his back ! ”—the former bold, courageous spirit has given place to fright and flight. The Greek word is the equivalent of the Latin *permutatis* (English “ permutation ”), which included a change of sentiment, an altered attitude of one person to another. Similarly God and man are changed in heart toward each other by the mediatorial action and death of the Son of God. Apprehension by man of such divine love and grace by God changes his distrust to confidence, his enmity to love, his rebellion to obedience. And on God’s part, the satisfaction rendered to His law by Christ on behalf of man removes the just displeasure and holy rejection of the sinner which was the inevitable reaction of the Holy One against his sin.

Such change in man is easy to grasp but some refuse to admit of such a change in God, for they stress that He is ever well-disposed toward man and loves the sinner in spite of the sin which He hates. It is certain that the Greek word can include such a change in God. It is used four times in the Greek of the Apocrypha in 2 Maccabees :

- i. 5 : “ May God be *at one* with you ” ;
- v. 20 : “ The great Lord being *reconciled* ” ;
- vii. 33 : “ He shall be *at*

one again with His servants ” ; viii. 29 : “ They besought the merciful Lord to be *reconciled* with His servants.”

Nor was such a change in God a new conception or limited to Hebrew, Greek, or Latin thought. In early Egyptian times a suppliant, Mes-em-Neter, turned in heart from false gods and prayed thus to the God of Right and Truth :

Behold, the god hath shame of me, but let my faults be washed away and let them fall upon both hands of the god of Right and Truth. Do away utterly with the transgression which is in me, together with [my] wickedness and sinfulness, O god of Right and Truth. May this god be at peace with me ! Do away utterly with the obstacles which are between thee and me . . . grant thou that I may bring to thee the offerings which will make peace [between thee and men] whereon thou livest, and that I also may live thereon. Be thou at peace with me and do away utterly with all the shame of me which thou hast in thy heart because of me.*

This remarkable prayer descends from within a measurable period after the Flood. It shows how there lingered among men recollections of the true God, His character and demands. The suppliant was aware of his own wickedness and sinfulness and that these were obstacles to fellowship with God ; but he knew that there were sacrifices which could remove these, and create peace between God and men. He knew also that the God of Truth was ashamed of him the sinner, and he longed that this shame on his account might be removed from the heart of God ; yet this could be effected by the act of God alone.

Thus did this suppliant of ancient times in a vile heathen land know well that there must be induced a change in God toward himself, the sinner, and that offerings were requisite which could remove utterly his wickedness and transgressions. How parallel is this to the statement concerning Jehovah that, as He contemplated the corruption and violence of men before the Flood, *He changed His mind* as to having created man and was grieved in heart (Gen. vi. 5, 6). This was a change of heart indeed from the day when He had seen that everything He had made was very good, and it was a change which resulted in the destruction of the unrepentant race.

The seeming mystery is resolved by the statement “ if ye call on Him as Father ” remember that “ without respect of persons He *judgeth* according to each man’s work ” (1 Pet. i. 17). God is both father and judge. In the highest relationship He is the heavenly Father of those who have been born again of His Spirit upon faith in His Son : in the creatorial sense He is the father, the cause of existence, of all spirits (Heb. xii. 9 : Eccl. xii. 7). This includes all orders of beings, heavenly as well as earthly, for from Him “ every fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named ”

* See *The Book of the Dead*, trans. Budge, 32.

(Eph. iii. 15), which fact Paul kept in mind when approaching Him in prayer.

Now in the former sense God, the Father of all, loves with Divine affection all souls that He has made ; it is His nature to do so. On the other hand, as the Ruler and Judge of all, and for the well-being of all, " God is a righteous judge, yea, a God that hath indignation every day " (Ps. vii. 11). It cannot be otherwise as to either attitude ; neither excludes the other, a truth which Peter pressed upon the children of God in Christ to whom he was writing. Cases have been known where human judges magnified the law and made it honourable by fining culprits according to law, and then gratified their innate instinct of mercy by themselves paying the fine. As humane, such a judge is merciful at heart ; as righteous, his mind is set against the criminal. His own payment of the penalty changes this latter and just attitude and liberates the quality of mercy, so that without failure of justice he can discharge the offender. The satisfaction of law made by the voluntary payment reconciles him *as judge* to the law-breaker against whom his heart *as judge* was definitely antagonistic.

The fact mentioned above (*d*) that the reconciliation affects the *cosmos*, " God was in Christ world-reconciling unto Himself," must surely imply that the change meant here is on God's part, since the *cosmos*, whether fully universal or the whole of mankind, is not a corporate entity with a single heart capable of a collective change of feeling towards God. But the sacrifice of the God-man, being of universal validity, gives to the universe collectively a new aspect before God and warrants a change of treatment from strict justice to the offer of mercy. Yet as before remarked under *viii.*, " Whom does the blood save ? " this universal opportunity of mercy benefits each individual only upon individual faith.

The Scripture says that the Lamb of God " taketh away the sin of the world " (*kosmos*). If this is not universal then that region of the universe not affected must remain for ever defiled and unreconciled. Apart from the blood of Christ the heavens must, in that case, remain for ever unclean in God's sight, which is contrary to Heb. ix. 23. That typical Most Holy Place in Israel, the dwelling of God, was cleansed by sprinkled blood.

We must indeed keep in mind R. B. Girdlestone's words :

When we speak of Christ reconciling His Father to us (see the second article of the Church of England) we are not to picture up an angry Judge being propitiated by a benevolent Son—this would be an entire misrepresentation of the Christian Faith. Rather we should regard the Son as sent by the Father to die for the sins of the world, in order that He might remove the bar which hindered the free action of Divine love on the heart of man. (*Old Testament Synonyms*, 217.)

Therefore Griffith Thomas rightly says :

There is practical unanimity among scholars that reconciliation in St. Paul means a change of relation on God's part towards man, something done by God for man, which has modified what would otherwise have been His attitude to the sinner. Thus, reconciliation is much more than a change of feeling on man's part towards God, and must imply first of all a change of relation in God towards man. It is this that the Article [No. II] was intended to express by the phrase, "To reconcile His Father to us." If it should be said that such a change in God is unthinkable, it may be answered that even in forgiveness, if we are to understand it aright, there must be some change of attitude, for God cannot possibly be in the same attitude before as after forgiveness (*The Principles of Theology*, 53).

Upon the passage quoted above from 2 Cor. v. 18, Alford wrote :

Observe, that the reconciliation spoken of in this and the next verse, is that of *God to us*, absolutely and objectively, through His Son : that whereby He can complacently behold and endure a sinful world, and receive all who come to Him by Christ. This, the subjective reconciliation—*of men to God*—follows as a matter of exhortation, ver. 20. On Romans v. 10 Moule says :

When we were hostile to His claims, and as such subject to the hostility of His Law, WE WERE RECONCILED TO OUR GOD THROUGH THE DEATH OF HIS SON (God coming to judicial peace with us, and we brought to submissive peace with Him) ; [and in a Note he adds] *Katallassein, Katallagee*. It is sometimes held that these words denote "reconciliation" in the sense of man's laying aside his distrust, reluctance, resistance towards God, not of God's laying aside His holy displeasure against man . . . But *Katallagee* (and its verb) is as a fact used in the Greek of the Apocrypha in connexions where the thought is just that of the clemency of a king, induced to pardon. [Two of the passages cited above from 2 Maccabees are given] . . . And there is no place in the New Testament where the meaning, *conciliation of an offended party*, would not well suit *katallassesthai*, etc. The present passage (Rom. v. 10, 11) would be practically meaningless otherwise. The whole thought is of divine mercy, providing a way for accepting grace. (Expositor's Bible, *Romans*, 138, 141.)

The passages in 2 Maccabees support Moule's statement that the Greek words *can* carry the thought of God being reconciled to the sinner. His remark that this is implied in Rom. v. 11 seems just ; for reconciliation is not presented in this verse as something wrought in man but as something that man "receives," as a benefit offered for faith to accept.

In the preceding verse the other aspect may be in view : “ *we* were reconciled *to God*,” though this can mean that we, His enemies, were made acceptable to God “ through the death of His Son.”

Upon the Greek words *katallagee*, etc., H. P. Liddon wrote that they must be taken passively, not merely or chiefly actively—

The reconciliation is accomplished, not only in the hearts of men, but in the Heart of God. Men are reconciled with God in Christ, in such sense, that God, seeing them in union with His Beloved and Perfect Son, abandons His just wrath which their sins have kindled, and admits them to His favour and blessing. This, the constant faith of the Church, was scientifically worked out by S. Anselm of Canterbury in his *Cur Deus Homo* [Why was God made Man ?]

[The conclusion of Anselm’s demonstration is given in his chap. xx.

So, the mercy of God, which whilst we were considering God’s justice and man’s sin, seemed to you to vanish away, we now find to be so great and so perfectly consonant with justice as that neither greater nor juster could be conceived of. For what can be understood as being more merciful than that God the Father should say to the sinner who was condemned to eternal torments, and who had nothing wherewith to redeem himself : “ Take My Only-Begotten Son, and offer Him for thyself ” ; and the Son Himself [should say] : “ Take Me, and redeem thyself ? ” But they do, as it were, speak thus when they call and draw us to the Christian faith. And what can be more just than that he [God the Father], to whom is given [by the Son] a payment greater than all that is owing to him, should, if this be given in payment of what is wrong, remit the whole debt ?]

Liddon adds :

Now although it is true that the essential nature of God is unchangeable Love, yet the living action of God’s love in the human world has been hindered and impeded by sin. In reality God’s Love is identical with His Righteousness. But sin has produced an apparent antithesis between these Attributes. Although God eternally and unchangeably loves the world, His actual relation to it is one of opposition, because the Unity of His Attributes is disturbed and the action of His Love *ad extra* [to that which is outside His own being], is restrained by sins. The *orgee tou Theou* [wrath of God] is an expression which implies, that in virtue of the Eternal necessities of His being, God’s relation of Love to the human world is unsatisfied, owing to the agency of sin, since sin contradicts His essential nature. It is not then His unchangeable

Character, but His relation (produced by sin) to the world of men, that is really affected by the *katallagee* [reconciliation]. No mere man could affect that relation by his personal conduct. Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, Who also as the Pattern or Ideal Man represented the whole human race, could, and did, by the consummate expression of His obedience on the Cross, establish a new relation between the active manifestation of the Love of God and all those who by faith are associated with His own supreme self-sacrifice. (*Explanatory Analysis of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, 101, 102.)

Blessed indeed is he who knows from his own joy in God that he has been reconciled to Him by the death of His Son ; happy is the man who can exultingly sing Wesley's ecstatic lines :

My God is reconciled,
His pardoning voice I hear ;
He owns me for His child,
I can no longer fear ;
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And Father, Abba, Father ! cry.

A further element in salvation is described by the term (4) *Forgiveness*. The old covenant repeated often the guarantee of God to the offender that, upon the appointed sacrifice having been offered, and its blood sprinkled, "the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven" (Lev. iv. 20, 26 ; etc.). Under the new covenant, written for the assurance of the believer, it stands that "in the Beloved we have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His [God's] grace (Eph. i. 7). Now the criminal whom the king pardons is not executed.

But the atoning blood of Christ secures more than pardon, even

(5) *Justification*. "We are justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in His blood," in order that God "might Himself be righteous, and the Declarer righteous of him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 24-26).

A judge may declare that the man before him was justified in law in doing the deed in question, that is, that in doing it he acted within his legal right and is righteous before the law. But the judge cannot declare a man righteous who has broken the law, not until he shall have rendered full satisfaction to the law by meeting its full penalty for his trespass. Thus a bankrupt may secure discharge from further proceedings to recover debts, but the record that he failed to meet his liabilities stands against him and his character

is thereby impaired before the law. He is let off payment because he has no resources that can be passed to his creditors, but the law does not justify him for having failed to pay twenty shillings in the pound. But should he later pay the debts in full, with interest, the court record against him is withdrawn, the former failure is cancelled, and thenceforth he is regarded by the law as a righteous man, as if he had not before failed. And this will be the case just as completely should another have provided the payment in full. Thus the adverse record is "blotted out," and the former default is no more remembered officially.

This is *justification*; the acquiring by the bankrupt of a new and perfect standing in law. Plainly it is more than simple forgiveness. A debt may be forgiven, and the creditor suffer the loss; but this does not put the debtor upon the same morally satisfactory footing as if either he had never defaulted or that he, or a mediator or surety for him, had satisfied the creditor by payment in full.

The sacrifices offered under the law of Moses could not provide for the sinner more than forgiveness. They did not in themselves adequately compensate the Divine law that had been infringed, and moreover the more heinous crimes were not within the range of that sacrificial system. Only the blood of the Son of God could meet fully the claims of God; but He having died, the glorious proclamation could be made, "Be it known unto you therefore, brethren, that through *this man* is proclaimed unto you remission of sins: and by Him every one that believeth is justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Ac. xiii. 38, 39). Against one that the law has declared righteous no proceedings can lie.

(6) *Remission*. The text last quoted speaks of *remission* of sins. The force of the word is seen in the commercial phrase "to make a remittance," to send something away to another person and place. On the day of the annual atonement in Israel, the live goat, to which ceremonially the sins of the people were transferred, was sent away from the camp into the wilderness, and "the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a solitary place" (Lev. xvi. 21, 22). Thus, in the fulfilment of the type, did the holy Sin-bearer go out into the darkness of being forsaken by His God and take away our sins into that solitude. "Apart from shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22), but in Christ "we have redemption through His blood, the remission [same word] of our trespasses" (Eph. i. 7); for He is "the Lamb of God that *taketh away* the sin of the world" (John i. 29), because He "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. ix. 26).

Sometimes an estate owner knows that his tenants are unable to pay their rent and he decides to bear the loss himself. He therefore "remits" all or part of what is due.

He suffers loss and they escape payment. Thus did God in Christ suffer for our sins and these are remitted. By faith in God's announcement of this remission we receive assurance of salvation, for the messenger of the Lord is sent "to give knowledge of salvation unto His people in the remission of their sins" (Lk. i. 77).

Another vast benefit secured by atoning blood is (7) *Redemption*. An Israelite might mortgage his house, land, or crops, but the law gave a right of redemption. Or he might even have dedicated a field unto Jehovah, but right of redemption was granted. Or he might have mortgaged his liberty and labour, and become a bondservant. In some cases his nearest kinsman was required by law to redeem him. The regulations are found in chaps. xxv. and xxvii. of Leviticus, and the proceedings as to redeeming land are shown in the pleasant history of Naomi and Ruth. The relative who thus intervened was known as the *goel*, the kinsman-redeemer, and was a forerunner of Him Who became man that He might redeem men.

The essence of all such transactions, ancient and modern, is that a person or article was under some control, had passed under bondage to another, and the redeemer released him or it from that control, and restored freedom. And further, this liberation could be effected only by payment of an adequate price.

The chief New Testament word for this transaction (*lutroö*) meant originally to release captives, taken in war or by robbers, by means of a ransom, and then to manumit a slave. Thus did Christ, having by incarnation become our kinsman, act as our Kinsman-Redeemer, and "give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. xx. 28 : Mk. x. 45). No less price could redeem our forfeited life ; no more could be demanded. Man is in a threefold bondage : (a) to his sins, which enslave him ; (b) to the law of God that condemns him for his sins ; (c) to death, their penalty. From this bondage Christ sets free the believer in Him.

(a) Tit. ii. 13, 14 : "our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ ; Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity," that is, from the iniquities themselves, not only from the consequences. This is the point of the first statement regarding Him found in the New Testament : "thou shalt call His name JESUS ; for He is the one that shall save His people *from their sins*" (Matt. i. 18).

(b) Gal. iii. 13 speaks of the curse of the law pronounced upon all who break its precepts, even the sentence of death : but "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us ; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Through sin each man was fallen under this dread condemnation of the law of God, but Christ in wondrous grace and condescension, consented to be "born under law, that He might redeem them that were under

law" (Gal. iv. 4, 5). There is here no article; simply "under law"; not "the law," as if meaning the Mosaic law; Christ was "born under law, that He might redeem them that were under law"; and ver. 8 shows that the passage is directed to Gentiles, idolators, not only to Jews: "ye were in bondage to them that by nature are no gods." All men are liable to the law of God that death is the penalty of sin.

A different word for redeem is used here *exagorazo*. It carries two thoughts; (1) the publicity of the transaction, for the root *agorazo* meant to buy in open market (*agora*, market place); and (2) the *completeness* of the purchase, for the prefix *ex* gives the emphasis of our phrase "I bought him out, I acquired *all* his holding in the Company"; and therefore the sacrifice made by Christ sets the believer wholly free from the grip of the outraged law by completely satisfying its demand on the sinner.

This verb is found elsewhere in the New Testament at Eph. v. 16: Col. iv. 5, "redeeming the time." At whatever cost of care and sacrifice the believer, being himself redeemed completely from sin and doom, is himself to redeem completely every minute from being mis-spent and wasted. He is to buy up every opportunity to do the will of God. This leads us to notice a fourth sphere and aspect of redemption.

(c) 1 Pet. i. 18: "ye were redeemed (*lutroö*) not with corruptible things, with silver, or gold, *from your vain manner of life*, handed down from your fathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ." Men everywhere have thought it natural and sufficient to live as did their forbears. Nor is there virtue in change for its own sake. But the Christian is under a sacred and imperious obligation to remember that man's ways are not God's ways (Isa. lv. 8, 9); that nothing that originates in the world's system of life is of God (1 John ii. 16); so that to follow the way our fathers took is surely to miss the way of God. And this is a "vain manner of life"—it produces no true satisfaction now and its vanity will be fully evident when the world passes away and sinners have only to say

My days are in the yellow leaf,
The flowers and fruits of life are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone. (Byron).

To save us from this lamentable fate the Son of God shed His precious blood. He bought us out of that wretched enslaved condition that we should live worthily for Him and eternity. The redeemed slave who continues in bondage is false to himself and his Redeemer.

Thus in redemption there are bondage, purchase, and freedom, and naturally the chief emphasis is on the last. It was by no means the thought of God that the blood of the passover lamb should merely deliver from the Destroyer yet

leave the delivered still slaves in Egypt. His message ran : “ I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey ” (Ex. iii. 8). At the time, this last sentence was a proverbial phrase for abundant fruitfulness, the exact and full opposite of a desert. It is upon the goal, rather than upon the price and process of redemption that Scripture enlarges. The infinite cost is indeed declared—the precious blood of Christ ; but the stress falls upon the full outcome of the redemption.

Thus our Saviour Jesus Christ redeemed us from all iniquity (the past life) in order that a present effect may flow out, even that He may “ purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works ” (Tit. ii. 14). And Peter teaches that our redemption by the blood of God’s Lamb demands that we shall gird up the loins of our mind, be sober, and “ set your hope perfectly [undividedly] on the favour that is being brought unto you [the divine process is already in movement] at the revelation of Jesus Christ ” (1 Pet. i. 13). Present holiness is the pathway to future glory, which they shall reach who press through the wilderness to Canaan.

Moses was sent by God to Israel to be their ruler and redeemer (*lutrotees*). They who submitted to him as ruler, by obeying his directions and following his lead, were delivered and liberated. The redemption which brings first the forgiveness of transgressions is with a view to the day of redemption, and demands that we shall not grieve the blessed Spirit Whose indwelling is the seal of God’s proprietary rights with a view to redemption. Thus redemption is a past fact as to the matter of purchase, but also a future hope as to full development (Eph. i. 7, 14 ; iv. 30). It may be that Paul meant to recall to the Ephesians the custom at their port that a merchant or builder could buy timber, paying the price that freed it from the ownership of the vendor and himself acquiring that right ; whereupon he sealed each plank with his seal, and in due time he or his agent upon producing the seal could remove the timber. The payment of the purchase price was vital, but the object of the buyer was personal possession and use.

Similarly in Romans iii. 24, redemption is connected with our justification, but chap. viii. 18-25 looks on to the goal, when the body also shall be emancipated from present frailty and pain, and in heavenly liberty and glory shall be a house suitable to the sons of God. Of this sublime consummation the indwelling Spirit of God is firstfruits and gives foretastes, but we still groan, waiting for and expecting our “ adoption, the redemption of our body.” Thus Christ Jesus is made unto us from God wisdom on all the chief necessities of our case, and the means of fulfilment of all the great and gracious desires of God ; He is our righteousness

before God, our justification ; He is our sanctification, in present liberty from the tyranny of sin ; and He is our *redemption*, the Fulfiller to the utmost of God's purpose that men of faith shall be glorified (1 Cor. i. 30). For Christ is " the Mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance " (Heb. ix. 15). The purchase price of this glorious programme and prospect was His own blood, and as this effected a redemption that is eternal (Heb. ix. 12), He rests for ever from that work, but carries out and develops its results unto their full completion. The pathway to this lies through many tribulations (Ac. xiv. 22), and we must suffer with Him if we would be glorified with Him (Rom. viii. 17) ; but when, as this age draws to its end, these sufferings for His sake reach their greatest intensity, then may we " look up " hopefully, and " lift up our heads " with joy and confidence, for then will our redemption have drawn nigh (Lk. xxi. 28).

This mighty scheme, proposed by Divine love, devised by Divine wisdom, based upon Divine sacrifice, will be consummated by Divine power. Its climax will be the glorifying of the church of God with the Son of God in His proper heavenly realm ; but there is included a repentance, recovery, and re-establishment of Israel in their land and honour as God's chosen people for the earth. For this " redemption of Jerusalem " the pious in Israel were looking and of it they spake often one to another (Lk. i. 68 ; ii. 38 ; xxiv. 21), as the prophets had done before them.

Nor shall only the church, Israel, and other nations benefit, but the whole creation shall at last " be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory [a liberty proportionate to the glory] of the sons of God " (Rom. viii. 19-21). For, as before shown, the redeeming virtue of the blood of Christ has no limits, except in those who reject its saving grace and refuse to be reconciled to God. For that grace constrains but does not compel (Lk. xiv. 23 : contrast R.V. and A.V.).

(8) *Sanctification*. Gen. ii. 3 states that " God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it." Exodus xiii. 2 tells that God said " Sanctify unto Me all the firstborn." In the Hebrew " hallow " and " sanctify " are the same word, as in the A.V. The force of the word is seen in Lev. xxvi. which refers to the sanctifying unto the Lord a house (14), or land (16), that is, it was devoted to the service of God and could not be used for a secular purpose while so devoted. Conversely, no one could voluntarily so devote the firstling of a beast or the tithe of his produce because these were already, by statute, the Lord's property. The meaning therefore is that the person or thing sanctified was set apart from common use to be devoted to God, it ceased to be common, profane, secular and became

sacred.

It is to be observed that this primary meaning of the term is irrespective of the inherent quality of the object sanctified. The firstborn child or animal might prove healthy or weakly, the produce of the consecrated field might be rich or poor, but the law of the consecration read "He shall not alter it or change it, a good for a bad or a bad for a good" (vers. 10, 33), under penalty that both should be deemed sanctified.

The Hebrew word and its cognates come some 260 times. In the Greek Old Testament they are represented by Greek words of the same primary meaning, and which are used in the New Testament in the same sense.

In the setting apart unto God for sacred use something that had before been common the atoning blood took a primary place. It is written of the altar of burnt offering that "Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and sanctified it, to make atonement for it" (Lev. xvi. 15); and of the person of the priest likewise we read in the same chapter that "Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his son's garments with him, and sanctified Aaron, his garments, and his sons, and his son's garments with him" (ver. 30).

Thus the spot where in grace the Holy One met the guilty with pardoning mercy was sanctified for the purpose by the blood that atoned for guilt. The cross of Christ would not have become the meeting place in peace for God and man had not the Redeemer there atoned for sin by the blood He shed to cover sin. Therefore it is said that "Jesus sanctified the people by His own blood" and that "we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. xiii. 12; x. 10). He who has accepted the atoning blood of Christ is to remember that, not only has he thereby received pardon for his sins, but he has thereby consented to regard himself henceforth as set apart unto God as a vessel dedicated wholly to sacred use, as it is written, "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. x. 31, and see Col. iii. 17).

Here it is necessary to recall what has just been mentioned, that this setting apart unto God does not depend upon the personal condition of the one thus sanctified. At his consecration as priest Aaron was not altered in actual character by that solemn ceremony. He was the same man, still "compassed with infirmity" (Heb. v. 2); but he had been set apart entirely for God, which very fact must itself have conduced to greater watchfulness over his heart and conduct, in order that he might walk worthily of his high and priestly calling. For he bore upon his forehead a golden plate inscribed "Holy [set apart] to Jehovah" (Ex. xxviii. 36).

The believer is not to wait until he feels some marked change in his nature before dedicating himself unto God ; he is to accept the searching and ennobling fact that, by having accepted atonement by the blood of Christ, he has already been set apart to God to do His holy will. Himself, his garments, his surroundings are to be regarded in detail as sacred, as belonging to God. It is in this sense that all believers are called " saints," dedicated ones.

Of this sense of the word " sanctify " the highest and quite unique example is that of the Son of God. He said of Himself that the Father had sanctified Him and sent Him into the world, and added, " Sanctify them in Thy truth . . . And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth " (John x. 36 ; xvii. 17, 19). It was clearly no question of His personal character being purified, for He was inherently without sin or imperfection. The sense is that the Father had set apart the Son for a definite service on earth and the Son had correspondingly set Himself apart to render that service. The thought is that of consecration and dedication, and He prayed that the truth He had taught His disciples might work effectually unto their dedication of themselves to God and His service.

There is yet more. Atoning blood is the basis of and preparation for the anointing oil. When the backslidden leper in Israel had been pardoned and healed his renewed fellowship with God, His people, and his family was secured by ceremonial cleansing. In this three elements were employed, blood, oil, and water. Blood and water commingled were sprinkled upon him. The part played by the water we shall notice later. The blood was put upon his ear, hand, and foot, to signify that his mind, work, and walk were now dedicated to God : the ear to fill the mind with thoughts of God, the hand to serve Him in every act, the feet to walk in His ways. But what son of Adam can assure such undivided devotion to God ? The oil was then put where the blood already was, to signify that the grace of the Holy Spirit of God would be available to make actual what the blood had made possible [Lev. xiv). The same ceremony formed part of the consecration of the priest, oil being put upon the blood and poured upon the head (Lev. xvi).

A national fulfilment of this type awaits Israel in the day when they shall repent of their national backsliding from God, with its culminating wickedness in the murder of their Messiah, for thereupon God will sprinkle upon them " clean water " (Lev. xiv : Num. xix), that is, water by which the blood will be applied, the Spirit bringing home to the conscience the saving virtue of the death of Christ ; and then will God put within them His Spirit, Who will cause them to listen to God's commandments with an understanding mind and ready heart, so that by the Spirit's strength they will do the will of God, and will walk gladly in His ways

(Ezek. xxxvi. 24-27).

But a present fulfilment is available already for such as repent of their sin, abandon it, and accept the cleansing of the conscience, so having the heart sprinkled from a consciousness of evil because of appreciating and appropriating the atoning virtue of the blood of Christ. Pentecost follows Calvary; the Spirit is granted to the believer who devotes himself unreservedly to Him Whose blood has redeemed him from all iniquity. This was the attitude of heart of the hundred and twenty upon whom the Spirit was poured on the day of Pentecost; and ever since then God has given the Spirit to them that *obey* Him (Ac. v. 32). Such show that they have been anointed with the Spirit by witnessing for Christ, talking of Him with the tongue and displaying Him in their spirit and ways.

Thus is there not only sanctification by the blood of Christ but a further "sanctification of the Spirit" (1 Pet. i. 2). He it is Who so presents Christ to the heart that the obedient find every spiritual need met, every godly desire satisfied in Him; with the consequence that in the power of the heavenly anointing the dedication to Him which is demanded by the atoning blood is rendered out of love and gratitude.

The oil was put only where blood had first been put. Pentecost did not precede Calvary, could not do so. No one can receive the Spirit who has not first received Christ as Redeemer by His blood. But by the indwelling Spirit of holiness the believer can fulfil the just demand of God "Ye shall be holy, for I am holy," a call given four times to Israel in the book of Leviticus (xi. 44, 45; xix. 2; xx. 7, 26), and repeated to Christians in 1 Peter i. 15, 16.

The atoning blood is the basis of holiness, of a life fully consecrated to God, and the Spirit, typified by oil, is its power. (9) *Access*. This subject is now resumed. The dignity of the king, as superior to all his subjects, has caused it to be regarded as a special honour to have access to his person, especially on State occasions. From the book of Esther we know that in Persia it was at risk of death that one should approach the king's throne in the inner court of the palace without having been first invited (Esth. iv. 11). So far did this seclusion rule in that Persian empire that there were only seven princes who had almost unrestricted right of access to the sovereign, they "saw the king's face and sat first in the kingdom" (Esth. i. 14). From Herodotus we learn that the original seven of these acquired this honour by special devotion to his cause. They had risked all to drive an usurper from the throne and secure it for the true heir.

The same principle of seclusion ruled in Israel in relation to entering the inner sanctuary of the tabernacle where God was present in a ray of glory. As before noted, even the consecrated high priest was forbidden to enter more than once a year, on the day of atonement (Lev. xvi. 2). The

high and heavy veil screened that Presence from all beholders, "the Holy Spirit this signifying, that the way into the holy places hath not yet been made manifest, while the first tabernacle is yet standing" (Heb. ix. 6-8). "The holy places," not here only the most holy place, because while the priests and Levites could enter daily the courts, and the priests the outer room of the sanctuary, the rest of the people, being the vast majority of the nation, were forbidden even this measure of approach to God. It was under penalty of death that any one of them ventured to draw near to God (Num. i. 51 ; iii. 10 : etc.). Even Levites forfeited their lives when they presumed to act as priests (Num. xvi), and later the king himself was stricken with fatal sickness when he entered the holy place to offer incense, a priestly act (2 Chron. xxvi).

How striking is the difference revealed in the New Testament. The people of God of this age are exhorted to "*draw near* with boldness unto the throne," to find it a "throne of grace," where they can obtain mercy as to failures and grace to help as may be needed (Heb. iv. 16). Of this mighty change the rending of the veil of the temple at the death of Christ was the public notice, the Holy Spirit signifying thus that from that hour the way into the holy places is made manifest, is thrown open to every believer.

Two principal facts contribute jointly to this marvellous change and mighty privilege : the Mediator and His precious blood. Jesus stated an unchanging and universal fact when He said : "I am the way . . . no one cometh unto the Father but through Me" (John xiv. 6). No one can have access to the sovereign of England at a court function unless provided with an inviation issued by the Lord Chamberlain of the Household. This official might say, "I am the way ; no one comes unto the Queen but through me."

Moreover, even the high priest in Israel durst not enter the Presence of God unless he took with him the blood that removed the guilt that debarred man access to God ; without atoning blood he would have died there, paying the penalty of sin. "Christ also suffered for sins once, the Righteous One for the unrighteous ones, that He might *bring us to God*" (1 Pet. iii. 18) ; not only that He might bring out to us the pardon of God, but that He might take us in to God. "Being therefore justified by faith let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ; through Whom also we have had our access into this state of favour wherein we stand" (Rom. v. 1, 2) before God, and "have boldness to enter into the holy places in [the virtue of] the atoning blood of Jesus" (Heb. x. 19, 22).

The veil is rent ; Lo ! Jesus stands
Before the throne of grace,
While clouds of incense from His hands
Fill all that glorious place.

His precious blood He sprinkles there,
Before, and on the throne ;
And His own wounds in heaven declare
His work on earth is done.

Within the holiest of all,
Cleansed by His precious blood,
Before Thy throne Thy children fall,
And worship Thee, our God.

Boldly our heart and voice we raise,
His name, His blood, our plea ;
Assured our prayers and songs of praise
Ascend by Him to Thee.

(*J. G. Deck*)

Blessed is he who can thus sing, not merely as recital of privilege, but out of real heart experience of the presence of God. It was one who, though a king, could not act as priest, who envied that honour and exclaimed

Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and causest to approach,
That he may dwell in Thy courts.

(David, Ps. lxxv. 4).

David could only visit the great public court : priests could dwell before God. It is possible that prayer may be only like the sending of a petition to the king, instead of talking with him in his very presence. "*Let us draw near*" ; let us learn how to realize this as a genuine experience of the spirit. Being asked if he knew the way to heaven a plain man replied, " I lives there ! "

(10) *Victory*. And when this becomes fact, what then ? Then, of course, the spiritual anticipation and counterpart of pearly gates and golden streets and golden harps ! Then peace like a river and joy like a fountain, because,

" The Father's face in radiant grace
Shines now in light on me."

Yes, and of this we might and ought to know much more. We ought to be able to sing with ecstasy

And oh, to know this place is mine !
Though yet by faith, in measure small :
To breathe its air, to sip its wine,
To dwell where God is all in all—
This, this is LIFE, before the throne,
And all is death save this alone.

Yet this is only one aspect of being seated with Christ in heavenly places. The same epistle that early lifts us there, closes by dwelling upon the dread fact that in those same heavenly places we wrestle against wicked spirits (Eph. ii. 6 ; vi. 12) ; and he who most abides there in Christ knows most of this conflict. In Egypt Israel did no fighting : they were slaves. During forty years in the desert they fought only two battles with outside foes : in the one they

conquered by faith and prayer ; in the other self-confidence brought defeat (Ex. xvii. 8-15 : Num. xiv. 39-45). In those years their own fleshly lusts were their entanglement. The devil does not need to bother much about Christians who live after the flesh. But as soon as Israel crossed the Jordan (typical of our passing out of the flesh into life in the spirit), on those uplands of Canaan they must needs fight for their promised land and dispossess by force the giants and others who disputed possession. Ours is no sham fight, no mimic warfare. The Greek word *palee*, translated "wrestling" in Eph. vi. 12, pictures antagonists locked in deadly embrace, swaying hither and thither as each strives to throw or kill the other. This is its only place in the New Testament, which lends strength and vividness to the passage. I must defeat Satan or be defeated. To say that every believer is a conqueror is false and foolish, a help to being defeated.

Nor is this warfare located only in the inner man of the Christian ; it has also the character of legal proceedings in Court, the Court of heaven. It is the *throne* to which we draw near. In Bible times the king sat thereupon as the supreme judge. It was the final Court of appeal (1 Kin. ii. 12 ; iii. 16). From very early times we see this High Court of heaven in action (Job i and ii : 2 Chron. xviii. 18-22 : Dan. iv ; vii. 9, 10, 26 : Lk. xxii. 31, 32). This situation continues on till the close of this age, for Rev. xii. 7-12 tells of the casting of Satan out of that heavenly realm, until when he continues as the Accuser of God's people, even as he was of Job. This casting down is to be a little before Christ establishes His kingdom on earth.

Of this continuing reality few believers are aware, or few teachers either. It means that Satan, the Adversary of God's church (Lk. xviii. 1-8 : 1 Pet. v. 8-10), is the Prosecutor-General of the universe, and either invents calumnies, as he did against Job, or bases charges on the sins of believers. If he carries the day in that Court, then, as Peter and the other disciples found, the Christian is left to him to be disciplined, as corn is tossed in a sieve. The end intended and permitted by God is the removing of the chaff, but the tossing will be severe (Amos. ix. 8-10).

How urgent therefore is the question of how the attack of the Prosecutor is to be defeated and the character cleared before that Judge and Court. A main object of Satan in tempting the believer into sin is to stop his mouth, to prevent him witnessing of Christ and his salvation. The battle on earth is therefore mainly that the Christian shall so live that he shall be able consistently to talk of Christ and invite Satan's slaves to secure their liberty from his thralldom and doom ; as it is written : "they overcame him . . . because of the word of their testimony," in giving which they were prepared even to die, "they loved not their life even unto death" (Rev. xii. 11).

But how are they, or their Advocate before that Court on high (1 John ii. 2 : Lk. xxii. 32 : Heb. iv. 14), to defeat the Accuser's plea that the failures of Christians ought to be punished. In that Court they must rely solely upon the argument that the due penalty of their sins as believers has been already met by the death of their Substitute : " they overcame him *because of the blood of the Lamb* " (Rev. xii. 11). The Lord's words to Peter, " Satan obtained you by asking " (Lk. xxii. 31, mgn.), represent a technical legal word (*exaiteo*) meaning to demand that a culprit be punished. If a Court orders that a certain sum be paid by a given date and it be not paid, a demand can be made that the defaulter be punished for having disobeyed the Court. The answer in law would be to show that the order had been obeyed and the sum paid. This would be an equally valid answer irrespective of who had made the payment, the debtor or a surety.

There is no other possible way of overcoming the Accuser than to plead the blood of Christ ; but this plea, when presented by the repentant believer, and endorsed by the heavenly Advocate, cannot fail. But it must be remembered that this plea cannot be urged or accepted so long as the sin remains unrepented, unforsaken, unconfessed. Our Advocate is not there to enable us to continue in any sin, but to deliver us from the Accuser if we walk in the light of God's will. This has been shown in section III above on 1 John i. 6, 7. On this condition victory is assured through the blood of the Lamb.

(11) *A Kingdom of Priests.* Deliverance from the Destroyer by the blood of the Passover lamb opened the door for Israel to enter upon the life of freedom marked by faith and obedience. God could now go on to train them for the purposes which He had in mind for the sons of Abraham His friend. One of the earliest of these purposes to be made known, and the highest of them, was declared in these words : " Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians," which shows that with Me nothing is impossible ; " and I bare you on eagles wings," showing My love, and strength, and care ; " and brought you unto Myself," so that I should have one people of the earth as My possession from among the apostate nations of the world. " Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be Mine own possession from among all peoples : for all the earth is Mine." Thus this first great promise to persons already redeemed was prefaced by a condition, and its fulfilment demanded their obedience and faithfulness. This was not under the law of Sinai, for it preceded that event. It did not in the least alter their past redemption and deliverance from both the Destroyer and Pharaoh, but it did affect their future, which was " ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation " (Ex. xix. 4-6).

“ A kingdom ”—that is, a governing body, as it was said of a Queen, “ thou art come to the kingdom ” (Esth. iv. 14), and of a king, “ Darius the Mede received the kingdom ” (Dan. v. 31). But these rulers were to be also a body of priests, thus royal priests. This was not a new idea. It was the general practice of the nations that the king should be the chief priest of his people. Melchizedek was a fairly recent instance from the time of their father Abraham. It was therefore the grand privilege of Israel to be a royal nation to rule all the earth for God, and a priestly people to instruct the rest of mankind in His law, to minister to them His grace, and to lead them in His worship. Thus should they serve the promise made to their first father that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed (Gen. xii. 3). This would be the restoration of the Divine purpose in the creation of Adam, for he also had been appointed to rule the earth for God, but had broken down.

But beyond this lay the nobler thought, that this programme would bring Israel into close association with the Son of God, Who Himself, from the beginning of creation, had been its appointed Sovereign and the Priest through Whom God held relations with all His creatures, heavenly and earthly. A Royal Priest, combining both offices in one Person, is the ideal to which God works, and which He will restore in heaven and on earth. For though Israel failed at that time in obedience, and the dignity offered has never been realized, yet it shall find fulfilment in the day of their national repentance and recovery. For the prophet saw and declared Israel's national supremacy, saying, “ the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish,” and their priesthood, saying, “ ye shall be named priests of Jehovah ; men shall call you ministers of our God.” But this can be fulfilled only when that also shall be true of them which the same prophet said, “ My people also shall be all righteous ” (Isa. lx. 12, 21 ; lxi. 6).

Yet even so, this will fulfil the plan of God for the earth only. But He has said that He has put *all* things under man's feet (Ps. viii. 6). Truly, as it is said in Heb. ii. 8, we “ see not yet all things subjected to him,” man, although in His purpose God has “ left nothing that is not subject to him ” (man : ver. 7). But we do see the promise receiving fulfilment in one man, the man Jesus, already on the throne of God. And God is now working by His Spirit through the truth to “ bring *many* sons *unto glory* (ver. 10), to share the glory and authority and royal priesthood of His Divine Priest-King. And this shall include authority over the heavens as well as the earth, for “ know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? . . . Know ye not that we shall judge angels? ” (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3).

For the church as for Israel the realization of this supreme

dignity and service is conditional, for it is "if so be that we suffer with Him that we may be also glorified with Him" (Rom. viii. 17), and "if we endure we shall also reign with Him," and obtain, not only salvation, but "salvation *with eternal glory*" (2 Tim. ii. 10-13). As the salvation of Israel from temporal death in Egypt was not affected by their failure to reach God's later ideal for them, so neither is our salvation from eternal death affected by failure to attain to God's higher ideal for us. And the reason is this, that salvation is secured by faith, and is granted on the ground that life answers to life, death for death; and the deliverance thus effected is irreversible in law. It is atoning blood that rescues completely from doom, and so it is the door that opens into the way of life, with its noble possibilities. Therefore this royal priesthood is connected with redemption, as it is written, "Unto Him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins in His blood; and He made us to be a kingdom, priests unto His God and Father; to Him be the glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen!" (Rev. i. 5, 6).

Every royal priest in that heavenly company will declare

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

And the four and twenty Elders, the present royal priests, who will then give up their crowns, when the Conqueror and His fellow-conquerors shall take the throne (Rev. iii. 21), will endorse that declaration and will say to Him,

Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with Thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth (Rev. v. 9, 10).

Thus the atoning blood of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, is the eternal basis of all God's gracious work with a sinner, from its commencement in salvation from doom to its crown and completion in the glory of heaven. Rightly do we sing:

Precious, precious blood of Jesus,
Shed on Calvary;
Shed for rebels, shed for sinners,
Shed for me.

Precious blood that hath redeemed us,
All the price is paid;
Perfect pardon now is offered,
Peace is made.

Precious blood ! by this we conquer
In the fiercest fight,
Sin and Satan overcoming
By its might.

Precious blood, whose full atonement
Makes us nigh to God !
Precious blood, our song of glory,
Praise and laud !

(*F. R. Havergal*).

(*To be concluded*)



THE WAY BACK *Chapter III*

TURN TO HIM—REPENTANCE

Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die ?
Ezek. xxxiii. 11.
God . . . now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.
Acts xvii. 30.
Repent ye, and believe the gospel.
Mark i. 15.

IT is the peculiar prerogative of God to overrule evil for good. The work of creation called into exercise His various attributes, and He Himself was glorified by their display. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork."

The introduction of sin afforded a new opportunity for the manifestation of the Divine character. The sky of human history had become darkened with the threatening cloud of wrath, but there stood out brightly upon its face the bow of promise. Satan had succeeded in marring the handiwork of God ; but God would yet have the victory by erecting upon the ruins of the Fall a still brighter exhibition of His infinite perfections. Man had fallen, but not beyond recovery ; he was lost, but not hopelessly so. The sentence was terrible, but blended with it were words of grace and love.

We may well pause and reflect often upon the fact that *recovery is possible*. It might have been otherwise. Scripture informs us of a class of beings concerning whom this is actually the case. Though sin "came into the world" by the transgression of Adam, yet sin was in the universe before. There had been a revolt in heaven. We read of "the angels that sinned," and who are cast down to hell, delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment. For them the Scripture indicates no ray of hope, no possibility of recovery,

no prospect of a Saviour. The contrast between their case and ours should awaken in us feelings of devout thankfulness to God. Banished as man was for a time, yet God did "devise means whereby His banished should not be an outcast from Him" (2 Sam. xiv. 14).

The attitude of God toward fallen man, from the first, has been one of *grace*. No sooner had man begun to wander, than God at once followed him. His voice was heard calling to His foolish and sinful creature, "Where art thou?" In that call it is true we hear tones of displeasure and of judgment. It is the voice of the Maker and Governor calling the rebellious and disobedient subject to account for his conduct and to hear the sentence of condemnation. But mingling with these grave and solemn sounds are the sweet notes of mercy. It was not only to hear words of judgment that God called His erring creature, but to listen to words of promise giving hope of a future restoration.

Sin had shut man out from Paradise and from God. The way of the tree of life was guarded by the flaming sword, to be opened only through Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. The recovery of man was no light matter. Not by a mere effort of the will or an act of power could it be effected. To be done at all, it must be done in a way consistent with the character of God. For this purpose an atonement was needed. "Without the shedding blood is no remission."

In order to discredit this doctrine, and disparage the atonement, some have distorted and caricatured the justice of God, making it to appear as a spirit of revenge. The Scriptures, on the contrary, ever represent God as full of compassion for men, yet bound by His very nature to act consistently with Himself. The incarnation, sufferings, and death of Christ are the solution of the problem; "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." A full satisfaction was thus made for the guilt of man. Mercy and truth met together; righteousness and peace kissed each other. Mercy rejoiced against judgment. Christ, by His death, opened "a new and living way," and by Him men are now invited and entreated to return.

Thus we see that as soon as man fell God immediately turned toward him with love and pity. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezek. xxxiii. 11).

This language is a call to repentance. The doctrine of repentance occupies a prominent place in the New Testament, and therefore demands corresponding attention on our part.

When John the Baptist came as the forerunner of Christ, he appeared in the wilderness of Judea preaching "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." His cry

was "Repent ye ; for the kingdom of heaven has drawn near" (Matt. iii. 2). When John was cast into prison, our Lord took up the same cry, saying "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of heaven has drawn near ; repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark i. 15).

When our Lord was about to ascend to heaven, He thus commissioned His disciples, "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke xxiv. 47). In fulfilment of this command we find Peter thus speaking in Jerusalem, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins" (Acts ii. 38) ; "Repent ye, therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts iii. 19).

From all these quotations it will be seen that repentance was set forth by John the Baptist, and by our Lord and His apostles, in the very front of their message to men. As, however, much misconception has arisen on the subject, we turn ourselves next to the question, What is repentance ?

1. *It is not sorrow.* The two things are frequently confounded, but they are totally distinct. Repentance includes sorrow, but sorrow does not necessarily include repentance. One passage of Scripture will suffice to establish this. "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance . . . For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor. vii. 9, 10). Here it will be seen that sorrow of a certain kind *leads to* repentance. It is therefore to be distinguished from it. A criminal may be very sorry, but his sorrow may arise, not from abhorrence of his crime, but because it has failed and he is found out. Sorrow may be only distress at the trouble which sin brings, not genuine grief on account of the sin itself.

2. *Repentance is not penance,* as the Church of Rome teaches. It does not consist in any self-inflicted sufferings, either bodily or mental. A man may practice great austerities, and yet know nothing of repentance.

3. *Repentance is not remorse.* The difference between the two is strikingly illustrated by the two men Judas and Peter. Of Judas it is said, after he had betrayed his Lord, "Then Judas, who had betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders . . . And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself" (Matt. xxvii. 3, 5). Here is bitter remorse, the torturing of an accusing conscience, without the exercise of any hope toward God. Of Peter, on the contrary, after his denial, it is said, "he went out and wept bitterly," while his after behaviour showed how truly he had repented, and how really he had been forgiven. Remorse is the beginning of hell ; repentance is the first step to heaven.

The correct definition of repentance is *a change of mind*. Not merely a change of opinion, but of purpose ; and where the repentance is genuine this will always be indicated by an appropriate change of conduct. A good illustration of the meaning of the word is given in the parable of the two sons. "A certain man had two sons ; and he came to the first and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not : but afterward he repented, and went " (Matt. xxi. 28, 29). Here it is evident that repentance signified a change of mind or purpose, followed by a corresponding change of conduct : "*he went.*"

Repentance denotes the complete change which is wrought in the mind of a sinner by the Holy Spirit, concerning himself and God, concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment. The Word of God, brought home to his conscience, creates an entire revolution in his mind regarding these subjects ; he fears God, loathes himself, hates sin, longs for righteousness, and acknowledges the justice of God.

How the change is effected. So great a change as this is not produced by any human power. Instrumentalities may be and are employed, but the power behind them all is that of the Spirit of God. He who of old moved on the face of the waters, and out of the confusion and darkness brought light, order, beauty, and fertility, now moves upon the darkened souls of men and quickens them into life. Repentance is really the first movement of life, and that life is imparted by the Spirit of life. He it is who convinces of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Christ is exalted "to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins " (Acts. v. 31) ; and this He does by sending the Spirit, according to His promise, to effect this change in the hearts and lives of men. The recognition of repentance as a gift of God is further evidenced by the words of certain critics, on hearing through Peter of the conversion of Cornelius and his household—"Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life " (Acts xi. 18).

But while fully recognizing the fact that repentance is the work of the Holy Spirit, let us at the same time give full weight to the other fact, that it is *the act of man*. The Holy Spirit does not repent for us ; nor is any man warranted in saying, "Because repentance is the gift of God, I will therefore wait till it is imparted." Such language is more than a misconception ; it is an abuse of Scripture and a defiance of God. In strong imperative terms did John the Baptist, our Lord Himself, and His apostles, address men, saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven has drawn near " ; "Repent ye, and believe the gospel " ; "Repent, and be baptized every one of you," etc. Paul, in his memorable address on Mars' Hill, tells us that God "*commandeth* all men everywhere to repent " (Acts xvii. 30). Language like this points to the duty of men, and lays upon all who come within

reach of its sound a solemn responsibility to obey the call. It is easy to raise theological questions, and speak of difficulties, but the man who is prepared to take the Word of God in simplicity of heart will find no obstacle in his way. No one who feels the beginnings of a new life, in a longing after God, however vague, need trouble himself about the Divine decrees, or the relations between sovereignty and responsibility. Our plain duty is to *obey*. If God calls upon us to repent, it is our duty and interest to do what He tells us ; and we may rest assured that in so doing we shall find the purposes and acts of God in perfect harmony. Surely the very existence of a desire for reconciliation, however feeble, is a proof of the operation of the Spirit and of a purpose of grace.

There are two aspects of repentance which we should keep in view, giving them their proper place and order. They are both expressed in the language of the apostle Paul concerning the Thessalonians (1. i. 9), "Ye turned to God from idols." There is the object deserted, and the object desired ; but the latter is put first. In Scripture, though this order may not be observed verbally, yet it is observed doctrinally. The greater importance of the one as compared with the other is obvious. There is a possibility of turning *from* the world without turning *to* God. An ascetic religion does this. The hermit, the monk, and the nun, turn their backs to the world, morally and physically, literally and locally ; but we cannot say that in so doing they turn to God. They rather turn to themselves, to a religious system, or we might say from an *ungodly* worldliness to a *religious* worldliness.

On the other hand, when the primary consideration is the turning *to* God, the turning *from* the world must inevitably follow. And when thus viewed, how differently the soul regards the change ! In the one case the renunciation of the world is a hardship, an effort ; in the other it is a delight and a matter of ease. In the one case the attention is fixed chiefly on that which has to be relinquished ; in the other on that which is to be gained. With God in view as the portion of the soul, it is easy to relax the grasp of the world.

A word of caution may be necessary in regard to attempts to discover and gauge repentance. Earnest souls are sometimes embarrassed by the thought that they *have not repented enough*. Then begins a search, a morbid scrutiny of self ; the judgment sets to work with its balances to weigh the amount of contrition experienced, to see whether it be of sufficient quantity ; the weights employed being generally the recorded experiences of some who have passed through long periods of mental agony prior to the enjoyment of forgiveness. What is this but an unconscious resort to merit, an endeavour to render the soul more worthy of the Divine favour ?

Let us beware of making our repentance a ground for satisfaction. That is the most real and healthy repentance

which is unconscious of itself, and only conscious of the God whose forgiveness and favour it seeks. The sick patient never thinks of weighing and measuring his desire for health. The exile never thinks of calculating the extent of his desire for home. And so the heart in which the work of the Spirit has begun need be under no concern as to the *measure* of its desire for the blessings of salvation. Do we feel conscious of our guilt, and desire deliverance? Do we loathe ourselves and the world, and long for the favour of God and communion with Him? If so, then we are in a state of repentance, and the dawn of a new life has already appeared.

The question has sometimes been discussed as to whether repentance precedes or succeeds faith. A good answer has also been made by asking another question, viz., which spoke of a wheel moves first? Repentance and faith often seem to be simultaneous, and indeed it is probable that, though scarcely discernible, most of the graces of the Spirit come into existence and action concurrently. This much, however, seems certain: that, whatever degree of repentance may precede or accompany faith, its largest development takes place subsequently to the apprehension of the mercy of God. As a proof of this see what God says to His people Israel in Ezekiel xxxvi. 22-31. After declaring that He would gather them, bring them back, cleanse them, give them a new heart and new spirit, put His Spirit in them, make them His people, be their God, and remove their reproach, He adds, "Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations." So it is now. Only at Gethsemane and Calvary can we reach the lowest depths of repentance.



AN IMPORTANT TEXT

(5)

We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

1 Cor. xv. 51.

It is often urged that this passage declares that though "we shall not all sleep," but some be alive at the descent of the Lord, yet "we shall *all* be changed," and surely, says the objector with emphasis, *all* means *all*. Truly; but in ver. 22, "For as in Adam all die, so also in the Christ shall all be made alive," "all" means all of mankind, for every child of Adam will at some time be raised by Christ (Jo. v. 28, 29). But not all at the first resurrection (Rev. xx. 5). Therefore in this very chapter "all" means different things, and in ver. 51 requires limiting, since it refers to a smaller company than in ver. 22.

The last and immediate context is in verses 48, 49, which speak of those who are to “bear the image of the heavenly,” that is, are to share with the Lord in His heavenly form, glory, and sovereignty. Now the more difficult, and therefore the more probable reading here is as in the R.V. margin : “As we have borne the image of the earthy, *let us* also bear the image of the heavenly.” It is evident that one copying a document is not likely to insert by mistake a more difficult word or idea than is in the manuscript before him ; so that, as a general rule, the more difficult reading is likely to have been the original reading. Moreover, in this case “let us also bear ” is so well attested by the manuscripts as to have been adopted as the true reading by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, and Westcott and Hort, and is given as the text in the latest editions of the Greek Testament, those of Nestle and Von Soden. Ellicott prefers the common reading, but on subjective and internal grounds only, and his remark on the external authority is emphatic : “It is impossible to deny that the subjunctive *phoresömen* is supported by very greatly preponderating authority.” Alford (on Romans ix. 5) well says, “that no conjecture [i.e., as to the true Greek text] arising from doctrinal difficulty is ever to be admitted in the face of the consensus of MSS. and versions.” Weymouth gives the force well by the rendering “*let us see to it that we also bear.*”

By this exhortation the apostle places upon Christians some responsibility to see that they secure that image of the heavenly which is indispensable to “inheriting the kingdom of God ” (ver. 50). In this Paul is supported by Peter, who also writes of that “inheritance which is reserved in heaven ” (1 Pet. i. 4), which he describes by the later statement that “the God of all grace called you unto *His eternal glory* in Christ ” (v. 10). But Peter goes on to urge the called to “give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure ” (2 Pet. i. 10), thus showing that this calling to share the glory of God has to be made sure. He is not at all discussing justification by faith or suggesting that *it* must be made sure by works done after conversion. Justification and eternal life are not in the least his subject. He writes expressly to those “who have [already] obtained like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ ” (2 Pet. i. 1). The calling of grace is to share in God’s own eternal glory, or, as Paul expresses it, to share God’s “own kingdom and glory,” and he tells us that he exhorted, encouraged, yea, and testified, to the end that his children in faith should “walk worthily of God ” Who had called them to such supreme dignity (1 Thess. ii. 11-12).

Since therefore this most honourable calling must be “made sure ” by “walking worthily,” in order that we may be “counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye

also suffer ” (2 Thess. i. 5), the reading “ let us also bear the image of the heavenly ” becomes consistent and important. Thus 1 Cor. xv. 41, 52 is addressed to those who are assumed (whether it be so or not) to have responded to that exhortation, and it will mean that “ we [who shall be accounted worthy to bear that heavenly image] shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.” Of that company it is strictly true that *all* means *all*.

Further, the primary antecedent to ver. 52 is in ver. 23 : “ But each [shall be made alive] in his own order : Christ the first-fruits ; then they that are Christ’s in His Parousia : then the end . . . ” Does not the whole sentence, in the light of other passages, carry the force : But each shall be made alive, not all at the same hour, but each in his own class or company (*tagma*) ; first-fruit, Messiah ; then, next, those of the Messiah, i.e., in His character as first-fruit, at His Parousia ; then, later, the end of all dispensations, involving the resurrection of all, saved and unsaved, not before raised ? Here is additional reason for R. C. Chapman’s view that the first resurrection is one of “ first-fruits,” and not of all who will be finally raised in the “ harvest ” of eternal life.

It has been accepted above that “ all ” means “ all,” but what does “ all ” mean ? It is not always used absolutely, in its universal sense. Thus the Lord, speaking of the last days of this age, said, “ ye shall be hated of all men for My name’s sake ” (Matt. x. 22 : Lk. xxi. 17) ; yet later, speaking of the same period, He showed that there will be then some, the “ sheep,” who will befriend His persecuted followers (Matt. xxv. 33-40). The explanation is found in the other report of His words : “ ye shall be hated of all *the nations* ” (Matt. xxiv. 10) ; that is, this hatred will affect all the peoples everywhere on earth, though not every individual as the other use of “ all ” might by itself suggest.

Again ; of the trial of Christ before the Council of the Jews it is said that “ all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel (*sumboulion*) against Jesus ” (Matt. xxvii. 1) ; yet Lk. xxiii. 50 tells that one of that Council, Joseph of Arimathea (a *bouletees*), had not assented to their counsel (*boulee*) ; and John xix. 39 shows that Nicodemus dissociated himself from their act ; and he also was one of the Council (John vii. 50-52). Acts i. 1 speaks of Luke’s Gospel having narrated “ all that Jesus began both to do and to teach,” yet we know that the world could not contain the books that would be required for such a full account (John xxi. 25).

These instances suffice to warn against rashly taking “ all ” in its fullest sense. They call for careful consideration of each use of the word. The Spirit took up the natural habits of human speech ! No one is misled when he hears one say

that "all the world was there."

Passages which deal with a matter from the point of view of God's plan and willingness use general, wide terms to cover and to disclose His whole provision. But these must be ever considered in connection with any other statements upon the same subject which reveal what God foresees of the human element which, by His own creation of responsible creatures, He permits to interact with His working. Out of these elements, through self-will in the believer, arises the possibility of individuals not reaching unto the whole of what the grace of God had offered in Christ. For fuller discussions see my *First-fruits and Harvest* and *Ideals and Realities*.



AN EXTRACT

from a letter written in 1873 by
PHILIP HENRY GOSSE, F.R.S.,
to his son Edmund

(From *The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse*, pp. 43-45)

OF late years many devout students of prophecy have thought they discovered, in the Word, intimations that not all of the saints found living at the Lord's descent—not *all* who are real believers—will go up to Him then ; but only those who are watchful, and practically ready ; only those who are, in habitual affection, in separation from the world, in circumcision of the heart—wholly His. The Wise Virgins, in fact : the Foolish ones representing not, as ordinarily taught, and as hitherto believed by me, hollow professors, but unwatchful, unready, half-hearted, though at bottom *real*, believers. That these latter are the "left" when the former are "taken" : left, to be purified by the fiery trial under the personal infidel Antichrist. There are difficulties attending the reception of this view ; texts which seem to militate against it ; such as the words "together with them in the clouds" in 1 Thes. iv. 17, and "we shall *all* be changed, in a moment . . ." in 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. [See preceding article.]

On the other side the view is strongly countenanced by the Lord's exhortation in Luke xxi. 36 ; which would seem to have no force, if the unworthy were not to endure what the worthy escape. And by the promise to the faithful but feeble church of Philadelphia (Rev. iii. 10) of preservation from the hour of trial, which shall be universal for the earth-dwellers. The very circumstance that there is, at the very last, *after* Philadelphia, a Laodicea, a *real* church, loved by Christ, yet so lukewarm as to be spued out of his mouth ; to be rebuked and chastened, and left for repentance, this fact, I say, is solemnly suggestive.

These thoughts have been much exercising our minds of late, and have led me much to the Word of God. I cannot say *I am quite sure* the affirmative of this view is true ; a good deal is to be said on the negative side ; but I judge the weight and number of texts preponderate for the former. But, supposing they were evenly balanced ; nay, supposing there were only an inferior measure of probability for the former, would it not be the highest wisdom to leave nothing to chance in so terrible an alternative ?

We have thought, with yearning hearts, of *you*, my only child. That you are the Lord's own : that the root of the matter is in you, I have strong reasons for believing. But, do you "love His appearing ?" Are you habitually *watching* for it ? Is the world behind your back ? Are you giving your heart to Him who gave His blood for you ? Oh, think seriously of this ! I must, in faithful love, warn you. It is not enough to say, "Perhaps it is not true !" Perhaps, I admit, it is not : but, perhaps it is ! And oh ! to be left behind to endure that terrible tribulation, which assuredly is coming soon ; when, if the thoughts of many deeply taught are correct, the only choice possible will be, either open apostasy and demon-worship, or—the axe of the executioner.

Remarks. The writer of this letter was one of the leading zoologists of the last century. He was profoundly evangelical in faith. When in 1857 Lyell, the geologist, was sounding scientific opinion as to what reaction could be expected to Darwin's theory of evolution, which it was proposed to announce, Gosse was one of the few front-rank naturalists that was ready to oppose it. His true fatherly solicitude for his only child shines in the letter. It was such a father that the son pilloried and misrepresented in *Father and Son*, using him as occasion to attack evangelical religion (p. 329).

The letter shows that the doctrine of selective rapture is not new but was understood and received a century ago by many thoughtful Bible lovers. Perhaps if the son had felt its force he might have been saved from apostasy from his early faith.



DEATH THE EXECUTOR

A. J. GORDON
(1836-1895)

WHY is it that so many Christians make Death their executor, leaving thousands and millions to be dispensed by his bony fingers ? Because they are exitists, rather than adventists ; their going, and not Christ's coming, being the goal towards which they calculate. Therefore, if they die their wealth

can stay behind ; their covetousness can still survive and reap post-mortem usury. Living men, transporting their riches in daily instalments into the world to come ; or dead men remitting back their fortunes into this world, and still fingering the interest thereof in mortuary incomes—here are the two ideals : and our Lord has plainly indicated which should be the Christian's in His saying, " Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth ; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." And can there be any doubt that, if the position to which we have been called and raised by Christ's enthronement were really occupied and exulted in by us—" For our citizenship is in heaven, whence also we look for the Saviour "—the achievement of making heavenly investments would be easy and inevitable, and the grip of avarice be unclasped from the purse-strings of multitudes of Christians ? The old nature is not sufficient for itself ; and as truly as " the expulsive power of a new affection " is needed to overcome the heart-contraction of self-love, so truly is the uplifting power of a new hope required to break that purse-contraction of self-enrichment, which is now the greatest obstacle to the evangelization of the world. The logic is inevitable ; if we are citizens of heaven, we are " strangers and pilgrims in the earth " ; and every rational instinct will lead us to make our investments where we hold our residence. (From *Ecce Venit*, ch. III, " The Power of His Coming," pp. 33, 34.)



PAGES FROM AN ORDERED LIFE

(4)

THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY

IT has been mentioned that I was directed not to leave Bristol by 1 Tim. iv. 15 : " Be diligent in these things ; give thyself wholly to them " ; and that it then crossed my mind whether that might mean that some day I would be called to devote all my time to the gospel. But the impression passed, for the time had not come. But the Lord often prepares His servants long in advance of a crisis. In 1892 two cousins and I were living at our homes in Sidcup and were in fellowship with the meeting of Exclusive Brethren. I was then seventeen. There stirred in our hearts an impulse to preach the gospel. We were not, as some youthful preachers have been, only newly converted and largely unacquainted with the truths of our holy faith. I had known Christ as Redeemer for ten years. And we had been blessed by being reared in homes and in a religious circle where the Word of God was habitually taught. What we knew we felt we must impart.

There seemed no opportunity at the Room, so the pent-up stream overflowed the banks. Each Sunday afternoon we

walked to the village of St. Mary Cray, about three miles from home, and preached under the big tree then on the green. It is worthy of note, this sight of three quite young men going forth thus, with no encouragement from their elders, with no "Class" or "Union" or "Society" or "Mission" to organize and direct, but just giving vent to the Spirit's urge to preach the good news. It was more common in England then, for human organization now retards the Spirit's action. May God revive it, causing many to feel the force of that word, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. ix. 16).

From that time doors continually opened and throughout my business career I usually preached four or five times a week, and on Sundays commonly walked ten miles a day from one appointment to another.

Such as Timothy and Titus must have gained knowledge and wisdom from contact with Paul. They had the Word of God, the Old Testament, but the Lord had granted light upon it and His further mind to others besides themselves. This was for their instruction. Such help can be gained from writings left by godly men, and all through life I have observed the controlling care of God in bringing to me books just when they could further me in His service. During the period in view my cousin Edward Musgrove helped me much in this matter. One book was Pember's invaluable treatise *Earth's Earliest Ages and their Connection with Modern Spiritualism, Theosophy, and Bhuddism*. It set me thinking aright and inquiring concerning the vast and solemn topics indicated by the title. The reading of it gave a determining direction to my studies. He also gave me Kirkham's *Open-Air Preacher's Handbook*, which was practical, useful and stimulating. He added some volumes of Spurgeon's *Lectures to My Students*, which could not but be helpful to a young preacher. At the same time I "happened" on Rupert Garry's small treatise *Elocution, Voice, and Gesture*. Of this I made a thorough study, especially of the selected pieces annotated to teach accent, emphasis, modulation, and gesture. To this little book I owe, under God, whatever I have gained of the art of speaking pleasingly and effectively. One could wish that many other preachers had taken pains to master the art of speaking in public. The noblest of themes deserves the finest of styles, and the finest of styles is that of speaking naturally, not artificially. It can be acquired and must be cultivated.

In Bristol I had at first much contact with the Y.M.C.A., and twice a week was a regular preacher with their open-air band. Presently I led the Bible Class. This was helpful to me at least, for I had to lead the thoughts and answer the questions of boys of twelve and men of sixty, being myself nineteen. Knowledge of the Bible and care in expounding were developed. But my connexion with the Y.M.C.A. came to an early and sorrowful conclusion. The first Y.M.C.A.

was originally directed to only spiritual ends, being formed in a London business house for that distinct purpose. As the sphere of activities enlarged it widened its operations to include educational, social, and physical activities. The result was what was to be expected, even that the three departments almost swamped the one ; and that, because they gratify the natural unregenerate nature, naturally minded men were attracted, and duly dominated. Examining the official Blue Book for one of those years I found that of over thirty affiliated branches in the West of England only four had any conversions to report for that year.

In the year 1897 the Dean of Bristol informed the Secretary that he was arranging that the Dean of Canterbury, Dr. F. W. Farrar, should visit the Cathedral and he suggested that he should address a meeting of men in the Y.M.C.A. that Sunday afternoon. The proposal was adopted. This would nominally be an address to my Bible Class, though many more were expected that day. I therefore objected on the ground that Dr. Farrar's doctrine of Eternal Hope was not acceptable and that he was well known as a higher critic of the Bible. I organized a petition and no small stir arose in the Y.M.C.A.

At the same time I wrote to Dr. Farrar thanking him for his courtesy in being willing to visit us, but intimating that divergence of opinion as to his views was creating conflict, and suggesting that it would really add to his kindness if he would withdraw the promise to speak at the meeting. He sent the letter to the Dean of Bristol, who expressed to the Secretary his mighty displeasure. A very full meeting of the General Committee passed by an overwhelming majority a vote of censure upon my action in writing to the Dean, and re-affirmed the engagement with him.

My attempt thus to provide an easy solution having been rejected, and my heart being unwilling to devote time and energy to a struggle to maintain spiritual life in the Association against conflicts I considered inevitable, I resigned membership on 8th October, 1897, and have always been thankful for this escape from an organization not contemplated in the New Testament. It was a step in my education in the Divine principles and practices for the church of God.

There was an early and momentous sequel. A few other members resigned. One of these was Mr. W. E. Milton. I was often at his home, and on 18th October of that year we had conversed, somewhat sadly, about the defeat of our stand. On the way to my rooms, quite suddenly the Voice again spoke distinctly the words of Matt. xviii. 19, "if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father who is in heaven," with the accompanying words: "Go back to Mr. and Mrs. Milton and ask them to agree with you in the prayer that Dean Farrar shall not come to Bristol." To me

this was a new and startling challenge, but I returned, though the hour was 10.30 p.m., and we presented the petition directed. On 6th November there appeared in the daily paper an intimation that the Dean would not be able to keep the engagement in Bristol. The reason was most unusual. Typhoid was raging at Maidstone, the county town of Kent. The Assizes were due, but to avoid risk to the many who would need to come to the town the Judges had removed the session to Canterbury. It devolved upon the Dean to be at his Cathedral to conduct the service which opens an assize, and this fell upon the date of the visit planned for Bristol.

Here is an exact example of that "agreement" in prayer which secures answer. It is not a merely human agreement, but one brought about by the Spirit of God. Christians may fail to get the mind of God about a matter and may agree to ask amiss. But the Spirit knows the will of God and what He purposes; He can lead minds into harmony with that purpose, whereupon their prayer will certainly be granted (1 John v. 14, 15). It is the musical term "symphony" which is translated "agreement." The Spirit is the Master-musician Who touches hearts far removed perhaps as to location, as are the bass and treble keys on a piano, and harmonizes their desires with the will of God and with each other. Therefore it is essential to be susceptible to the touch of the Holy Spirit.

We return to the year 1899.

On the east side of Bristol there was a vast slum known as The Dings. In the 1850's one of the Bethesda Fellowship, Mr. Victor, started a gospel work there. It was developed by another of that church, a Major Tireman, who built Unity Chapel. A Mr. W. J. Morgan joined him and presently became the recognized "pastor" of the church, with a stated salary. At a minister's Fraternal to which he belonged he was asked how he should be described in the register. As he hesitated, a Congregational minister said, "Call him an Independent Baptist Brother." This humorous suggestion was pretty accurate; for, like Open assemblies the church was administratively distinct from other congregations, as are the Independents; they practised the immersion of believers only, as do the Baptists; and yet retained such items of Brethren practice as the guidance of the Holy Spirit in worship at the Lord's Supper.

In the Spring of 1899 Mr. Morgan had died, and the church was seeking another pastor. I had known W. J. Morgan but nothing of his church, not even its situation in Bristol, nor any who attended there. I was to leave the office at the end of September, and was awaiting guidance as to the next step, being quite ready to continue in business. Early in that month a Christian I knew came to the office and said that one of his staff in the Head Post Office was

appointed at Unity Chapel for the next Sunday morning but wished to find a substitute : would I go? He added that he thought that Unity Chapel was just the place for me, meaning the pastorate.

As yet I had no distinct views against a pastorate, but only a general sense that it was not fully Scriptural ; yet this feeling was not so well formed as to lead me promptly to reject the idea, should the Lord seem to lead that way. At the same time it was vital not to be guided by anyone but the Lord, and this friend was not one of whose spiritual judgment I felt sure. I was therefore glad to be able to answer that I was already booked for a certain place. After some hours he returned to say that he had arranged for another of his staff to take my previous appointment so that I could go to Unity Chapel.

The human mind is liable to conflicting emotions. On the one hand I felt it impertinent of him to have interfered in my affairs : on the other hand, the very fact that he had taken so unusual a step made me wonder whether the hand of the Lord might be in it. After brief consideration I said I would go. The sequel showed that it was of the Lord. It was Sunday morning, 3rd September, 1899. The subject was the new birth. Later I learned of three persons who had said that their new pastor had preached that morning. This was followed by an invitation to take further services in October.

At the end of September I left the office facing an unknown future with a month's salary, £5, in hand. But God's perfect peace preserved from all anxiety. By the end of October I was penniless, which brought the comforting reflection that I was now as poor as I ever could be, and knew the worst. It was gracious of the Lord to bring me thus early to a complete end of my own resources, and so to a complete dependence upon Himself, for this situation was to recur a hundred times. That morning the post brought a letter from the Treasurer of Unity Chapel with a cheque for £5 in recognition of my visits. Thus the next month was started with the same sum as my salary had been.

Not a word had passed between the friends at Unity Chapel and myself as to money, and that God had used them to supply so exactly this first hour of need made me ponder further whether it might be His mind that a closer association should follow. But he who would walk with God must refrain from operations of his own hands and pay close regard to the operations of God's hands, otherwise he will be broken down by God and not built up (Psm. xxv. 4, 5 : Isa. v. 12). I therefore did nothing at all in the matter save preach there as requested during the next month or two. Before the end of that year the Secretary of the church, Alfred Dennes, made on behalf of the church the proposal that I should take up the pastorate for the ensuing year, to

which I agreed.

This active servant of Christ was a man of business, constantly about the city and well known in circles in which I moved, yet he had never heard my name nor I his. But during the interval between the death of Mr. Morgan and my first visit to Unity Chapel no less than three persons had mentioned me to him as being the man for their sphere. He was thus prepared by God to take a favourable view of my coming.

It may be felt that my "call" to this ministry was more certainly of God than the common measures by which clergy and ministers in general reach their posts. Yet in later years, and from this very experience of a pastorate, I came to see that a formal "pastorate," a single "minister" to preach in and guide a church, is not the Lord's chosen method for serving and ordering His house. But as yet I was walking by what light I had and He graciously ordered my steps and owned my labours. Thus His acceptance and working have preserved me from that general and severe condemnation of other servants of Christ which narrow-hearted Christians sometimes utter. In due time I was led out of and beyond the position of "pastor" into which I had in good faith entered, and I have had the joy to lead others beyond it; but one may recognize God at work in others of His servants as He worked in me, and can leave them to His further leading, meanwhile strengthening their hands in any present sphere which they occupy according to His present will for them.

The church proposed to pay a stipend of £120 per annum. Thus my income was to be doubled. This did not attract me. Long since I had seen in Scripture that the apostles and others received no agreed salary, but trusted their Lord to meet their daily needs. Moreover, a regular income could not but mean a suspension of that life of faith as to means the sweets of which I had just begun to taste. But thinking it over I felt it of grace to yield the point, and said that as I might remain with them only a year I would not disarrange their fiscal methods; but that if, as had been hinted, our association should prove longer, the stipend would have to yield to a plan of voluntary offerings for my support. This came to pass, and I know not that any one step I took at Unity Chapel did so much as this to encourage faith in God in that assembly of almost all poor people. They felt that their pastor was no longer enjoying an income far above that which most of them received, but was one with them in trusting the mercy and faithfulness of the Father in heaven. Of course, I took the seeming risk, but how little risk there really is in trusting the promises of the Almighty was seen in the fact that during the first year the dear folk put in boxes for my use an average of one pound per week above the former stipend.

Our association continued for nine years, years of valuable education and training for me. Many souls were brought to the Lord, and there was general increase of spiritual life in His people.

The next great change and advance must be narrated later, if God permit.



REST OF SOUL

(From the German Calendar *Der Herr ist Nahe* (the Lord is Near), Dec. 15-22, 1951.)

You shall find rest unto your souls (Matt. xi. 29)

WHOEVER observes carefully the present condition of the people of God will surely soon discover that among believers true rest of soul is seldom to be found. There may be earnestness, activity, zeal, knowledge, and understanding, but all, or at least some, of these things may be present and yet true peace and rest be wanting. In our days it is extremely rare to find anyone who rejoices in abiding, undisturbed peace. Why? There are two principles through which some endeavour to create rest and peace of soul. The one is zeal; to be ceaselessly occupied and active in some service. One may be engaged with matters which in themselves are good and worthy, but which as such give the soul no true rest, nor are able to give it, but only too often bring to light the lack of it. The second principle, which is just as often met, is a ceaseless endeavour after the improvement of the flesh, so as by this means to reach rest. Through sheer strength of will one will effect the subjection of one's own will, and thereby at the same time slay one's self, and by this form of energy attain true rest. Alas, whoever knows his own flesh will quickly perceive the presumption of such thoughts.

Then He poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet. (John xiii. 5)

The lack of rest and peace in believers lies in the circumstance that their feet are not washed. From this arises the incapacity to have practical fellowship with Christ *where He is*. But this, let it be well observed, is the chief truth which is set before our eyes in John xiii. It is and remains perfectly true that the Lord Jesus cleanses us from the daily defilement incurred during our walk; but here a deeper truth is pressed upon our heart, namely, the possibility to abide with Christ *where He is*. The question here is of a cleansing which puts us in the position to have a share in common interests with Christ *in His glory*.

"During supper" we see the Lord as a Companion of His own in this world; but then "rising from supper" He shows His disciples that He can and will enable them to

enter a better relationship ; they shall be His companions in His new position. They shall have fellowship with Him in the new realm and the new position which He will now enter. In the full consciousness that "His hour was come" and that "He came out from God and now goes to God," He rises from supper to fulfil His new service to His own.

As He had "loved His own who were in the world He loved them to the end" (John xiii. 1)

Love is the spring and motive of the Lord's activity. It is most necessary to fasten on this our undiverted gaze. Alas, how little do our hearts understand the basic principles of His act. Because it is the good pleasure of His will, He capacitates His own to appear in His very presence and to have fellowship with Him in His new position. Only He can bring to pass what corresponds to His own heart. The inclinations of His heart are the motive of His activity, so as to make us suitable to Him *where He is*. Therefore "He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to dry them with the linen towel with which He was girded."

Knowest thou the meaning of this act which the Lord performs on thee? Does thou recognize it as a present fact that He holds thy feet in His hand? Knowest thou how to value that thou art the object of such an action performed by Him, an action which has no less a goal than the removal of every trace of defilement which might hinder thee from abiding in His presence, in which His heart finds a far greater joy than thou thyself findest in thy fellowship with Him?

Dost thou willingly put forward thy feet so that He may complete the washing? Dost thou find it necessary that He should gird Himself so as to wash thy feet?

Thou shalt never wash my feet (John xiii. 8)

"What I do thou knowest not now," must the Lord say to Peter. Alas, in the present time how little we feel what high significance this form of action of the Lord has for us. We dare not conceal that in general, more or less with us all, there fails that complete subjection to the piercing, dividing, soul-penetrating Word, so that everything, even the smallest item, which is unseemly and unsuitable to fellowship with Christ, may be judged and put away. Heb. iv. 12, 13 instructs us as to the manner in which the Lord—and this through the Word of God—uncovers and removes everything which disturbs and hinders our fellowship with Him. It is that "everything is naked and exposed before the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do." "The water," God's Word, is the cleansing power which sets aside everything which is not in harmony with the presence of God. When the living Word penetrates the conscience and the soul it brings us into the presence of God, and the Divine judgment works through the Word upon all that it finds in us. Both the written

and the incarnate Word have place in that passage in Heb. iv : “ The Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, etc.,” and then “ there is no creature that is invisible before *Him*.” He knows the cogitations and thoughts of the heart.

But thou shalt understand hereafter (John xiii. 7)

Regarding the foot-washing it is needful to observe that we under-estimate its high meaning if we see only cleansing from what is entirely incompatible with His holy presence. We should also ponder that our gracious Lord foresees and anticipates innumerable things which, should they find entrance and tolerance in us, would at once disturb our fellowship with Him. How many things in the history of the saints should we regard in quite another light if we learned to understand how often the Lord anticipates the activity of such principles which could induce a moral distance between Him and us. In His grace-full care He shows both His preventive as well as His cleansing power. We see this in the apostle Paul : “ So that I should not over-exalt myself there was given to me a thorn for the flesh.” At the moment there was here no cause for a moral separation between the apostle and Christ : the flesh had not become active in Paul. But the flesh was present and could become active. This thought, alas, does not always receive due attention. How worthy of worship is the love which itself anticipates the activity of the evil nature in me, so as to maintain me in His fellowship.

If I wash thee not, then hast thou no part with Me (John xiii. 8)

Knowest thou what it means to be suitable for fellowship with the Lord ? Has thy heart welcomed anything of such fellowship ? Alas, it is to be feared that only few enjoy in reality this fellowship, and that many have not even felt its lack nor longed after such enjoyment. Are thy feelings, thy thoughts in harmony with those of Christ in glory ? Or must thou confess that thou understandest very little about it ? Perhaps thou sayest, “ I am happy.” This may be perfectly true ; I do not doubt it ; only it is quite another matter to be capacitated for the presence of God through feet-washing, so that all that does not harmonize with that presence is removed. Then first is there no more hindrance for us to be in full fellowship with Him *where He is*, and to enjoy the rest which flows from this fellowship.

In the present time in which there is so much zeal and outward activity, when it is so easy to lose sight of the blessed Person to whom our whole labour should be devoted, it is necessary above all to lift into relief what the portion of the Lord Jesus is. The heart of God desires no other testimony from His own than to find them, not such as are distinguished by great deeds and by completing great acts, but as being

such as are wholly subjected to the power and influence of the Son of God.

Abide with me, for with me thou art well protected (1 Sam. xxii. 23)

To find rest one must be near to Jesus *where He is*. It is not enough to have Him as my Saviour, my Redeemer (lit. sin-effacer). It is also not enough to seek refuge and help from Him in the day of trouble. No, I must have a Christ Who washes my feet, Who cleanses me from all which does not suit the presence of God, so that nothing is present to hinder my entrance into the surroundings of Christ. The enjoyment of that which is above diverts my heart from that which is only a deceitful imitation of that true Good. The children of this world strive after the earthly, because they possess not that true Good. If they possessed it, then would there be in their hand a just measure by which to judge of earthly things. No one can perceive what is false according to God's judgment unless he knows the true. He who does not know the truth is not able to distinguish between truth and error.

Alas, how many Christians still seek diversion in the things with which they surround themselves, including Christian services; they are exercised from morning till evening only so as not to be alone with Christ and God. If there is nothing between Him and us then we can and shall be glad to be alone with Him and shall find our rest in His presence.

He makes me to rest in green pastures, He leads me to still waters
(Ps. xxiii. 2)

If I have common interests with Christ then I stay willingly in immediate nearness to Him. His presence is the rest of my soul. The 23rd Psalm shows where this rest is found. It does not lead us to any spot on earth, for earth possesses no "green pastures," and the "still waters" flow little here below. How can "green pastures" be found in the sands of the wilderness, or "still waters" in the storms of this world? Here below there is only vanity and unrest. But when my heart tastes nearness to Jesus, and nothing hinders this enjoyment, I turn my back on the things of earth, yea, on the best possessions of this poor earth. How blessed it is to be in His presence and to be able to listen to the communications of His mouth. There one forgets oneself and all that is around; there one understands how to put aside the world and its unrest and to enter into His thoughts. What can be more blessed! To him who finds himself in immediate nearness to the Lord others concede the privilege to turn in confident manner to the Lord as a friend, as we see with Peter and John. Peter felt that he who rested in the bosom of Jesus as a companion would be able to search into His secrets and to explore His revelation.

THE DISCIPLE

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*“ The opening of Thy words
giveth Light ”*

PSALM 119: 130. (R.V.)

A PILGRIM SONG

Deut. xxxi. 8.

*On, O beloved children,
The evening is at hand,
And desolate and fearful
The solitary land.
Take heart ! the rest eternal
Awaits our weary feet;
From strength to strength press onwards,
The end, how passing sweet !*

*Across the will of nature
Leads on the path of God;
Not where the flesh delighteth
The feet of Jesus trod.
O bliss to leave behind us
The fetters of the slave,
To leave ourselves behind us,
The grave-clothes and the grave !*

*To speed unburdened pilgrims,
Glad, empty-handed, free;
To cross the trackless deserts,
And walk upon the sea;
As strangers among strangers,
No home beneath the sun:
How soon the wanderings ended,
The endless rest begun !*

*We follow in His footsteps;
What if our feet be torn ?
Where He has marked the pathway
All hail the briar and thorn !
Scarce seen, scarce heard, unreckoned,
Despised, defamed, unknown,
Or heard but by our singing,
On children ! ever on !*

TERSTEEGEN.

EDITORIAL

THIS magazine is in its third year and it is on my heart to acknowledge humbly the goodness of God that has brought us thus far. I wish also to thank very warmly those who have shared the burden of producing and distributing the paper, and the help of others who have introduced it to friends. It has been a distinct cheer to receive from all quarters of the earth gracious testimonies to light and help gained from these pages, and I renew sincere thanks to each that has encouraged my heart by writing.

Nor may I omit to express hearty gratitude to readers whose hearts have been moved of God to contribute to the cost of production. This is heavy and their gifts have been most acceptable. It is my deep desire that this effort may be some testimony that the prayer of faith can still command the approval of the Lord, and the maintenance of His service. George Muller's prayer-hearing God still lives and still works for those who wait for Him.

I beg the continuous prayers of readers for myself. I am in my eighty-first year and for some long time have known very uncertain health. My desire is to finish my course with joy and the ministry received from the Lord Jesus, including that through "The Disciple."

May His grace and mercy and peace be multiplied unto us all.

G. H. LANG.

"God is still the Living God,
and now, as well as thousands of years ago,
He listens to the prayers of His children,
and helps those who trust in Him."

GEORGE MULLER, *11th July, 1897.*

JOY UNSPEAKABLE

Whom not having seen ye love; on Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye exult with joy unspeakable and glorified (1 Pet. i. 6-8.)

*We see Thee not, O Son of God,
Thy throne is very high,
And mortal sight is dim and frail,
Nor may the eye of man prevail
Thy glory to descry.
We see Thee not by outward sense,
But faith has vision keen;
By faith we gain the heavenly place,
And gaze upon Thy glorious face,
And see the things unseen.
And while we gaze we needs must love:
Thy beauty all divine
Enthralls the heart that here has been,
And darkens every outer scene,
Nor sun nor stars now shine.
And he who thus has faith and love
Is strong with joy supreme,
And firmly treads this mist-wreathed way
As one on whom eternal day
Continually doth beam.
Oh, if the vision now by faith
Is so surpassing sweet,
What ravishment the soul shall thrill
When Beauty inconceivable
Our unveiled eyes shall greet!
We see Thee not; and yet we see,
And seeing we rejoice
To know that on our raptured sight
Shall burst the uncreated Light,
And on our ear Thy voice;
And we, transfigured by that light,
Incomparably blessed,
Shall instant lose all sense of need,
And gain in Thee life's goal indeed,
Eternal life possessed.
O Day most sweet! thy glimmering dawn
Disturbs the shades of night!
Oh, let the veil of space be riven,
And our great King flash forth from heaven
And faith be crowned by sight!*

G.H.L.

(From *The King and Other Verses*)

ATONING BLOOD :
What it does and what it does not do (3).

II
WHAT THE BLOOD DOES *NOT* Do.

IN the matter of deliverance from the Destroying Angel in Egypt the atoning blood sufficed by itself. The repentant tax-gatherer "went down to his house justified" solely by the virtue of the sacrifice on the altar (Lk. xviii. 13, 14).

Thus for the redeemed Israelites the blood was the commencement and basis of all future relations with God, it was the doorway out of estrangement into a life of faith and communion. Moreover, all through the life thus entered there continued various sprinklings of blood, showing that it remained perpetually the basis of intercourse with God. Nor is the place and efficacy of atoning blood at all diminished by the abrogation of repeated sacrifices and sprinklings through the one complete and final sacrifice of the cross, because the virtue of that death, and of the blood of Christ there shed, is eternal and is the perpetual basis of all communion with God.

Nevertheless the door is not the road or its goal, the foundation is not the superstructure, the blood by itself serves *its* ends but not *all* ends; deliverance from the judicial penalty of sin is not the same as deliverance from the practical power of sin, freedom from servitude in Egypt must advance to conquest in Canaan, turning from idols is to develop into service to a living and true God. For the numerous phases and necessities of this developing life the blood is ever the basis but is not by itself sufficient. There are things which blood cannot do and does not do, which it is not its function to do. In particular, as all histories and types show, it does not (1) dispense with the obedience of faith, or (2) with need of bread, or (3) do the work of water, or (4) take the place of oil, or (5) act as fire and serve the ends of discipline, or (6) do the work of the sword.

1. *Blood does not dispense with faith and obedience.* The sprinkling of the passover blood opened the door to escape from Egypt, but the redeemed people had to take the next and immediate step of faith by obeying the order to march off that same night. If they had not so acted they would not have escaped from thralldom into freedom, though delivered from the Destroyer by the blood. Pharaoh would have held them still. It was no small faith that strengthened them for their hasty and complete flight. Pharaoh was active and angry, his chariots and cavalry were at hand, they had no unity or arms to resist an attack; but faith obeyed and set forth, trusting that God would protect, and make the enterprise successful.

How many there are today who have rested their hope of safety from eternal death upon the precious blood of Christ, but have failed to break with the world, and so they continue entangled by its pleasures and enslaved by its Prince. Either they never heard the call and command to break every yoke with unbelievers, or they have lacked the energy and decision of faith to do this. Protected by the blood they yet remain enslaved by the world, the flesh, and the devil. The apostle rejoiced greatly in the continuing faith of his children in the faith (Eph. i. 15: Col. i. 4: 1 Thes. i. 3), and gave thanks to God when he knew that it "grew exceedingly" (2 Thes. i. 3). He was keenly aware of the practical dangers attendant upon a failure of faith in children of God. He stressed heavily that the disasters that overwhelmed Israel in the wilderness, though they were the redeemed of the Lord, can have counterpart in the experience of Christians, for, he says, "these things happened unto them by way of example [Greek, figure]; and they were written [put into God's historical records] for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages are come" (1 Cor. x. 1-13). These disasters befell "most of them" that had been redeemed by the blood of the lamb and brought into liberty and fellowship with God. They were sufficiently spiritual to know that manna and water had spiritual counterparts and to partake of these latter: "they did *all* eat the same *spiritual* food; and did *all* drink the same *spiritual* drink: for they drank of a *spiritual* rock that went with them: and the rock was Christ."

In the face of these explicit assertions of Scripture as to the spiritual state of those concerned, and in the face of the direct application of their experiences to Christians in Corinth, it is wholly without warrant to say that they were not real believers and that the application here made is to mere professors of this age, not to true believers. Such treatment of Scripture would mean that all but a very small number of the Corinthian Christians were either hypocrites or self-deceived, for of those who were examples for them only three or four of the men who left Egypt did not die in the desert. Jude refers to the same ancient events and says, "I desire to put you in remembrance, though ye know all things once for all, how that the Lord, having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not" (verse 5). This is exactly how Paul warns us in the passage cited, saying, "Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured and perished by the destroyer" (verse 10).

Therefore there is such a thing as being saved from the Destroyer in Egypt and yet falling under his power in the desert. The blood saves from being condemned at the same time as the world, but did not prevent carnal Christians in Corinth from losing their present life under the chastisement of the Lord (1 Cor. xi. 29-32). To have received eternal redemption from eternal doom by the blood of Christ does

not dispense with the need of continuous faith and obedience by the redeemed, if such are to enjoy present communion with their holy Father and escape severe chastisement. To exactly the same effect are the solemn warnings in the parables of Christ and those in *Hebrews*. The whole Word of God emphasizes the urgent need of a continuous faith and ceaseless obedience in the redeemed of the Lord. Hence the force of the continuous tense in "eth": heareth, believeth, eateth, drinketh, and the like words. See John iv. 13, 14; vi. 54, 46: etc. No backslidden Israelite or backslidden Christian ever has escaped loss and chastisement through redemption by the blood.

2. *Blood does not take the place of food.* The same night that Israel sprinkled the blood they strengthened themselves for the coming hard trek by eating of the lamb and the unleavened bread. Nor did this initial meal suffice for long: they took dough to make bread for the next meals (Ex. xii. 7-11, 34). Nor could this provision last for all the journey; shortly bread out of heaven was given. Nor was one supply of this heavenly food adequate: the manna had to be gathered and eaten repeatedly and unfailingly. For us Christ is the Lamb and the unleavened bread and the manna, to be appropriated by faith as the soul's vital force (1 Cor. v. 6-8; John vi); and he who would run and not be weary, walk and not faint, mount above obstacles on eagles' wings, must nourish his soul daily in the words of the faith, even the words of the Lord Jesus, whether spoken by Old Testament prophets, or Himself when here, or by apostles and prophets who spake by the Spirit. One may be sincerely relying upon the blood of Christ for salvation from perdition, yet be feeble and sick spiritually by not feeding upon Christ in the Word.

3. *Blood does not do the work of Water.* It may be thought needless to argue something so self-evident. In fact there is the most urgent need to do so and at length, for Evangelical theology and belief are almost universally false on this point. This is to be seen especially in hymns, though also in many competent writers.

" There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.
The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there have I, as vile as he,
Washed all my sins away."

It is to be asserted categorically, and with the utmost emphasis, that no such fountain or flood of blood exists, that to be plunged in blood is a purely pagan idea, and that no person or his sins ever have been washed in blood. The

whole conception is both obnoxious and mischievous. The heathen had a most offensive rite, the *taurobolium*, in which the man was deluged with blood from above, but God never sanctioned any such ceremony nor does His Word admit even the idea.

The one verse that could be fairly quoted for the conception was Rev. i. 5 in the A.V., "Unto Him that . . . washed us from our sins in His blood." The Revisers, following the better Greek text, read "*loosed* us from our sins," set us free, liberated us from our sins, as a debtor is freed from his debts by the payment of them. The difference between the two Greek words is only one letter. To free is *luo*, to wash is *louro*. Whether the introduction of the first "o" was the accidental mistake of a copyist, or a conscious correction by him to accommodate the verse to a popular conception which he thought true, or a deliberate perversion to inculcate error, it had the baneful effect of forcing this verse into plain contradiction with the whole typology and theology of Holy Scripture and of hiding indispensable truth.

There is one other statement, also in Revelation (ch. vii. 14), often misread and misused to the same effect: "they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." This does not say that these washed and whitened their robes in the blood: there are here two separated verbs describing two operations, "they washed their robes, and whitened them in the blood," the "and" being disjunctive as well as conjunctive; the two operations belong together but the latter is additional to the former. This is indicated by the comma after "robes." We shall see the force of this when considering certain types, and that the washing was with water and the blood was applied by sprinkling.*

The passage from the Old Testament upon which the hymn quoted is doubtless based is Zech. xiii. 1: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." This does not say "a fountain of blood." "In that day" looks forward not backward: it points to the future when Messiah shall return to deliver Jerusalem and Israel from Antichrist—see the paragraph preceding and the whole context. Is Calvary to be then re-enacted? Is the blood of Christ to be shed again? Must not the meaning be other than this? An Old Testament figure must be interpreted in harmony with previous Old Testament types, pictures, and teaching.

(i) When Israel was redeemed from the Destroyer it was by blood alone. The people were not required to wash their

* Rev. i. 5 and v. 9. "The idea of washing or whitening robes in blood is therefore not present, whether *en to hoimatic tou arnion* ['in the blood of the lamb'] goes with *eplunan . . . kai eleukanan* ['washed . . . and whitened'] or with *eleukanan* ['whitened'] only."—F. F. Bruce

persons or garments. The taxgatherer "went down to his house justified" (Lk. xviii. 14) by virtue of the altar and the blood alone; he did not have to wash at the laver. Thus the blood by itself saves from damnation and justifies the penitent believer. This is the Scriptural denial of the doctrine that eternal salvation depends in part upon outward sanctification, so that no one can be assured of salvation until he has persevered in holiness to the end of life. The point is stressed by both the type and the express statement of Christ.

(ii) But no sooner had the people redeemed by blood entered the life of fellowship with God in the desert than the necessity for water arose: "they went three days in the wilderness and found no water" (Ex. xv. 22). Anyone who has tramped the desert for *one* day, under the Egyptian sun, will know how hard it was to go three days without water, and will not throw stones at them for murmuring.

And the first water they reached was bitter (Ex. xv. 23). The type teaches that something more and better than earth's supplies is needed for spiritual refreshment. God changed that bitter water and made it drinkable and healthful. God has skill to turn life's bitter experiences into soul-refreshment, health-giving and vivifying; for still He uses such occasions as He did then, to grant "precious and exceeding great promises, in order that by means of these we may become partakers of divine nature" (2 Pet. i. 4). This will bring us, as Israel, to an Elim, where the heart may encamp and repose (Ex. xv. 27).

But in a desert the need of water is perpetual and the lack of it easy occasion for a grumbling spirit (Ex. xvii. 1-7). Oh, how readily the redeemed soul reaches its Massah and Meribah, testing God instead of trusting Him, chiding instead of praying. But as has been noticed above, their gracious God provided henceforth water from the Rock which accompanied them the rest of their journey (1 Cor. x. 4). That Rock was Christ, smitten on the cross once for all, water of life being thus made permanently available and free. Now the blood that had redeemed had been shed once for all in Egypt; the water that slaked their thirst flowed constantly. Blood did not flow to quench their thirst. Only a pagan savage would offer his friend blood to drink.

The Lord Jesus is He Who shed His blood to redeem: He it is Who also gives the living water. In John iii we hear Him tell Nicodemus that it is Himself lifted up on the cross to whom the sinner must look in order to receive the gift of eternal life. To Nicodemus He spoke of the cross, for He was showing that the source of eternal life lies in His own death; but in the next chapter (iv), when showing a sin-parched thirsty soul how *this* need could be met, He did not speak of blood but of water. They are many who have reached John iii, having experienced the new birth by faith

in the death of Christ, but who have not advanced to John iv, for they have no experience answering to the Lord's rich promise, "whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall *never thirst*" (verse 14). The promise is emphatic: "for ever shall in no wise thirst," and the reason is notable, "the water that I shall give him shall become in him a spring of water always welling up unto eternal life." Here is an inward experience that never could have been possible had the blood not covered our sin but which manifestly is something additional to this latter, and which many never reach though knowing they are redeemed and pardoned. And they will remain thirsty and weak as long as their attention is confined to the blood; it is *water* they need. What water typifies, wherever it is spoken of figuratively, is shown in the Lord's words spoken in the temple, as explained by John: "Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth into [vital union with] Me, out of his innermost being shall flow torrents of living water" (*Variorum Bible*). "But this spake He of the *Spirit* which they that believed on Him were to receive" (John vii. 37-39).

Better class houses in the East are frequently built as a square, with windows and doors opening only on to an interior court, save perhaps in some cases a door into a walled garden, and the heavy door leading to the street. If now a tumult arises in the town the occupants can retire into their house, bar the stout door, and stay within till quiet returns. Only they must be well stocked with food, and still more must have their own well in the inner court. Thus can the believer be inwardly secured and fortified against the tumults that disturb the outer life: by the indwelling Spirit he can have his full supply of peace and joy springing up in his own heart, and so copiously that the streams will overflow to others, as Jesus promised. Only those redeemed by blood can experience this; nor will such know it save by drinking continually of the water, by living constantly in communion with the Holy Spirit.

(iii) The second principal use of water is for washing. Both the person and the clothing require this. For this purpose water is the natural and only suitable agent.

(a) Lev. xiv. The leper in Israel was a redeemed man under Divine chastisement for his sin. It was distinctly guaranteed to them that if they would obey the commandments and keep the statutes of their God the diseases of Egypt should not touch them (Ex. xv. 26). Therefore the healing and cleansing of a leper in Israel pictures the penitence, pardon, and restoration of a backslidden believer. In this restoration the first act was by God; He healed the leper of the disease. The second act was that "living," that is, running water, not stagnant water, was brought, a bird was so killed that its blood dropped

into the water, and this mixture of water and blood was sprinkled upon the healed man. These two operations have spiritual counterpart, (1) "By His stripes we are healed" (Isa. liii. 5), not simply forgiven but *healed*. The defiling, weakening effects of sin are cured; its outflow is removed, its display restrained. Then (2) there is the further stage that the heart is sprinkled from an evil conscience (Heb. x. 22). This means that the Holy Spirit brings home to the conscience the saving power of the blood of Christ, and the believer has no more consciousness of being guilty, defiled, banished. When the leper had been sprinkled the stain of the blood in the water would be visible on his garments. That would assure him and show to others that he had been forgiven and was being restored to fellowship with God and His people. He would now have no feeling that he must flee to outside the camp, nor could any other command him to do so. The blood stains set him free; the setting free of the living bird, also stained with the blood, was the symbol (verse 7).

But (3) there was a third stage in the restoration. Cleansing was not yet complete. The man had now to wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and bathe himself in water. Every external sign of defilement, the whole output of sin, had to be removed. The blood was sprinkled upon him by another, the priest; the washing he had to do himself. God supplied the water; the man had to use it, to apply it to himself. The Lord gives the Spirit; the believer has to receive and apply His empowering grace.

It is obvious that the clothing is not the man. Garments are articles we make, and put on or put off. They represent those qualities of character and practice which we form and wear; they are the externals which both reveal and conceal our real self. They must be kept unspotted (Jas. i. 27), they must be washed when necessary (Rev. vii. 14); it is possible, and far better, to keep them undefiled (Rev. iii. 4). This making clean and keeping clean of our outer life is wrought by the grace of the Spirit of holiness, the heavenly "Water."

To the formerly grossly immoral heathen at Corinth who had believed on Christ Paul wrote: "Such were some of you: but ye *washed yourselves* (R.V. mgn), but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. vi. 9-11). And later he exhorted them thus: "let us *cleanse ourselves* from all defilement of flesh and spirit [of outer life and inward state], going on perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. vii. 1). The former passage shows that continued action of the Redeemer and the Spirit pictured by the commingled water and blood sprinkled on the leper, preceding the man washing and bathing himself. The latter verse cannot point to this initial step in the cleansing, because the participle

“perfecting holiness” points to a ceaseless process to be continued perseveringly till its perfection is reached. It is to this that we are called to attend, for if the sprinkled man had not gone on to wash his clothes and bathe his person he would have blocked his own progress and debarred himself reunion with the family circle and also approach to God. Though penitent, pardoned, healed, and sprinkled with the blood, he could not resume communion with God or the godly, save by diligent use of the water.

The Scripture solemnly and repeatedly warns believers that if the marks of the old life are not removed, if they continue to allow the old defiling practices, they will thereby forfeit any *inheritance* in the kingdom of God. The leper, though healed, could not re-enter upon his *inheritance* in Israel merely because of the sprinkled blood, but only after the additional washing with water. An inheritance is not a man’s life; a living man may forfeit an inheritance (1 Cor. vi. 6-10: Gal. v. 19-21: Eph. v. 5). The solemn repetition of this warning in three epistles shows that it was a regular theme in apostolic ministry. It were well if it regains this place.

All this shows the vast and important part water has in the life of the redeemed. The atoning blood has its indispensable initial place and work, but it cannot do the work of the water. Calvary leads to Pentecost but cannot substitute it. Pentecost itself is the initial act of bathing, but it does not dispense with daily washing. Therefore to even the inner circle of faithful followers the Lord said, “He that is washed all over needs not save to wash his feet, but is wholly clean” (that is, by keeping his feet washed. Darby, *New Translation*, John xiii. 10 and note *a*). The force of this will be seen in Lev. viii, the consecration of a priest.

(*b*) Leviticus viii. *The Priest*. The tax-gatherer was justified by the blood through faith without the use of water; but he went down to his own house, he could not go up into God’s house, for he was not a priest. The banished leper was healed and cleansed, first by blood and water, the former applied to him once for all, by sprinkling, the water by himself and repeatedly. This restored him to intercourse with God and His people. But he also could not go into God’s house and serve there. He was not a priest.

To the priest were granted the higher dignities of entering the house where God dwelt, of presenting the showbread and feeding upon it, of burning the incense of worship, of interceding for the people without, and of going forth from that sacred Presence with power to bless others (Num. vi. 22-27).

The perfect sacrifice having provided eternal redemption, the Great Priest over the house of God being permanently before Him, the veil is rent, that Holy Place is open to every believer and its heavenly privileges are available to all. Such is the essence of the exposition in *Hebrews*. Yet what proportion of Christians are experimentally in the power

of this? A clerical caste of clergy and ministers, reserving to themselves the conduct of Christian worship, is a terrible and devastating hindrance to general priestly growth and experience. But even in spheres where this barrier is not allowed, where liberty to function as priests is found, there are all too many who are not in their very soul conscious of the immediate nearness of God, they do not in spiritual experience "draw near unto the throne of grace." Every British subject has the right to submit a petition to the Crown, but not every subject has access to the Sovereign in person. Many send prayers up to God, and are heard, but this is not the same as *drawing near* to God in the power of the Spirit.

In Israel all the devout could stand at the gate and look beyond the altar to the house; they could all present their petitions and secure God's answer, as did Solomon (1 Kings viii), or Hanna who there prayed and praised (1 Sam. i and ii). And this is as far and as near as many Christians get. They attend public worship and never open their lips to lead it. They say Amen to prayers but do not pour out intercessions for others; they sing hymns but do not offer their own praise; nor do they go forth from the realized presence of God to distribute His bounties to needy hearts, saved or unsaved. Moreover it is, alas, sadly possible for one to engage publicly in all these outward functions of the house of God without being in His presence in heart consciousness and without leading others there. Priests by position, such are not priests by practice. Why is this?

It is principally because though they know the sprinkling of blood they do not regularly wash with water. They have received Christ but not the Spirit, they have reached Calvary but not Pentecost, they stand at the altar *and stay there*. And a principal reason for this arrested progress is that, by sermons, books, and especially hymns, they have been taught that at the altar and by the blood they have secured all that can be known on earth. The function of the water has been attributed to the blood, and they seek no more. The necessity and the blessedness of the laver they do not discern. This has conduced to permanent and lamentable impoverishment of soul, so that only few of the saved act as priests.

Leviticus viii shows the first stage of the remedy. The priest to be consecrated was

1. Stripped of his former clothing.
2. Bathed in water.
3. Clothed with priestly garments, the crowning item of which was a golden plate on his forehead inscribed "Holy to Jehovah" (verse 9: Ex. xxviii. 36).
4. He was anointed with oil.
5. Sacrifices followed and the blood was sprinkled.

At the cleansing of the leper (Lev. xiv) the sprinkling of blood came first and washing with water later; at the consecration

of the priest, water and oil were used first, and afterward the blood. Why this difference? Because Aaron and his sons, the priests, were already on a right footing before God as His redeemed people: but for access to His holy presence in priestly service a right standing by blood was not all that was demanded; they must also be thoroughly clean outwardly, attired suitably, wholly dedicated to God, and empowered by His Spirit, the holy anointing Oil.

Peter wrote to his fellow-believers as a "royal priesthood" (1 Pet. ii. 9). He says they had already "obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. i. 1). Their standing as justified was secured; but addressing them as priests he says that they have been chosen by God "in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 2). Here is the same order: first, sanctification by the Spirit; second obedience (as signified by the engraving on the high priest's forehead); and then the sprinkling of blood. Unless this order, in its present spiritual significance, is known experimentally by the power of the Spirit of God the man may be saved and safe because of the atoning blood, but he will not be really a priest unto God.

One may be a clergyman, minister, elder, deacon, evangelist as to position in the church of God, he may be a teacher, preacher, Sunday School worker, but he will not be a *priest* unless he has "put off the old man with his doings, and has put on the new man, which is ever being renewed unto knowledge [experimental, not merely theoretical knowledge, *epignosis*] after the image of Him that created him" (Col. iii. 9, 10). In the sight of God the "old man" is morally ugly and deformed, his clothes are filthy rags, and he cannot be tolerated before the throne on high, where nothing that defiles can enter. A believer who displays the tempers, cravings, conduct of the "old man" has not begun to be a priest unto God, for he has not stripped himself of his old garments, nor been bathed and purified outwardly, nor put on the new garments, the "new man," on which person and clothes alone the holy Oil can be poured.

But why must there be still the sprinkling of blood even though there has been that stripping, purifying, clothing, and anointing? The reason is a rebuke to the unwarranted notion that practical sanctification can ever reach absolute perfection in this life and the Christian be sinless in heart and ways. Though the believer has once and for all disowned his "old man" by reckoning that he died on the cross with Christ (Rom. vi. 6), and constantly reckons himself dead unto sin; though he has once for all turned his back on the world as his moral sphere of life, as Israel forsook Egypt; though he is living daily and carefully and usefully in the communion of the Spirit of God; yet he has to remember that the all-searching eye of the Searcher of hearts sees iniquity in even

the holy things of His people; not only in their unholy ways and works (Ex. xxviii. 38). Hence the strong words of George Whitefield: "you must be brought to see that God may damn you for the best prayer you ever put up;" or that saying of the godly Thomas Boston: "My Sabbath day duties were enough of themselves to damn me." These expressions may be thought too severe, but such keen perception of the degree to which sin can permeate and vitiate even our holy exercises is all too rare. It is only because of our High Priest that we can ever be "accepted before Jehovah," as the verse just cited shows. Paul's words are to be pondered: "I know nothing against myself"—his conscience was clear: this is the possible standard beneath which no Christian should live—"yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord," and He may know something against me of which I am unconscious (1 Cor. iv. 4).

This explains the statement as to the "great multitude coming out of the great tribulation," standing before the throne of God arrayed in white robes (Rev. vii. 14). They had not lived as cleanly as those at Sardis who had not defiled their garments (Rev. iii. 4). The garments of the former had been defiled, and needed to be washed. This they had done betimes: "they washed their robes"—they had used the purifying "water" and their garments were now clean; but not so absolutely clean as to pass the scrutiny of the Holy One before whose throne they were to stand. Therefore the blood of the Lamb was added to their imperfect labour to make their garments perfectly clean before the throne; "they whitened them in the blood of the Lamb." The homely counterpart may be mentioned that the housewife first washes the clothes in water and then adds the bluebag or a chloride to impart lustre to the whiteness. The only other New Testament use of this word for whiten is in Mark ix. 3, where it is said that the transfigured garments of Christ were "exceeding white," which degree and type of whiteness is described by the accompanying word "glistening;" which last word in its turn is explained in Luke ix. 29 by the word "dazzling," to gleam as lightning, to be "white as the light," as Matthew expresses it (Matt. xvii. 2).

Such brilliance of holiness, such resplendence of character is beyond the utmost effort of the most diligent saint: but the blood of Jesus "cleanses from *all* sin"; it removes the faintest trace of the "old man" still lingering upon the believer who walks in the light. But *this* application of the blood, that is of the virtue of the atoning death of Christ, is *after* the diligent washing of the leper's clothes, *after* the bathing and robing of the priest. It is not that *initial* attributing of the redeeming virtue of the atonement by which the sinner or the backslider is reckoned justified. The legal righteousness thus obtained secures safety before the *law*: to this must be added the actual, external holiness by the Spirit and the Word

if the justified man is at last to stand before the throne.

And there is a yet higher privilege than "to stand before the throne." Those who had not defiled their garments are promised by the King that "they shall walk with Me in white; for they are worthy." "The conqueror shall *thus* be arrayed in white garments," and be a constant, intimate companion of the Sovereign of the universe (Rev. iii. 4, 5). For that King of glory has "fellows," or more exactly "companions" (Heb. i. 9). Therefore "take heed, *brethren*, lest haply there be in any one of *you* an evil heart of unbelief . . . lest any of *you* be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin: for we are become *companions* of the Messiah if indeed we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end" (Heb. iii. 12-14). The beginning of our confidence in Christ secured our eternal standing as righteous in law; but it is the final stage, the end of our confidence, that will secure the dignity of being the personal companions of the Lord in His glory; and this stage demands the diligent use of the water as well as of the blood. This is most firmly declared by all the types, prophecies, and promises. It arises from the very holiness of God.

(c) *The Laver*. This last is the pre-eminent lesson of the laver in tabernacle and temple. The directions as to its construction and use are as follows: "And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and the base thereof of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. And Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: when they go into the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, that they die not: or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire unto Jehovah: so they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations" (Ex. xxx. 17-21).

(1) Its position was between the altar of burnt offering at the entrance gate and the house itself where God dwelt, so that to reach the laver one must first pass the altar.

(2) Its use was for priests, that they might habitually keep clean their hands and feet, their practice and walk.

(3) The frequency of this washing was striking. On every occasion without exception when a priest was about to enter the house to serve God or to go to the altar to serve man he was to wash his hands and feet.

(4) The penalty of non-observance was death, twice denounced against non-compliance with the regulation to wash.

On the very day of their consecration as priests Nadab and Abihu dared to enter the house to burn incense using fire not taken from the altar of atonement and therefore not sanctified by the atoning blood. They were slain by fire

from Jehovah (Lev. x. 1, 2: xvi. 12). Thus was solemnly emphasized that blood is indispensable to acceptable worship.

At the beginning of this dispensation Ananias and Sapphira dared to enter the present house of God, the church, with defiled hearts and unclean hands, and they too fell dead in the presence of God (Ac. v. 1-11). Thus was solemnly emphasized that the sanctification secured by "water" is indispensable to acceptable service.

Under the Old Covenant it was asked

Who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah?

And who shall stand in His holy place?

And the searching answer was,

He that hath *clean hands*, and a *pure heart* (Ps. xxiv. 3, 4).

Under the New Covenant the apostle says,

I desire therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up *holy hands*, without wrath and disputing [a pure heart] (1 Tim. ii. 8).

The Corinthian Christians were carrying on the public gatherings of the church, but with hearts impure by strife, jealousy, and selfishness, and with bodies defiled by immoralities and greed; and they were sick, ill, and dying prematurely under the judgments of God (1 Cor. xi. 26-32). That place of blessing, the table of the Lord, is a dangerous place to the carnal believer, as was the altar of incense to Nadab and Abihu.

Here then is the inexorable condition of priestly standing and service. Does this explain why, though the saved are many, priests are few?

(d) *Water*. What then is the "water" so indispensable to communion, worship, and service? What enables the believer to be a saint? By what means may person and garments, the inward man and the outer life, be kept clean? The answer is given in Eph. v. 25-27: "Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself up for it; that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that He might present the church to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

This teaches (1) That the love of Christ is the fountain of every blessing for all His people. (2) That His sacrifice of Himself unto death is the ground of His redemptive right, His ownership of the church. (3) That the goal He has set before His heart is to present the church to Himself as a bride to a husband. The whole context is of this relationship, and it would be helpful in translating, and would display the figure used, to follow the feminine gender of the Greek word "church" and render, "gave Himself up for her . . . that He might sanctify her . . . that she should be holy and without blemish." At present His people are as a betrothed virgin (2 Cor. xi. 2, 3); but in due time the heavenly hosts

will rejoice because "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready" (Rev. xix. 7). But (4) unto this great end it is needful that she shall be completely perfect, so as to be pleasant to her royal Bridegroom. She must be glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but so holy as to be without blemish. All these terms refer to external appearance, to visible beauty.

How is this perfect condition to be attained by the bride? The answer here is that Christ Himself sanctifies her. Not otherwise were it possible, but He can bring her to this height of beauty and glory. But by what process does He do this? It is by the use "of the laver [composed of] water in the word." The brazen laver of old pointed to the words of God, now preserved for us in Holy Scripture. The water in the laver spoke of the Holy Spirit of God. He who obeys what the Lord says receives the purifying energy of the Spirit that abides in the word. The Lord's instructions direct us to holiness, but we must obey those commands if we are to be sanctified. A command disobeyed cannot benefit but only condemn; a command obeyed removes the moral blemish against which it is directed or supplies the virtue lacking.

Obviously the picture is of a slave girl upon whom a prince sets his heart. He thereupon redeems her and acquires all rights in her. His purchase price completely releases her from her former bondage but at the same time makes her entirely his property. But he cannot take her direct from the slave market to sit with him on his throne. She must be bathed, clothed, adorned, trained for regal glory, and in this she must co-operate by obedience to his requirements and acceptance of the training appointed. All she will ever have her prince supplies, but *she must use it* so as to render herself correspondent to him and suitable for her noble calling. It were vain for her to argue that the redemption price alone sufficed for every requirement. It would not: it sufficed to set her free from the old life and introduce her to her new standing and relationship, but it would not take the place of and render needless the water, the royal garments, the ornaments, and fragrant ointment. These she must accept and employ with all diligence, as did Esther. Hence the two statements, complementary to each other, that Christ sanctifies the church, but she makes herself ready and arrays herself for the marriage.

And therefore while Paul says of his converts that he espoused them as a chaste virgin, that he might at last present them unto Christ on the marriage day, yet he feared lest any of them should prove faithless in heart to the heavenly Lover, and be corrupted and defiled and so unready. For as Satan seduced Eve from God, so he will seduce the Christian from Christ if he be unwatchful as to heart and ways (2 Cor. xi. 2, 3). And then

O grief for words too sore !
 The bridal day is nigh,
 The virgin, *that* no more,
 Is left to weep and sigh:
 All sullied by the foul embrace,
 She lost for aye her queenly place.
 (Jas. iv. 4: Phil. iii. 13, 14)

This use of the water is shown in many Scriptures. David, recovered from moral leprosy, his sin put away by God, his sentence of death annulled, prayed, " Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean: Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow " (Ps. li. 7). The hyssop was used to sprinkle the blood (Ex. xii. 22: Lev. xiv. 6, 7: Heb. ix. 19-21); the washing was with water, not with blood. No hymn to the contrary should be used. It fixes in the mind the false idea that *all* that God requires is gained at the altar, so that the laver is neglected and holiness retarded. Of every thousand allusions by preachers to the altar and the blood is there more than one mention of the laver ? Again, Heb. x. 22 shows that the water is as requisite as the blood for full assurance of faith: " let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our body washed with pure water ;" the inward consciousness relieved by faith in the blood of Christ, the " body," the outward conduct, purified by obedience to the Word and the Spirit.

It was to a justified believer and sincere follower that the Lord said, " If I wash thee not thou hast no part with Me ;" and emphasizing this need of practical cleansing, under the figure of a branch in a vine having been stripped of dead bark and other impurities which hinder fruitfulness, He added, " Already ye are clean because of [by the effect of] the word which I have spoken unto you " (John xii. 8-10; xv. 3). This external cleansing requires to be maintained and advanced by diligent washing of the feet at the laver, and only so will the pilgrim through this squalid world (2 Pet. i. 19) arrive at length at the bridal hall " clean every whit." The application of this last phrase to cleansing by the blood at the altar is in utter disregard of the words as spoken by Christ to Peter. It was while He was graciously washing his feet with water that He said, " He that is bathed has no further need than to wash his feet." This being done he is " clean every whit ;" but obviously a guest will not be clean every whit so long as his bare and sandalled feet are soiled by the dust and mire of the street.

Of the first bathing of the priest at his consecration baptism is an appointed figure, " the laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit " (Tit. iii. 5), but baptism is not in view in the main passages on holiness and priestly service, such as Eph. v. 25-27 and Heb. x. 22.

Let no Christian beguile himself, or be beguiled by erroneous teaching, into thinking that he acquires by the sacred blood what can only be gained by the equally sacred water. He needs both equally; the blood to secure his standing before God, the Spirit to cause his state to correspond to his standing. It is by water that the thirst of the heart is quenched, the soul refreshed, the life made to overflow with grace; it is by water that the practice of daily life is cleansed and kept clean. And God be praised that this heavenly Water is ever at hand; the spiritual Rock goes with us through the desert; Christ accompanies His people and gives the Spirit to them that obey Him. Therefore from His riven side there flowed both water and blood, and therefore rings out His gracious promise "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely," and therefore "blessed are they that wash their robes" (Rev. xxi. 6; xxii. 17, 14).

4. *Blood is not oil and does not serve the purpose of oil.* In the process of cleansing the leper, after the blood of atonement had been put upon his ear, hand, and foot, oil was sprinkled before Jehovah, was put upon the blood on the ear, hand, and foot, and poured upon the head of the man being cleansed. It was the last act but one of the ceremony and without it cleansing was not complete (Lev. xiv. 16-18). The same features found place in the consecration of priests (Lev. viii). The king was consecrated by anointing with oil (1 Sam. x. 1; xvi. 13; 2 Sam. v. 3). Elisha was to be anointed as prophet (1 Kings xix. 16). The Son of God was anointed at His baptism. Peter intimates what the oil signified and effected when he said of Jesus "God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and power," so that "He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him" (Ac. x. 38). This anointing with the Spirit was distinct from that measure of the Spirit which had been the portion of the Lord Jesus all His private life. Its consequence was that "God was with Him" in a sense that was additional to the former fellowship with His Father. Its effect was an accession of spiritual energy for public service; He was anointed with the Holy Spirit and power, as it is written of that event, that "Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee" (Lk. iv. 14), and showed the power of the anointing in victory over disease, sorrow, Satan.

In like manner the first disciples received power by the Holy Spirit coming upon them (Ac. i. 8) and became mighty witnesses to Christ glorified.

This anointing can be given to those only who have accepted the sprinkled blood as atonement for sin. But why are so many who do this without power to witness and serve? The solemn fact is undeniable: what is its reason? and what the remedy? Let each ask himself, Have I consented that my ear shall be marked with blood, so that I purpose to

listen only and constantly to the voice of God? Have I dedicated my hand to do only His will, His works? Am I, as blood-bought, resolved to walk only in the footsteps of my Lord? Have I sought and received an *anointing* with the Spirit and power? Or do I suppose that all this took place when first I went to the altar and accepted pardon by blood?

It *might* have been thus, for so it was with Cornelius and his company (Ac. x. 44-48); but was it so with you? Is the reader's life as a believer marked by power or by weakness? Be not beguiled by theory, but receive the reality by faith. Dedicate your person to Christ to serve Him alone and wholly, so shall the anointing of oil be added to the blood, and you shall have power to know the mind of God (1 John ii. 27), to go about doing good, to conquer the devil in your own life and in others.

But be assured that blood without oil does not produce those blessed God-glorifying results. To service as prophet or priest or king the anointing with oil was a distinct and known event.

5. *The Blood does not dispense with discipline.* The classic instance of this is David after his lapse and recovery (2 Sam. xii. 12-14). He was pardoned, his sin put away, the capital punishment remitted, and all this because God was able to give the repentant offender the benefit of the blood Jesus would shed. But to the announcement of pardon the sentence was added that his child should die and the sword would harass his house to the end. He had sinned publicly and had given great occasion to the enemies of his God to blaspheme, and that holy God was bound to vindicate His holiness and to show publicly that He does not tolerate sin in His people. The after life of David showed that he humbly bowed to this severe chastisement and was benefited by it.

The leading passage on parental discipline by God is Hebrews xii. 1-17. This follows the great exposition of remission through the blood and of cleansing by the water. Can discipline, then, add ought to these? The passage declares that the Father "scourges every son whom He receiveth," and that this is a proof of His love and of their sonship. The object of this severe treatment is "for our profit, that we may be partakers [*eis to metalabein*, so that we may partake] of His holiness" (verses 6-10). Every one of His sons has already been reckoned *righteous* by faith in Christ. But that is something imputed, securing a clear and safe standing in law; this holiness is the actual character and activity of God infused into and wrought out in His sons. The only other place of this exact word in the New Testament is 2 Cor. i. 12, where Paul uses it of his practical conduct at Corinth. In that city notorious for vice he had "behaved in holiness and sincerity of God."

For the furthering of this needful and noble end chastisement is employed by God our Father, and neither blood, water,

nor oil dispenses with it. Gold is freed from dross by neither of these but by *fire* (1 Pet. i. 7). This is set in direct connexion with the believer being found unto "praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Our passage in *Hebrews* puts heavy emphasis upon this same connexion by exhorting us to "follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one shall see the Lord" (verses 14-17), that is, God the Father, for every eye is to see Christ and every knee to bend before Him at one or other session of His judgment seat.

In my commentary on *Hebrews* it was shown from many Scriptures that there is a possibility that this "scourging" of a child of God may continue after death. An indignant critic complained in a magazine that it seems that what the blood cannot do, a thousand years in purgatory is to do. I had shown that the process proposed differed radically and essentially from the Roman Catholic conception of purgatory in that the Catholic doctrine makes *salvation* dependent upon such purgation, which is false. The critic ignored this. His phrase was clever, well calculated to catch the unwary and mislead the uninstructed by a seeming honouring of the blood: but it revealed the common and regrettable theological error that the blood is like money and answereth for all things. Yet it is very evident that in this life at least the atoning blood does *not* serve the end that chastisement serves, nor, if discipline be resented, will the blood compensate by perfecting holiness in the child of God. To lead the people of God to rest on this misconception is injurious to their souls and to their prospects. It retards growth in holiness, induces unwarranted confidence, and conduces to lethargy.

6. *Blood does not do the work of the sword.* By blood Israel had been delivered from the Destroyer in Egypt, but this did not give victory over Amalek in the desert. It required the hill-top intercession of their Leader and their own sharp swords. In the desert they had experienced the continual virtue of blood, water, oil, and the fire of discipline; but this did not give them victory over Sihon and Og: victory demanded their own swords. They went through Jordan, typifying for us escape by the cross of Christ from the weary effort to suppress the flesh, the "old man" and his corruptions; this did not give them possession of their noble inheritance: possession had to be won at the sword's point.

Israel in Egypt is the chosen people of God in bondage to the world; Israel in the desert pictures her harassed and often defeated by defilements of the flesh (as fornication and idolatry), and of spirit (as distrust and self-pleasing): Israel fighting giants on the hilltops of Canaan represents our warfare with wicked spirits in the heavenly places. This ceaseless battle must be waged in our own hearts, watching

against evil thoughts, feelings, desires: it must be pressed in home, school, business, church, pulpit, perhaps in prison for Christ's sake.

Hast thou sheltered under the precious blood of Christ, then thou art secure from eternal damnation; but take not thou for granted that all the privileges and advantages of the new life in Christ, in time and eternity, are certain to become thine. Not so, not so! Thou must put on the whole armour of God, and use the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. vi). Therefore challenge thy heart with the question, Am I fighting the good fight of faith? "Am I a soldier of the cross?" Thy new birth grants thy *title* to inherit in Christ; the atoning blood has removed the legal *obstacle* to thy inheriting, even thy sin; but *possession* will only be secured by thy sword. Therefore, my brother, say resolutely to thy soul

"Since I *must fight* if I would *reign*
Increase my courage, Lord:
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain
Supported by Thy word."

What the blood does has been opened up in the former part of this exposition. The God of all grace be praised for the rich and establishing truth there set forth. Yet it is very necessary that the Christian should understand what the blood does *not* do, in order that he may feel his need of water and oil, may set himself to the life of detail obedience to the will of God declared in His Word, may thus enjoy the communion of the Holy Spirit and "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and unto the day of eternity. Amen." (2 Pet. iii. 18).



ATONEMENT

by

JOSEPH BEVAN BRAITHWAITE (1818-1905)

J. B. Braithwaite, a barrister at law, was a distinguished member of an old Quaker family and an esteemed Minister of the Society of Friends. The following paper is an instance of how the Spirit of truth instructs devout students of Scripture without a formal training as theologians. It is taken from *J. Bevan Braithwaite, A Friend of the Nineteenth Century* (pp. 89-92) and is used by kind permission of his grandson J. Frederick Braithwaite.

THE cross of Christ, the central glory of which is His death not merely as it was a holy example, but much more as it was a real sacrifice—a propitiation for sin—has ever been

“foolishness” to those who prefer their own theories to God’s Revelation. How can the practice of sacrifice, so prevalent if not universal in the Heathen world, be explained on any other ground than that of *Atonement*? Sacrifices of blood occupy a very large place in the ancient Economy—a place quite unintelligible except upon the admission of *Atonement*. Exclude this—and the imposition of so expensive and intricate and burdensome a machinery in connection with the worship of Jehovah—infinite, all-seeing, ever present and eternal—is altogether inexplicable. Exclude this, and many important passages both in the Old Testament and in the New are deprived of meaning, or must be subjected to arbitrary principles of exposition. Exclude this and you either exclude some of the Divine Attributes by resolving the whole into part only—as Love, Mercy, etc.—or you lower the attributes of Holiness, Righteousness, etc., to a standard compatible with human infirmity, or you leave man at a hopeless distance from his *inaccessible* God—the Bridge across the vast gulf broken down, with no Mediator to pass over and restore the relation between God offended and man offending (I use Geo. Fox’s words). But with the doctrine of the atonement all this is made plain. It is not only the doctrine of Reconciliation—but emphatically the reconciling doctrine—the only basis on which the Old Testament doctrine of sacrifice—the offering up of Isaac—the 53rd chapter of Isaiah—the plain and direct teaching of Christ and His Apostles—Matthew, Peter, John, Paul (to give His life *a ransom for many*), can receive any adequate explanation.

The truth is that in regard to this and many other subjects that concern our relation to the Infinite Creator, we are prone to forget or mistake our true position and to apply to Him what He means us to apply to ourselves. With our finite capacities we are unable to comprehend anything except through the medium of distinction and contrast. Hence the need of different words to express different ideas. We think by parts, by degrees. Our minds cannot contain our Infinite thoughts—we must come to it bit by bit. It must be divided into fragments in order that we may receive and digest it. Now in this process how hard it is to embrace the whole in its unity and completeness—how easy to mistake one, two, or more *fragments* for the entirety—and draw our conclusions accordingly. If these general views have any truth in them, they are in an essential manner applicable to all that relates to the Attributes of the Most High.

He has, in His great condescension, employed human language as a medium of conveying His Mind and Will. This in itself necessarily involves a limitation. The limitation is not in Him who is infinite, but in us who are finite—and who should therefore reverently accept the Revelation not as of the whole in the fulness, but as mercifully veiled that

it may be adapted to the capacity of those who can in this state of being see only through a glass, darkly. Thus, when we are told of the *Love* of God, we are not to suppose it an attribute separate and distinct from or opposed to His holiness. In like manner His mercy and justice, compassion and righteousness, lovingkindness and truth are all spoken of in distinct terms—this being the only means of making them plain to us. But in Him they are blended in an eternal and inseparable oneness and harmony.

To speak of any immutable principles independent of God, and which He cannot alter or disturb, is a highly irreverent and indecent mode of statement. God being Eternal, from everlasting, uncreated and unchangeable, no principles can be conceived as existing antecedently to Him. All good is derived from Him and exists because He wills it. All evil is posterior to His being, and exists because He permits it as a means of exercising and proving His intelligent creatures—and is wholly subject to His Power. God being the creator of all created intelligences is, in the Highest and most absolute sense, Himself a Free Agent. His acts are not controlled by any necessity, but are all the free and spontaneous expressions of Perfect Wisdom. In the atonement He is presented to us as “reconciling the world unto Himself” in a manner altogether consistent with Himself. In this great and glorious Act of Infinite and Eternal Love, Mercy and Truth meet together, Righteousness and Peace kiss each other. Great prejudice has resulted in connection with this subject from the frequent practice of using terms—as anger, wrath, etc., as though they were human passions. Wherever these or similar terms are warranted by Holy Scripture, beyond which I would not presume to go, they are to be understood as expressions of the Divine Holiness and Righteousness, maintained in the Divine unity in Co-equal and Co-eternal dignity with His Mercy, Compassion, and Love.

But how must the Infinite manifest His glorious attributes to *man*—fallen, degenerate, depraved, and corrupt man, in the way most fitted to affect his heart and to bring him back to his God—and this without the least diminution of the Divine attributes or degradation of infinite Purity, Holiness, and Truth? This was the great problem to be solved. There was the reconciling Mind and Will in Him, who from all Eternity is the Father of Mercies. In His eternal counsel and foreknowledge the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world. But how was reconciliation to be brought about in man, alienated in his fallen nature, in a way consistent both with man’s Free agency and the Sovereignty of his Maker? The Great Act of the Incarnation and Atonement is surely a presentation in the most real, expressive, and persuasive form of the holiness, the righteousness, the compassion, and Love of God. He who suffered is He who

uttered the words "I and My Father are one." He is the Word made flesh—the Immanuel, God with us. As regards God, there is no opposition, but an eternal unchangeable and explicitly *revealed* Unity, or rather Oneness, between Him who was pleased to undertake and undergo, and Him who was pleased, in the same Love, boundless and eternal, to accept the suffering. As regards man, the law was fulfilled, its requirements were satisfied, holiness was gloriously revealed and confirmed. It was shown that God might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

It is thus that God has seen fit to commend His love unto us in that whilst we were yet sinners Christ died for us. To meditate upon His Love as *thus* manifested and commended unto us is indeed an exercise which, under the operations of the Spirit of Truth and Holiness "testifying of Jesus," is in its very nature calculated to transform and renew and sanctify the heart. It brings into humility and contrition—to godly sorrow for sin under the felt sense of its awful nature, and, at the same time, to a living and fruitful faith in the reality of that mercy and compassion so powerfully proclaimed in the sufferings and death of Christ. To speak of the Love of God, in a sense which excludes the manner in which He has Himself chosen to exhibit it, is to *nullify the gospel*. Upon any possible hypothesis of Theism, we must believe that our *Creator* understands both His own nature and ours better than we do ourselves. Upon any possible hypothesis of Christianity we must believe that the mode in which our Creator has been pleased to reveal Himself to man, is the mode best adapted to our condition, our capacities, and the great purposes of mercy, wisdom, and love which He has in view in making the revelation. To modify, abridge, or alter the representation which God has been thus pleased to make of Himself, is to substitute an image of our own; and in worshipping that, we incur the folly and guilt of Idolatry. This is my deepest and most solemn conviction. Any tampering with "the Image of the Invisible God" revealed in Christ produces a distortion—a base caricature, and is always connected with inadequate and unworthy views of God—inadequate views of sin—and inadequate and unworthy views of man—his origin, his fall, his condemnation, his destiny.

For myself I feel more and more thankful for the precious gift of the Holy Scriptures. Interpreted and applied by the inspiring Spirit they are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. From my very heart I wish to have no other Christianity than that of Christ and His Apostles. All my desire is to be a Christian after Christ's own pattern, baptized with His Spirit, transformed by His grace, conformed to His will, knowing nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

BIRTH CONTROL

THE basic principle in the matter of birth control, as to which you inquire, is quite simple. The Creator has expressly declared that a primary purpose for which He ordained marriage is that "He sought a godly seed" (Mal. ii. 15). On bringing Adam and Eve together He commanded them to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Gen. i. 28). This command He repeated to Noah and his sons after the Flood (Gen. ix. 1). Surely it is an obvious and fundamental principle that it never can be right for the creature deliberately to frustrate an express command of the Creator. To crave the indulgence while avoiding the responsibility is impious. Men and women are not compelled to marry, but when they do so it should be with the intention to fulfil the purposes of God in marriage.

Occasions may arise when childbearing is no more advisable, as when the health of one or both parents is bad. How many children should be born is for the parents to settle before God. In such cases the right and healthy course is to refrain from intercourse, not to prevent its God-intended result. For this, self-control is imperative; but this grace is one fruit of the Spirit of holiness dwelling in the Christian (Gal. v. 22, "temperance," meaning self-control). Desire is strong, nature is weak, there is forgiveness for failure; yet the strength being thus available from God, weakness is avoidable and there should be no excusing of oneself.

Every infringement of the will of God brings penalty. In this case the joy and discipline of rearing a family are lost and the blessing of God upon doing so is forfeited. There is also involved a serious impoverishment of character, for the instinct of parenthood being crushed human nature does not develop to its fulness. The repression of any proper instinct works damage. Married people do not live in and for the children they refuse to beget, so that self becomes more and more the centre of life, with all the blighting results.

Or again, obviously the ability of man to subdue creation is dependent upon his race multiplying. The beasts go on increasing and defy and destroy men if they be few.

A portentous international situation is arising. The coloured races, Eastern and Southern, multiply, the Western do not. When at last the great clash shall come numbers will prevail. The rulers of Russia and China can be reckless of man power; the Western rulers dare not be so. The East can wait: it must win finally. Consider Rev. xvi. 12. And in view of the Divine purpose that the earth be replenished, why should races be permitted to hold vast territories they neither will nor can subdue and use?

It is urged that this practice affords relief from some of the miseries that burden the lives of many, especially women. These afflictions are among the results of the original disobedience to God by the first man and woman (Gen. iii. 16-19), disobedience endorsed and perpetuated by their posterity. Attempt to gain relief on the line of further and flagrant disobedience will fail, for further and heavier penalties will be incurred. The dire effects of a powerful spiritual poison, such as rebellion against God, are not to be nullified, but can only be aggravated, by taking a larger dose of it.

One terrible result and penalty of this practice is that sexual immorality has vastly increased. Formerly many a young woman kept chaste out of fear of the stigma and complications of having an illegitimate child, and young men shrank from the reproach and financial responsibility of being the father. Such restraints are now scarcely operative, and both married and unmarried persons commit fornication recklessly. The resulting general moral degeneracy cries unto the Judge of all the earth as did that of Sodom (Gen. xviii. 20, 21; xix. 12, 13). These corrupt conditions are heading up for a catastrophic judgment such as overwhelmed that ancient city. Seasons are reached when the iniquity of races is full and the full penalty must be poured out from heaven (Gen. xv. 13-16). The peoples are preparing their own judgments by, for example, preparing atomic bombs, but God will superintend their use as to time and region and deserts.

It is significant that this particular defying and defeating of the will of God was first popularized in England (in 1877) by two militant atheists, Charles Bradlaugh and Mrs. Annie Besant. Today there are in the West millions upon millions of atheists, virtual if not avowed, persons living in defiance of the laws of God, natural or written.

Alas, that it cannot be expected that godless men will heed such considerations: but alas, alas that children of God are often ignorant or indifferent as to what pleases Him. Where this is so, the penalty must be paid; the Christian cannot but decline in soul and the churches show the spiritual result. Directly a Christian commits an act the rightness of which he *secretly doubts* he falls under the sentence "he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. xiv. 23). No one can practice birth control with a quiet assurance that he is doing the will of God; therefore it cannot be done in faith, and so it is sin. The warning that "fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (1 Thess. iv. 7) is written expressly to Christians, though applicable to all. It is Christians that are definitely warned that the law of sowing and reaping is universal and inexorable (Gal. vi. 7).

I doubt not that the practice troubles the conscience of some unconverted persons. They know that the law of nature is against them. It is a reason in such why they will not pay attention to the Bible. They *know* that it is not godly, and while they will not abandon it they dare not face the claims of God. It is certainly a canker eating at the life of the church, and is the more dangerous that it works in secret. Some years ago there came from the Continent a very able and godly medical man. I asked him his impressions about the spiritual state of various Christian assemblies he had been visiting. He replied: "There are two things wrong here: you are too rich and—birth control!" He was right.

May the love of God be more enjoyed by us, so that the fear of God may increase in us. Then it will be a gladness to please Him, not self. This is the heart of the matter, and the cure of this as of all sin. Yet known sin must be abandoned before His love can be enjoyed.



AN IMPORTANT TEXT (6)

THE ELECT
Matt. xxiv. 31.

THE Lord was dealing with the question "What shall be the sign of Thy parousia and consummation of the age?" (verse 13). It is almost completely overlooked that this question was concerned with one double event not with two separated events. This is clear in the Greek though not in the English Versions, for the latter render it "the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" The comma, with the words "of the," dissociate the "coming" from the "consummation of the age," leaving it possible that there may be an undefined interval between them, but they are without warrant. The phrase "the end of the world" is simply false and misleading, for it carries the mind on to the final event of heaven and earth passing away, to be substituted by new heavens and earth. But *tou aionos* means "of the age," and *sunteleia* means the consummation of this age, the point when this period of God's dealings touches and leads into the next period, the millennial kingdom to be ushered in by the parousia of Christ.

Among other events to lead up to that consummation the Lord mentioned (15-28) the rise of the Desolator foretold by Daniel, bringing on a tribulation surpassing all previous troubles on earth and never afterward to be equalled. He then declared that it would be immediately after that tribulation that His coming in power and glory would be seen (29, 30), to which He added our passage: "And He shall send forth His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and

they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

The view that the parousia and the removal of the church will be before that tribulation has (1) to ignore the fact that the question of the disciples was concerning two events so closely connected that they could be indicated by one and the same sign; and (2) it has to affirm that the “elect” of our present verse are not Christians but godly Jews. It is part of the theory that the Synoptic Gospels are “Jewish” in character, not Christian, which theory will stand or fall with this particular passage. The following considerations must have weight.

1. This gathering of the elect takes place while the Son of man is still in the clouds. Thence He “sends forth” His angels, having not yet come as far as the earth. Comp. Rev. xiv. 14-16 and 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. But the saved of Israel are to be gathered to their land, Palestine. See Isa. xi. 10 ff., which states distinctly that the nations of the earth also will then seek the Lord at His “resting place.” The clouds are not His resting place but merely a halt on His way to the earth, nor will the nations seek Him on the clouds, it being impossible. Further, the passage goes to detail the Philistines as involved, with the other lands surrounding Palestine. Every passage, without exception, that deals with this topic confirms the return of the literal Israel to the actual land of their fathers. Therefore they will not be the elect to be gathered to the clouds.

2. No gathering of Jews to Palestine at this particular hour is known to Scripture. There is to be one gathering of them before the Beast reigns, for he is to persecute them there in that great tribulation (Lk. xxi. 23, 24: etc.). There is to be another gathering of Israel after the Lord shall have come to His resting place, Zion; Isa. xi. 11, ff. This is to be of whatever Israelites shall have survived that late tribulation and the heaven-inflicted judgments of the End days, “the remnant that remain.” This gathering is expressly called *the second*. But had there been, first, the return to Palestine which will precede the tribulation (of which we have perhaps seen some fulfillment), and then the gathering before us to the clouds, the gathering of the remnant mentioned in Isa. xi. would not be the second, but a third.

3. The gathering of the elect by the angels is to be universal: “from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other,” or as Mark xiii. 27, “from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.” If these were Jews there would be no Jews left for the second gathering to Messiah at Jerusalem, for they would all have been already gathered.

4. Not angels but the Gentile nations are to be the agents for that second gathering to Palestine. This is distinctly and specifically asserted no less than four times. See Isa. xi. 12; xiv. 2, “*the peoples* shall take them and bring them to their

place": and so xlix. 22, with lxvi. 19, 20.

5. The term "elect" is applied to angels (1 Tim. v. 21), to Christ (Lk. xiii. 35: 1 Pet. ii. 6). "Election" is used of God's purpose concerning Jacob (Rom. ix. 11). The cognate verb "chosen" is used of Jehovah's choice of Israel as His earthly people (Ac. xiii. 17), of guests selecting the chief seats (Lk. xiv. 7), and of Mary choosing the good part (Lk. x. 42). None of these places has any bearing upon the interpretation of Matt. xxiv. 31 or Mk. xiii. 27: and in every other place of the many in the New Testament the invariable application of these terms is to Christians. Even in Rom. xi. 5, 7, 28, though Israelites by race are in view, it is as Christians that they form "the remnant according to the election of grace." Nothing arises to suggest that Christ meant the term in any other sense to His former use in Lk. xviii. 7, "shall not God do justice to His elect?" or for supposing that the Christians to whom the Gospel first came could think it to have any other than its by that time fixed application to Christians.

In the parable of the wedding feast, given only a few days earlier (Matt. xxii. 1-14), the Lord had given the warning that "many are called but few are chosen," this last word being the same as "elect." As the invitation to the feast is not limited to Jews neither can the "elect" be only Jews. Therefore the urgent matter for each who hears the call is to be among the few who are chosen (elect). The condition for this is suggested in the last place where the word is found in the New Testament, Rev. xvii. 14. Of the Beast and his supporters it is there said that "These shall war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they also shall overcome that are with Him, called and chosen, and *faithful*." The faithful to Him in His battles will be found among the chosen, the elect.

[It will help to free the mind from theological bias if the word *eklektos* be translated *chosen* in all places. Of its 22 occurrences it is already so rendered in six, and the cognate verb *eklegomai* is thus rendered in all its 22 occurrences. The remaining form *eklogēe* is rendered *chosen* at its first occurrence ("he is a chosen vessel unto me," Ac. ix. 15), and might be so translated in its other six places.]



A FAMOUS HYMN

With Notes and Queries.

LET us ponder Heber's Warrior hymn. The general picture corresponds to Psalm xlv.:

I speak the things which I have made touching the King . . .
Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O mighty One,
Thy glory and thy majesty.

And in thy majesty ride on prosperously,
Because of truth and meekness and righteousness:
And thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things . . .
Thy throne, O God is for ever and ever:
A sceptre of equity is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

The Son of God goes forth to war,

Since you became a Christian have *you* turned your back
on the common life of spiritual pleasure, comfort, and ease
and *gone forth to war*?

A kingly crown to gain;

Have *you* settled once and for all that the way, the only
way, to gain a kingly crown in the kingdom of God is *to*
fight for it?

His blood red banner streams afar:

It is His own blood that dies that banner. Are *you*
prepared to spill any blood in His cause?

Who follows in His train?

Are *you* in His warrior train? or are you content to be
a domestic servant, or an office boy, or fill some other
useful and comfy post in His service?

Who best can drink His cup of woe,

Are *you* able and ready to drink of His cup, or do you
prefer a cup of wine?

Triumphant over pain,

How do *you* bear the wounds and bruises of the Christian
life, especially those inflicted by fellow-believers? Do you
triumph or succumb?

Who patient bears his cross below,

The cross is the cruel instrument by which the *self-life*
is *ended*. Have *you* accepted the cross of Christ as the *death*
of self? and are you patient under the daily mortifications
of pride and self?

He follows in His train.

Be honest now, if never before as to this matter:—
Are *you* in His train, or are you not?

A noble army, men and boys, The matron and the maid,

The army is recruited from all classes and ages. If
you really do think them a noble army, why have *you* not
joined them in the ranks of war?

Around the Saviour's throne rejoice,

They are not there yet, but it is their assured prospect
at the coming triumph of their Lord. Do you imagine
that you will rejoice before that throne if you shirk the
battles of the King who won that throne in war?

In robes of light arrayed.

The King has said plainly that it is those who keep
their garments clean in this foul world who shall walk with
Him in white in His world (Rev. iii. 4, 5). What hope
of this have *you* if your garments are spotted by the mud
of this world?

They climbed the steep ascent of heaven

To be brought up out of the pit of corruption and destruction is not a matter of climbing by our own effort: we are lifted thence by the energy of divine grace, and set upon a rock. But rising to the mountain top of the world above, "getting to heaven," is different. Do *you* really believe that the path to heaven, the only path, is *just like this*, an *ascent*, and a *steep* ascent, and that you will gain the summit only by *climbing*? If you do really think this, then you will brace yourself to be a lifelong climber, even though it must be

Through peril, toil, and pain:

And you will offer from your heart the cry
O God, to us may grace be given; To follow in their train.

Did you ever yet sing this hymn thoughtfully and sincerely, or only lustily in the crowd? If not, face the issue honestly. The appeal of the last two lines will most certainly be answered if offered from a sincere heart. It is divine strength that lifts from the pit to the rock; it is by divine strength that the mountain is climbed.

What do you truly think? Does Heber here state God's truth, according to Scripture? If so, is it not high time that you awoke from your pleasant dreams, arose from among the dead, and commenced to follow diligently and enthusiastically in your Lord's train, sharing in His wars in hope of sharing in His victory and glory?

Let no one deceive you with empty words as to this prospect. You will *not* be

"carried to the skies On flowery beds of ease;"
so spring out of bed, buckle on the whole armour of God (Eph. vi), and throw yourself headlong into the battle of the King on behalf of truth, and meekness, and righteousness. No one ever won a battle sitting on the fence.



PAGES FROM AN ORDERED LIFE (5)

TRAVEL

Egypt and India, 1909, 1910.

LIFE in one city and service at one centre had been a living on *terra firma*; now I must learn the lesson and the joy of walking on the sea, of getting to know God amid the uncertainties of foreign travel.

Toward the end of 1906, after I had laboured at Unity Chapel for six years, I began to notice in my mind an impression that my service there was not to continue for long. There was nothing to occasion this: the church was harmonious, the work encouraging, and I was happy in it.

But the impression steadily deepened. I asked of the Lord that, if this was to prove the case, He would grant still greater prosperity on the church, so that, when I had to leave, there should be no reproach that I was leaving because of failure or disunity. Forthwith there were more conversions and more growth in Christians, and the more this increased the more sure I felt that the impression was of God.

This continued for two years, and not a soul was aware of my exercise except my wife. During 1908 Miss Brealey asked by letter if I had ever thought of serving in India. I answered, No, adding that I believed the climate of the Arctic circle would suit me better than the tropics. So little had I any thought of India. At that time Miss Brealey went to Coonoor on the Nilgiri Hills, in South India. This is a district from 6,000 to 7,000 feet above the burning plains, where the Government of Madras Presidency sat for eight months of the year, where retired English officials and others resided, and where missionaries resorted in numbers for the hot months. The chief centres were Coonoor and Ootacamund.

In addition to Church of England buildings and chaplains, there was at each of these places an Union Church, where all Nonconformists worshipped, and which were served by recognized pastors. Miss Brealey learned that these churches would shortly be without ministers, and she thought of myself in this connection. On Friday, 23rd October, 1908, she came to visit us at Unity Lodge, Bristol, and that evening, sitting together by the fire, for the first time I felt an impulse to mention the exercise of my heart as to leaving Unity. For a while I hesitated, so as to be sure that this impulse was of God, but presently I told her. She said nothing to me, but going upstairs told my wife of the need of the Nilgiris, which a little later my wife repeated to me. I said at once, "My dear, this is the call for which we have been waiting," and she, with that simplicity toward Christ and His will which characterized her, replied, "Yes, I know it is."

It was wise and gracious of the Lord that Miss Brealey did not, as would have been so natural, tell me of the need while we were conversing, but mentioned it to her sister first; for so my wife heard the call direct from God and I did not have to persuade her that it was of Him. Living, as we did, without reserves or resources, it could not but be that she must herself, while I should be away, rely wholly upon God for her support, and that of our child and home; but having herself been assured of God that this separation was of Him she found faith to rely on Him apart from me. And we presently felt clear that I should be away for not less than two years. It proved to be two and a quarter years.

If it be asked why I did not take them with me, the answer is that the Lord gave no such direction. Neither then, nor during the forty years since, have I had any leading to settle

in any other land. Times not a few have believers in different parts begged me to settle with them, but it has never been my call from God, however this may have been with other servants of Christ. It is clear from the New Testament that men "separated unto the gospel of God" (Rom. i. 1) did not establish themselves in any place. They were ready to remain two years (Acts xix. 10) or eighteen months (Acts xviii. 11) or three months (Acts xx. 3), or shorter periods, always as the Lord might indicate or persecution might compel. Philip, the evangelist, having four daughters, must needs have a home for them (Acts xxi. 8, 9); but there is no hint that he moved his home from one land to another, or that any other apostle or evangelist did so. It is a modern development, feasible in such an exceptional period of world order as was the Victorian era, but unsuitable to unsettled times, and not contemplated in the New Testament.

Being now sure of the call of God I mentioned the matter to intimate friends and after a while asked a few of these to meet at my house for prayer and consultation. Not that their advice was needed but that their fellowship was valued. Among them were those two men of God E. S. Bowden, of the Godaveri Delta, South India, and H. Handley Bird, also of long service in India. Their endorsement was of use in commending the project to the wider circle of Christians.

Shortly I told the church at Unity Chapel I should be leaving them for India. There was general and genuine sorrow as regards themselves but equally cordial support and financial fellowship. At a large farewell meeting Handley Bird, in that blunt style of his that made his remarks ever forcible, told them that he did not in the least pity them but hoped that they would later send to India others such as myself. It reminded me of a farewell meeting at Bethesda Chapel, Bristol, a few years before, when that nobleman of the kingdom of God F. S. Arnot was leaving for Central Africa. Speaking of the dignity of carrying the good news of God to the unreached peoples, Dr. A. T. Pierson had said: "Our brother Arnot does not need our pity."

By February 1909 preparations had been completed and tickets for the journey taken, when two serious difficulties arose such as the all-wise God frequently permits so that faith may be tested and strengthened.

It became necessary for our home to be removed by the 25th of March. It was not till the day before I left Bristol that another house was secured. Yet our hearts were kept in perfect peace, for we were sure that our God and Father would keep His promise never to fail them that trust in Him before the sons of men. I could not see to the actual removal, but my very capable elder sister, Ella, lovingly shouldered this task.

Then also news arrived that the need of both of the

Union Churches on the Nilgiris had been met. To Coonoor there had come a Mr. Hercus from New Zealand, and Mr. D. R. Logan of the Ceylon and India General Mission, who had been serving at Ootacamund, had decided to continue there. Thus the occasion for my journey seemed to have ceased. But I knew that I had heard the call of God and I went forward.

The last day or two were passed at the house of my parents at Folkestone, whence I was to sail. What according to nature should have been a time of tension and sorrow to my wife and me was actually, according to grace, a time of heavenly joy in the power of the Holy Spirit. In the richest possible measure we experienced that the joy of the Lord is strength. The only moment of strain was at breakfast the morning I was to leave. By my side was our sweet girlie of four and a half years and it suddenly rushed over me that I was not to see her for a long indefinite period. I was almost overwhelmed and it was only by the sternest effort that I restrained myself for that brief spasm. But it passed with the recollection that the privation was to be for Christ's sake.

It was 2nd March, 1909, that I left England. On the 7th, bespeaking prayer for those who have left loved ones and those who are left, I wrote as follows: "The particular need to be borne in mind is, that the presence of the Lord Jesus, by the Spirit, may be a vivid reality to the spirit; for it is *persons* they have left, and it is the personal presence of Christ that needs to be known that the void may be felt less acutely." The special promise which the Lord gave to me for this new course in life was Isa. xli. 10: "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." Gracious fulfilments of this vast guarantee will be narrated.

The journey to India was to be broken by a week in Egypt, the occasion being to visit Miss J. S. Jameson of the Egypt General Mission. A few years before we had met at Great Yarmouth in connexion with the Open-Air Mission seaside work. An address I gave on living by direct faith in God had influenced her to leave a Church of England Missionary Society and join one where such faith had more definite place. But much more than I foresaw was to come from this passing visit. Miss Jameson had thoughtfully sent a card of introduction to the head of the customs at Alexandria, named Rickard, which facilitated the formalities there; and from this also more was to arise than one knew at the time.

Miss Jameson being then at Ibrahimia, a suburb of Alexandria, I stayed a day or two at Miss van Somer's Home of Rest, "Fairhaven" at Ramleh, a littler further from the city. There I met William L. McClenahan, a member of

the American Presbyterian Mission, and Miss Tula D. Ely, a young American lady, with private means, who had dedicated her life to the spread of the gospel among Moslems. Much co-operation with these friends was to grow from these contacts.

As Miss Ely knew the land and the language, and was going to Cairo she kindly consented that I should accompany her. In the train the subject arose of the Christian so failing to walk with Christ that he may be accounted unworthy to share in the first resurrection and the millennial kingdom. Most of the four hours' journey was spent in examining the Scriptures as to this. When parting at Cairo she remarked that the Scripture said: "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things" (Gal. vi. 10) and that she would write to me in India. Knowing then nothing of her circumstances I set no store by this remark and shortly forgot it. God will have our faith to rest on His promises alone: "My soul, wait thou *only* upon God. For my expectation is from *Him*" (Ps. lxii. 5). But Miss Ely duly redeemed her promise, as will appear later.

I embarked at Port Said on 16th March, 1909. It was a German vessel, and we were aroused each Sunday morning by the ship's band playing two verses of "Nearer, my God, to Thee." I had left England in a blizzard. In the Red Sea my cabin was at 84°. I lay sweating and panting, thinking I never could survive to reach India. Two years later I found a permanent temperature of 80° comfortable.

Colombo was reached in the early morning of Sunday, 28th March, 1909. Mr. A. F. Witty had kindly purposed to meet me, but as we arrived on Sunday, he could not do so, being four miles from the harbour and having four meetings that day. This could have left the inexperienced traveller the unpleasant job of getting along through the customs and finding an inexpensive lodging in that Eastern seaport. But God had graciously taken in advance His own measures to meet this difficulty and show His loving care. Without a word to me my friend Rev. J. O. West, already mentioned, had written to a clerical friend of his asking him to meet me. Being far up country he could not come, but he had sent the letter to Mr. Ferrier, the Accountant of the Church Missionary Society, who kindly came on board, attended to all formalities, and took me to their centre, where the Secretary, Mr. Dibben gave me a warm welcome. That day and night I was their guest, and in the evening spoke at one of their Mission halls.

This manifest interposition of God for my comfort and help, by putting me at once into the arms, as it were, of the Church of England Missionary Society, emphasized the line He wished me to take in relation to His children I should meet in such systems and Societies. The systems and Societies

as such I could not sanction or support: with the true people of God in them I was to show fellowship, and to receive it from them, on the basis of our common heavenly life in Christ, and for the mutual furtherance of that life. Those of their views or practices which I believed unscriptural I could not recognize and might on occasion be compelled to oppose, but I was not entitled to separate from anything evidently of God, such as prayer, Bible study, preaching of the Word, winning men to Christ. When later I read the life of Anthony Norris Groves I was impressed to find that this was the practice of those great men of God whom He had used eighty years before to recall His servants to the true principles of Christian fellowship. And now after forty-six years' experience in many lands, I am more than ever satisfied that it is the path well-pleasing in His sight.

That first day Mr. Dibben gave me insight into one of the needless burdens involved in the plan of Societies for gospel labours. He remarked that I would do all missionaries a great service if my visiting various fields should reveal some way of saving them the immense labour of filling statistical forms and compiling reports. But one does not need to travel far for the desired solution. Drop the plan of Societies, and let each worker depend directly upon the Head of the church for all guidance and support. Then the only obligatory report will be that shown in Luke ix. 10: "And the apostles, when they were returned, declared unto *Him* what things they had done."

In Colombo I learned to what moral depravity young Englishmen, including Christians, can soon sink when they go out in business to Eastern cities. Greatly do they need to be fortified in advance by having experienced that Jesus is able to "save his people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21). No other power can do so.

At the foot of the Nilgiri Hills lies the important town of Coimbatore. On Friday, 2nd April, 1909, I was kindly entertained there by Mr. (afterward Sir) Robert Stanes, and met there Mr. D. R. Logan above-mentioned. He had that week been ordered to Scotland, his health having broken down, and thus I arrived as he left, and the sphere of service which seemed closed was opened exactly as my six weeks journey ended. Thus admirably does the Lord control and arrange the ways of one submitted to His ordering. In fact two spheres were available, the Union Church at Ootacamund, and "Brooklands," the large home of rest at Coonoor.

Miss Bishop who conducted this home was a gracious and devoted lady. Her life was given unreservedly to caring for the servants of Christ who resorted to one or other of the homes she provided and superintended at Colombo and Coonoor. She smilingly remarked to me that had she chosen

to live in England she could have had a flat and a maid and a visitor now and then; but here she had these lovely houses in these lovely districts, with many servants and many visitors. In reality, she was everybody's servant and therefore shared the joy of Him who said, "The Son of man came not to be served, but to serve" (Mark x. 45).

When I reached "Brooklands" on 5th April I had ten pence in hand. This would not have been the case but that Miss Jameson had lovingly met the cost of my days at "Fairhaven." But for this I would not have had money for incidental expenses on the further journey. But on reaching Coonoor I found a man in business in South India, with whom I had been a playmate when as boys we lived next door to each other at Sidcup. Knowing nothing of my circumstances, he kindly gave me a sovereign, and I had no need to be ashamed of my empty purse, as the Chinaman would express it.

(To be continued)



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THE DANGER OF RICHES
a Sermon (abridged) by
JOHN WESLEY

“ *They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful desires, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*” 1 Tim. vi. 9.

How innumerable are the ill consequences which have followed from men’s not knowing, or not considering, this great truth ! And how few are there even in the Christian world, that either know or duly consider it ! And many put such a construction upon it, as makes it of no manner of effect. “ They that will be rich,” say they, “ that is, will be rich at all events; who will be rich, right or wrong; that are resolved to carry their point, to compass this end, whatever means they may use to attain it.” But truly if this were all the meaning of the text, it might as well have been out of the Bible.

2. This is so far from being the whole meaning of the text, that it is no part of its meaning. The Apostle does not here speak of gaining riches unjustly, but of quite another thing. St. Paul does not say, “ They that will be rich by *evil means*,” but simply, “ they that will be rich :” these, allowing, supposing the means they use to be ever so innocent, “ fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful desires, which drown men in destruction and perdition.”

3. But who believes that ? Who receives it as the truth of God ? Who is deeply convinced of it ? Who preaches this ? It is the keen observation of a great man, “ The pulpit is the Preacher’s stronghold.” But who even in his stronghold has the courage to declare so unfashionable a truth ? I do not remember that in threescore years I have heard one sermon preached on this subject. I have never yet either published or preached any sermon expressly upon the subject. It is high time I should—that I should at length speak as strongly and explicitly as I can, in order to leave a full and clear testimony behind me, whenever it pleases God to call me hence.

4. O that God would give me to speak right and forcible words; and you to receive them in honest and humble hearts ! In this hope I shall endeavour,

(a) *To explain the Apostle’s words, and*

(b) *To apply them.*

But, O ! “ who is sufficient for these things ? ” Who is

able to stem the general torrent ? to combat all the prejudices, not only of the vulgar, but of the learned and religious world ? Yet nothing is too hard for God ! Still His grace is sufficient for us. In His name then, and by His strength, I will endeavour,

(a) TO EXPLAIN THE WORDS OF THE APOSTLE.

1. And first, let us consider, what it is to be rich. What does the Apostle mean by this expression ?

The preceding verse fixes the meaning of this: " Having food and raiment " (literally *coverings*; for the word includes lodging as well as clothes), " let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich ;" that is, who will have more than these; more than food and coverings. It plainly follows, whatever is more than these is, in the sense of the Apostle, *riches*; whatever is above the plain necessities, or at most conveniences, of life. Whoever has sufficient food to eat, and raiment to put on, with a place where to lay his head, and something over, is *rich*.

2. Let us consider, secondly, what is implied in that expression, " They that will be rich ? " And does not this imply, first, they that desire to be rich, to have more than *food* and *coverings*; they that seriously and deliberately desire more than food to eat, and raiment to put on, and a place where to lay their head, more than the plain necessities and conveniences of life ? All, at least, who allow themselves in this desire, who see no harm in it, desire to be rich.

3. And so do, secondly, all those that calmly, deliberately, and of set purpose, *endeavour* after more than food and coverings; that aim at and endeavour after, not only so much worldly substance as will procure them the necessities and conveniences of life, but more than this, whether to lay it up, or lay it out in superfluities. All these undeniably prove their " desire to be rich," by their endeavours after it.

4. Must we not, thirdly, rank among those who desire to be rich, all that, in fact, " lay up treasures on earth ? " a thing as expressly and clearly forbidden by our Lord, as either adultery or murder. It is allowed, (1) That we are to provide necessities and conveniences for those of our own household : (2) That men in business are to lay up as much as is necessary for the carrying on of that business: (3) That we are to leave our children what will supply them with necessities and conveniences after we have left the world: and (4) That we are to provide things honest in the sight of all men, so as to " owe no man anything : " but to lay up any more, when this is done, is what our Lord has flatly forbidden. When it is calmly and deliberately done, it is a clear proof of our desiring to be rich. And thus to lay up money is no more consistent with a good conscience, than to throw it into the sea.

5. We must rank among them, fourthly, all who *possess* more of this world's goods, than they use according to the

will of the Donor ; I should rather say, of the Proprietor; for He only *lends* them to us as stewards; reserving the *property* of them to Himself. And, indeed, He cannot possibly do otherwise, seeing they are the work of His hands: He is, and must be, the possessor of heaven and earth. This is His unalienable right; a right He cannot divest Himself of. And together with that portion of His goods which He hath lodged in our hands, He has delivered to us a writing, specifying the purposes for which He has entrusted us with them. If, therefore, we keep more of them in our hands than is necessary for the preceding purposes, we certainly fall under the charge of “desiring to be rich:” over and above, we are guilty of burying our Lord’s talent in the earth; and on that account are liable to be pronounced wicked, because unprofitable, servants.

6. Under this imputation of “desiring to be rich,” fall, fifthly, all “lovers of money.” The word properly means, those that *delight in money*; those that take pleasure in it; those that seek their happiness therein, that brood over their gold or silver, bills or bonds. Such was the man described by the fine Roman painter, who broke out in that natural soliloquy:—

“ Let them hiss on,
While, in my own opinion fully blest,
I count my money, and enjoy my chest.”

Horace.

If there are any vices which are not natural to man, I should imagine this is one; as money of itself does not seem to gratify any natural desire or appetite of the human mind; and as, during an observation of sixty years, I do not remember one instance of a man given up to the love of money, till he had neglected to employ this precious talent according to the will of his Master. After this, sin was punished by sin; and this evil spirit was permitted to enter into him.

7. But beside this gross sort of covetousness, the love of money, there is a more refined species of covetousness, censured by the great Apostle—*pleonexia*—which literally means, *a desire of having more*; more than we have already. And those also come under the denomination of “they that will be rich.” It is true that this desire, under proper restrictions, is innocent; nay, commendable. But when it exceeds the bounds (and how difficult is it not to exceed them !) then it comes under the present censure.

8. But who is able to receive these hard sayings? Who can believe they are the great truths of God? Not many wise, not many noble, not many famed for learning; none, indeed, who are not taught of God. And who are they whom God teaches? Let our Lord answer: “If any man be willing to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.” Those who are otherwise minded will be so far from receiving it, they will not be able to understand it.

9. Having explained the former part of the text, "They that will be rich," and pointed out in the clearest manner I could, the persons spoken of; I will now endeavour, God being my helper, to explain what is spoken of them: "They fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful desires, which drown men in destruction and perdition."

"They fall into temptation." This seems to mean much more than simply, they are tempted. They *enter into the temptation*: they fall plump down into it. The waves of it compass them about and cover them all over. Of those who thus enter into temptation, very few escape out of it. And the few that do are sorely scorched by it, though not utterly consumed. If they escape at all, it is with the skin of their teeth, and with deep wounds that are not easily healed.

10. They fall, secondly, into "a snare," the snare of the devil, which he hath purposely set in their way. I believe the Greek word properly means a gin, a steel trap, which shows no appearance of danger. But as soon as any creature touches the spring, it suddenly closes; and either crushes its bones in pieces, or consigns it to inevitable ruin.

11. They fall, thirdly, "into many foolish and hurtful lusts:" *anoetous—silly, senseless, fantastic*; as contrary to reason, to sound understanding, as they are to religion: *hurtful*, both to body and soul, tending to weaken, yea, destroy, every gracious and heavenly temper: destructive of that faith which is of the operation of God; of that hope which is full of immortality; of love to God and to our neighbour, and of every good word and work.

12. But what desires are these? This is a most important question, and deserves the deepest consideration.

In general, they may all be summed up in one, the desiring happiness out of God. This includes, directly or remotely, every foolish and hurtful desire. St. Paul expresses it by "loving the creature more than the Creator;" and by being "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." In particular, they are (to use the exact and beautiful enumeration of St. John), "the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life;" all of which the desire of riches naturally tends both to beget and to increase.

13. "The desire of the flesh" is generally understood in far too narrow a meaning. It does not, as is commonly supposed, refer to one of the senses only; but takes in all the pleasures of sense, the gratification of any of the outward senses. It has reference to the *taste* in particular. How many thousands do we find at this day, in whom the ruling principle is, the desire to enlarge the pleasure of tasting? Perhaps they do not gratify this desire in a gross manner, so as to incur the imputation of intemperance; much less so as to violate health, or impair their understanding by gluttony or

drunkenness: but they live in a genteel, regular sensuality; in an elegant epicurism, which does not hurt the body, but only destroys the soul; keeping it at a distance from all true religion.

14. Experience shows that the imagination is gratified chiefly by means of the eye: therefore "the desire of the eyes," in its natural sense, is, the desiring and seeking happiness in gratifying the imagination. Now, the imagination is gratified either by grandeur, by beauty, or by novelty, chiefly by the last.

15. Seeking happiness in *learning*, of whatever kind, falls under "the desire of the eyes;" whether it be in history, languages, poetry, or any branch of natural or experimental philosophy: yea, we must include the several kinds of learning, such as geometry, algebra, or metaphysics. For if our supreme delight be in any of these, we are herein gratifying the "desire of the eyes."

16. "The pride of life" seems to imply chiefly, *the desire of honour*; of the esteem, admiration, and applause of men; as nothing more directly tends both to beget and cherish pride than the honour that cometh from men. And as riches attract much admiration, and occasion much applause, they proportionately minister food for pride, and so may also be referred to this head.

17. *Desire of ease* is another of these foolish and hurtful desires; desire of avoiding every cross, every degree of trouble, danger, difficulty; a desire of slumbering out life, and going to heaven (as the vulgar say) upon a feather-bed. Every one may observe how riches first beget, and then confirm and increase this desire, making men more and more soft and delicate; more unwilling, and indeed more unable, "to take up their cross daily;" to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and "to take the kingdom of heaven by violence."

18. Riches, either desired or possessed, naturally lead to some or other of these foolish and hurtful desires, and, by affording the means of gratifying them all, naturally tend to increase them. And there is a near connexion between unholy desires, and every other unholy passion and temper. We easily pass from these to pride, anger, bitterness, envy, malice, revengefulness; to a headstrong, unadvisable, un-reprovable spirit: indeed, to every temper that is earthly, sensual, devilish. All these, the desire or possession of riches naturally tends to create, strengthen, and increase.

19. And by so doing, in the same proportion that they prevail, they "pierce men through with many sorrows;" sorrows from remorse, from a guilty conscience; sorrows flowing from all the evil tempers which they inspire or increase, sorrows inseparable from those desires themselves, as every unholy desire is an uneasy desire; and sorrows from the contrariety of those desires to each other, whence it is im-

possible to gratify them all. And, in the end, "they drown" the body in pain, disease, "destruction," and the soul in everlasting "perdition."

(b) TO APPLY THEM

1. I am, in the second place, to apply what has been said. And this is the principal point. For what avails the clearest knowledge, even of the most excellent things, even of the things of God, if it go no farther than speculation, if it be not reduced to practice? He that hath ears to hear, let him hear! And what he hears let him instantly put in practice.

2. I ask, then, in the name of God, who of you "desire to be rich?" Which of *you* (ask your own hearts in the sight of God) seriously and deliberately desire (and perhaps applaud yourselves for so doing, as no small instance of your *prudence*) to have more than food to eat, and raiment to put on, and a house to cover you? Who of you desires to have more than the plain necessities and conveniences of life? Stop! Consider! What are you doing? Evil is before you! Will you rush upon the point of a sword? By the grace of God, turn and live!

3. By the same authority I ask, Who of you are endeavouring to be rich? to procure for yourselves more than the plain necessities and conveniences of life? Lay, each of you, your hand to your heart, and seriously inquire, "Am I of that number? Am I labouring, not only for what I want, but for more than I want?" May the Spirit of God say to every one whom it concerns, "Thou art the man!"

4. I ask, thirdly, Who of you are, in fact, laying up for yourselves treasures upon earth? increasing in goods? adding, as fast as you can, house to house, and field to field? As long as *thou* thus "doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee." They will call thee a wise, a prudent man! a man that *minds the main chance*. Such is, and always has been the wisdom of the world! But God saith unto thee "'Thou fool' art thou not 'treasuring up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God?'"

5. Perhaps you will ask, "But do not you yourself advise, to gain all we can, and to save all we can? And is it possible to do this without both *desiring* and endeavouring to be rich? nay, suppose our endeavours are successful, without actually laying up treasures on earth?"

I answer, It is possible. You may gain all you can, without hurting either your soul or your body; you may save all you can, by carefully avoiding every needless expense; and yet never lay up treasures on earth, nor either desire or endeavour so to do.

6. Permit me to speak as freely of myself as I would of another man. *I gain all I can* (namely by writing) without hurting either my soul or my body. *I save all I can*, not willingly wasting anything, not a sheet of paper, not a cup

of water. I do not lay out anything, not a shilling, unless as a sacrifice to God. Yet *by giving all I can*, I am effectually secured from "laying up treasures upon earth." Yea, and I am secured from either desiring or endeavouring it, as long as I give all I can. And that I do this, I call all that know me, both friends and foes, to testify.

7. But some may say, "Whether you endeavour it or no, you are undeniably *rich*. You have more than the necessaries of life." I have. But the Apostle does not fix the charge, barely on *possessing* any quantity of goods, but on possessing more than we employ according to the will of the Donor.

Two-and-forty years ago, having a desire to furnish poor people with cheaper, shorter, and plainer books than any I had seen, I wrote many small tracts, generally a penny a-piece; and afterwards several larger. Some of these had such a sale as I never thought of; and, by this means, I unawares became rich. But I never desired or endeavoured after it. And now that it has come upon me unawares, I lay up no treasures upon earth. I lay up nothing at all. I cannot help leaving my books behind me whenever God calls me hence; but, in every other respect, my own hands will be my executors.

8. Herein, my brethren, let you that are rich be even as I am. Do you that possess more than food and raiment, ask, "What shall we do? Shall we throw into the sea what God hath given us?" God forbid that you should! It is an excellent talent: it may be employed much to the glory of God. Your way lies plain before your face; if you have courage, walk in it. Having *gained*, in a right sense, *all you can*, and *saved all you can*; in spite of nature, and custom, and worldly prudence, *give all you can*. I do not say, "Be a good Jew; giving a tenth of all you possess." I do not say, "Be a good Pharisee, giving a fifth of all your substance." I dare not advise you to give a half of what you have; no, nor three-quarters; but all! Lift up your hearts, and you will see clearly in what sense this is to be done. If you desire to be "a faithful and wise steward," out of that portion of your Lord's goods which He has for the present lodged in your hands, but with the right of resumption whenever it pleaseth Him, (1) Provide things needful for yourself; food to eat, raiment to put on; whatever nature moderately requires, for preserving you in both health and strength: (2) Provide these for your wife, your children, your servants, or any others who pertain to your household. If, when this is done, there is an overplus left, then do good to "them that are the household of the faith." If there be an overplus still, "as you have opportunity, do good unto all men." In so doing, you *give all you can*: nay, in a sound sense, all you have. For all that is laid out in this manner is really given to God. You render unto God the things that are God's,

not only by what you give to the poor, but also in that which you expend in providing things needful for yourself and your household.

9. O ye Methodists, hear the word of the Lord ! I have a message from God unto all men, but to *you* above all. For above forty years I have been a servant to you and to your fathers. And I have not been as a reed shaken with the wind: I have not varied in my testimony. I have testified unto you the very same things, from the first day even until now. But “ who hath believed our report ? ” I fear, not many rich: I fear there is need to apply to some of *you* those terrible words of the Apostle, “ Go to now, ye rich men ! weep and howl for the miseries which shall come upon you. Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as with fire.” Certainly it will, unless ye both save all you can, and give all you can. But who of you hath considered this, since you first heard the will of the Lord concerning it ? Who is now determined to consider and practise it ? By the grace of God, begin today !

10. O ye lovers of money, hear the word of the Lord ! Suppose ye that money, though multiplied as the sands of the sea, can give happiness ? Then you are “ given up to a strong delusion to believe a lie ; ”—a palpable lie, confuted daily by a thousand experiments ! Open your eyes ! Look all around you ! Are the richest men the happiest ? Have those the largest share of content who have the largest possessions ? Is not the very reverse true ? Is it not a common observation, that the richest of men are, in general, the most discontented, the most miserable ? Had not the far greater part of them more content, when they had less money ? Look into your own breasts. If you are increased in goods, are you proportionately increased in happiness ? You have more substance ; but have you more content ? You know that in seeking happiness from riches, you are only striving to drink out of empty cups. And let them be painted and gilded ever so finely, they are empty still.

11. O ye that *desire* or *endeavour to be rich*, hear ye the word of the Lord ! Why should ye be stricken any more ? Will not even experience teach you wisdom ? Will ye leap into a pit with your eyes open ? Why should you any more “ fall into temptation ? ” It cannot be but that temptation will beset you, as long as you are in the body. But though it should beset you on every side, why will you *enter into* it ? There is no necessity for this: it is your own voluntary act and deed. Why should you any more plunge yourselves *into a snare*, into the trap Satan has laid for you, that is ready to break your bones in pieces, to crush your soul to death ? After fair warning why should you sink any more into “ foolish and hurtful desires ? ” desires as inconsistent with reason as they are with religion itself; desires that have done you more hurt already than all the treasures on earth can

countervail.

12. Have they not hurt you already, have they not wounded you in the tenderest part, by slackening, if not utterly destroying, your "hunger and thirst after righteousness?" Have you the same longing that you had once, for the whole image of God? Have you the same vehement desire as you formerly had, of "going on unto perfection?" Have they not hurt you by weakening your *faith*? Have you now *faith's* abiding impression, realizing things to come? Do you endure, in all temptations, from pleasure or pain, "seeing Him that is invisible?" Have you every day, and every hour, an uninterrupted sense of His presence? Have they not hurt you with regard to your *hope*? Have you now a hope full of immortality? Are you still big with earnest expectation of all the great and precious promises? Do you now "taste the powers of the world to come?" Do you "sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus?"

13. Have they not so hurt you, as to stab your religion to the heart? Have they not cooled (if not quenched) your *love to God*? This is easily determined. Have you the same delight in God which you once had? Can you now say,

"I nothing want beneath, above;
Happy, happy in Thy love!"

I fear not. And if your love of God is anywise decayed, so also is your love of your neighbour. You are then hurt in the very life and spirit of your religion! If you lose love, you lose all.

14. Are you not hurt with regard to your *humility*? If you are increased in goods, it cannot well be otherwise. Many will think you a better, because you are a richer, man: and how can you help thinking so yourself? especially, considering the commendations which some will give you in simplicity, and many with a design to serve themselves of you?

If you are hurt in your humility, it will appear by this token: you are not so teachable as you were, not so advisable; you are not so easy to be convinced, not so easy to be persuaded; you have a much better opinion of your own judgment, and are more attached to your own will. Formerly one might *guide* you with a thread; now one cannot turn you with a cart-rope. You were glad to be admonished or reprov'd; but that time is past. And you now account a man your enemy because he tells you the truth. O let each of you calmly consider this, and see if it be not your own picture.

15. Are you not equally hurt with regard to your *meekness*? You had once learned an excellent lesson from Him that was meek as well as lowly in heart. When you were reviled, you reviled not again. You did not return railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing. Your love was *not provoked*, but enabled you on all occasions to overcome

evil with good. Is this your case now? I am afraid, not. I fear you cannot "bear all things." Alas, it may rather be said you can bear nothing; no injury, nor even affront! How quickly are you ruffled! How readily does that occur, "What, to use *me* so! What insolence is this! How did he dare to do it? I am not now what I once was. Let him know I am now able to defend myself." You mean, to revenge yourself. And it is much, if you are not willing, as well as able; if you do not take your fellow-servant by the throat.

16. And are you not hurt in your *patience* too? Does your love now "endure all things?" Do you still "in patience possess your soul," as when you first believed? O what a change is here! You have again learned to be frequently out of humour. You are often fretful; you feel, nay, and give way to, peevishness. You find abundance of things go so cross, that you cannot tell how to bear them.

17. And are not you, who have been successful in your endeavours to increase in substance, insensibly sunk into softness of mind, if not of body too? You no longer rejoice to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ Jesus." You no longer "rush into the kingdom of heaven, and take it as by storm." You do not cheerfully and gladly "deny yourselves and take up your cross daily." You cannot deny yourself the poor pleasure of a little sleep, or of a soft bed, in order to hear the word that is able to save your souls! Indeed, you "cannot go out so early in the morning; besides, it is dark, nay, cold, perhaps rainy too. Cold, darkness, rain, all these together! I can never think of it." You did not say so when you were a poor man. You then regarded none of these things. It is the change of circumstances which has occasioned this melancholy change in your body and mind: you are but the shadow of what you were! What have riches done for you?

"But it cannot be expected that I should do as I have done. For I am now grown old." Am I not grown old as well as you? Am I not in my seventy-eighth year. Yet, by the grace of God, I do not slack my pace yet. Neither would you, if you were a poor man still.

18. You are so deeply hurt, that you have nigh lost your zeal for works of mercy, as well as of piety. You once pushed on, through cold or rain, or whatever cross lay in your way, to see the poor, the sick, the distressed. You went about doing good, and found out those who were not able to find you. You cheerfully crept down into their cellars, and climbed up into their garrets,

"To supply all their wants,

And spend and be spent in assisting His saints."

You found out every scene of human misery, and assisted according to your power:

"Each form of woe your generous pity moved;

Your Saviour's face you saw, and, seeing, loved."

Do you now tread the same steps? What hinders? Do you fear spoiling your silken coat? Or is there another lion in the way? Are you afraid of catching vermin? Are you not afraid lest the roaring lion should catch you? Are you not afraid of Him who has said, "Inasmuch as ye have not done it unto the least of these, ye have not done it unto Me?"

19. In time past how mindful were you of that word, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt in anywise reprove thy brother, and not suffer sin upon him!" You *did* reprove, directly or indirectly, all those that sinned in your sight. And happy consequences quickly followed. How good was a word spoken in season. It was often as an arrow from the hand of a giant. Many a heart was pierced. Many of the stout-hearted, who scorned to hear a sermon,

"Fell down before His cross subdued,
And felt His arrows dipped in blood."

But which of you now has that compassion for the ignorant, and for them that are out of the way? They may wander on for *you*, and plunge into the lake of fire, without let or hindrance. Gold hath steeled your hearts. You have something else to do.

"Unhelp'd, unpitied let the wretches fall."

20. Thus have I given you, O ye gainers, lovers, possessors of riches, one more (it may be the last) warning. O that it may not be in vain! May God write it upon all your hearts! Though "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven," yet the things impossible with men are possible with God. Lord speak! and even the rich men that hear these words shall enter Thy kingdom; shall "take the kingdom of heaven by violence;" shall "sell all for the pearl of great price;" shall be crucified to the world, and count all things dung, that they may win Christ!

WHAT TOOK PLACE AT THE LORD'S SUPPER?

THE wordy warfare with His foes is over. Jesus holds the field: "No one durst ask Him any more questions." Now the Lord retires from the grand and crowded temple to the quiet of an upper room for converse with the inner circle of His own followers, and to observe for the last time the Passover feast. It was during this evening meal that He took of the bread and received a cup and gave to the ancient solemnity a higher meaning and completion, by instituting the breaking of bread and partaking of the cup as a perpetual remembrance of Himself as the sacrifice offered for the remission of sins, the true Passover lamb.

By the first generation of His disciples the original features

of this simple and holy ordinance were preserved, but there soon set in a change in conception and practice which thoroughly corrupted the ordinance and changed it into a *sacrament*, a ceremony charged with mystical meaning and magical power, the working and efficacy of which could be secured only by it being solemnized by a consecrated priest. Thus that simple remembrance of Himself which the Lord instituted for the mutual upbuilding of all who partake, was perverted by heathen notions and regulations and became a powerful agent for concentrating authority in a human priesthood.

At rare intervals the Lord has stirred godly hearts to return to His original thought and characteristics for His Supper so that the intended grace might be enjoyed. Yet it is but seldom that this return has been thorough and the observance been sufficiently stripped of the false ideas and corrupting features imported by clerisy. The reason for this is largely that the principle of clerisy itself has seldom been completely rejected. It persists in modified forms and degrees in the State Churches of the Reformation and it lingers in the Non-conformist bodies that refused those State Churches; and it subtly survives or revives even in those smaller circles which have at least intended and endeavoured to be quite clear of its poisonous influence. And now, as ever, this spirit of clerisy finds its surest spheres in the only two ordinances sanctioned by Christ, baptism and the Supper.

It is therefore necessary and salutary that the New Testament records of those first days and occasions should from time to time be scrutinized afresh, that the mind of the Lord, and the practice of the apostles He taught, should rise clearly before the eyes of our hearts. Yet this will prove beneficial only as far as there is a resolute purpose and a vigorous courage to return to those first conceptions and practice. Indeed, without this humility and obedience of spirit even a child of God may not see clearly the picture presented in the Word, or seeing it may reject its claim and continue in some human views and ways. Take heed lest the light that is in thee become darkness, for how deep shall be that darkness !

Let it therefore be observed:

First, that the Supper was instituted in a private house and in a small group of familiar friends. This feature continued. Acts ii. 46 tells of the first believers at Pentecost that they broke bread at home, and Acts xx. 8 shows that the gathering at Troas was in an upper room, as when the Lord first introduced the feast. This excludes any necessity for a consecrated building, a chapel, or a public hall of any type. This feature continued till well into the third century. For two hundred years Roman law did not permit Christians as such to own property: they therefore met where they could, in houses,

catacombs, woods, or elsewhere. The importance of this has been constantly recognized in periods of persecution, and will be so again.

When leaders of a Christian assembly object to the Supper being observed in homes, and insist that it is schismatic to hold it elsewhere than in the hall where the assembly meets, they are plainly unscriptural and are asserting the vital principles of clerisy that the ordinance should be observed in a special building and under the control of leaders. This secret desire of prominent men to have affairs under their control is a corrupting cancer. It is that dominating impulse of all clerics, the love of power.

I asked a godly Baptist Minister why he presided at the Lord's table. He replied that it was a question of order. But *whose* order was secured, God's or man's?

Observe, *secondly*, that the Supper arose out of and was linked with a social meal. The Passover was a family festival eaten in the various homes of the redeemed. It was during this repast that the Lord introduced the new element, in which was concentrated the essential thought of remembrance. Israelites were to remind themselves of the redemption wrought in Egypt; Christ's disciples are to remind themselves of His work of redemption on the cross. This social feature the early Christians perpetuated: (a) "breaking bread at home, (b) they took their food" (Acts ii. 46). Thus at Corinth also the love feast of the church and the Lord's Supper were associated (1 Cor. xi. 20, 21, 32-34). This conjunction could produce opposite effects; either the degradation of the Supper by self-indulgence at the social meal, as at Corinth, or the elevation of the common meal by the solemnizing, sanctifying influence of the Supper.

The effect of this association of the meal and the Supper, and of both taking place in the family home and circle, prevented of necessity the arising of a clerical caste and the sacrosanct, magical notion of a mystical rite.

To the Catholic, attendance at mass is the summit of all religion. If he is diligent in attendance there the remaining elements of religion are only insignificant, and his personal conduct in daily life is secondary. To many a "Plymouth Brother" the breaking of bread meeting is all-important, and sufficient. This solemnity is the acme of religion for too many and if they have broken bread little else is of importance, sometimes including moral behaviour. In both extremes there is a *false* sense of sanctity, a notion of virtue inherent in the ceremony irrespective of the state of heart and practice of the partaker. This is paralyzing and demoralizing and can bring the partaker under the solemn warning against partaking unworthily and inducing Divine judgment (1 Cor. xi. 28-32). Apart from any distinct visitation in bodily sickness or premature death, this state of soul is ever accompanied by spiritual deadness and by formality. This

may be unrecognized by the individuals concerned, who may plume themselves upon their devoutness.

Again, *thirdly*, the Supper was not instituted on the first day of the week or on the sabbath, but on a week-night. Hence every day is proper. The same verse in Acts ii. shows that the first disciples practised daily communion in their houses (46). It was the only possibility for many thousands of Christians in one confined city. There was no place for a vast congregation of disciples to gather and observe a Christian feast.

This is significant as to the view held of the new ordinance and the spirit of observance. They were all Jews, still attending public worship in the temple, and zealous of ancient customs. This new feast had been lately instituted in connection with the Passover. That was a feast that might be held only at an appointed time of the year, as with all their other ceremonies. Yet from the very start of the Christian church they were already emancipated from legal restrictions as to this ordinance, and observed it daily as occasion served.

How contrary to this is the practice and the spirit of the Catholic mass, or the sacrament in the State Churches. How different too from the infrequent and well-controlled observance of Presbyterianism, and from the stated occasions in most Dissenting chapels. And I knew the leaders of an Open Brethren assembly who refused any recognition of a new gathering, where God was working blessedly, because they broke bread on the Saturday evenings! Yet there is no Divine command that the proper time is Lord's day morning at 11.0 o'clock or the proper place the Meeting Room or the Gospel Hall. It is equally against the New Testament that groups of immature disciples, in heathen lands, must not break bread unless the "missionary" is present or a brother he approves. The Corinthians were mostly heathen lately converted, and abuse quickly appeared at the Supper, but the Apostle did not check these by forbidding them to break bread unless he were present or a delegate. This is in principle rank clerisy and sacerdotalism, destructive of gospel liberty and spiritual growth.

Much that is not there is read into Luke's statement (Acts xx. 7), "Upon the first day of the week, when we were met together to break bread." This *says* no more than that on *that* first day of the week they met for that purpose. It is pure and unsupported *inference* that, so early in Christian history, it had become the regular practice to break bread on the first of the week. The statement shows that the first day is quite suitable, but it does not give that day any prominence, not to say pre-eminence, and still less an exclusive right as the only proper day. The notion contradicts Acts ii. 46 before considered.

All this bears directly on the practice of the reservation

of a portion of the bread and wine used at the general sacrament to be taken to the sick or others who could not be present. This obnoxious proceeding attaches a special sanctity to the elements thus used, so that there is special benefit imparted beyond what could be gained by using non-consecrated elements. This, indeed, is the essence of the matter that priestly consecration imparts special virtue. It is clerisy again in undisguised ugliness. And all this is wholly nugatory, seeing that any few believers can profitably partake at any time, in any place, without a priest or other special leader.

Fourthly: The simple and informal nature of the Supper is marked distinctly by the conversational feature of the occasions. That was naturally seen in the Passover feast, it being a family and social event. There was converse between Jesus and the disciples, and among themselves as to who would betray Him. They disputed with one another as to priority, which led the Lord to rebuke and warn them, and prompted Peter to protest that he was ready to die with Christ, causing the Lord to foretell his coming denial of his Master. There was further interchange of thought as to the matter of now taking purses and swords. A brief colloquy arose as to whether Peter's feet should be washed, and another between the Lord and Judas. While Christ was imparting the instruction recorded in John xiv, Thomas interposed a remark and Philip added another, to which the other Judas shortly added a question. A little later (John xvi. 17ff.) the disciples were heard chatting over a difficulty they feel, and the Lord talks to them about it.

The long night at Troas developed this same element. It is not to be supposed that Paul talked and talked the whole night and the rest only listened. The historian tells us that Paul *dialogued* with them (Acts xx 7, 9) and *homilized* (ver. 11), both words implying conversation.

This is vastly different to an elaborate ornate ceremony such as the mass or a choral service, and considerably different to the common "morning meeting" in other quarters. That night the bread was broken in the unexpected interval caused by the death and resuscitation of the youth who fell from the window, which being over, the conversation was resumed. It would be very scriptural to take the holy Supper in the middle of a conversational Bible reading.

This introduces another and very important feature.

Fifthly: The Supper was a brief event in the midst of long instruction in the truth of God.

Combined conversation and instruction was an appointed feature of the Passover. At the very institution of the feast it was taken for granted that the natural curiosity of children would prompt them to ask the meaning of these singular doings, such as eating a lamb with unleavened bread and the redemption of the firstborn child; and the father had the

duty to recite the history of the festival and its lessons (Ex. xii., xiii). Without this instruction the occasion must have soon become a meaningless religious formality, even as the Supper of the Lord is to countless thousands from either lack of instruction or false teaching. The great facts of redemption from death and dedication to God were illustrated and inculcated by the annual Passover.

Similarly the Lord that night taught that His blood, represented by the cup, was to be shed for the remission of sins, to which was added much instruction as to devotion and obedience to Himself. It is important to observe the vast range of powerful truths which He explained and stressed. It included:

1. That the feast then instituted looked forward to the time when the Lord will renew such fellowship with his followers in the kingdom of God.
2. That in His kingdom the humble slave is the chief ruler.
3. That honour and rule in His kingdom are gained by sharing His present trials.
4. The activity of Satan as the accuser and tempter of the disciple, but His own intercession that the attack and testing should be limited. This short statement of the high priestly service of the Son of God is amplified in *Hebrews*.
5. The searching warning that, though their faith in Him had sufficed in the past to enable them to go on His business without purse or protection, yet that night's test would overwhelm them and they would, from want of faith, be cast on their own resources, and would fail.

These features are found together in Luke xxii. 14-38. Why did the Spirit of truth think well to cause a Gentile Christian, a generation later than the events, to group these subjects together and send the account forth to other Gentile Christians? Does this not tell us of our need of such instruction and that the table of the Lord is a right occasion to give it?

Again, why did the same Spirit of truth cause John, at the close of the next following generation, to record the body of teaching given at the Supper as found in chaps. xiii to xvi of his Gospel? What a mighty vista of instruction is here. Observe—

1. That a clean walk (washed feet) is simply indispensable to fellowship with Christ—"If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me!" (xiii. 8).
2. That lowliness of heart is requisite in disciples, that they may serve their brethren (xiii. 14-17).
3. The possibility of having an untroubled heart; of sharing the Lord's own tranquility and joy (xiv. 1, 27; xv. 11).
4. The life of interior and abiding oneness with Christ

and the fruitfulness that results (xv. 1-16).

5. The Person and working of the Spirit of God as teacher, sanctifier, and co-witness with the believer to Christ, giving knowledge of the oneness of the Father and the Son (xiv. 20).
6. The illimitable resources and irresistible energy of the prayer of faith in the name of Christ.
7. The return of the Lord as the hope and goal of faith.

These are some of the profound and exalted topics with which the Lord Jesus occupied the hearts of His followers as they conversed at the table that memorable night. He was preparing them for the tasks and ordeals that awaited them without the support of His visible presence. No one will or can be equal to these tasks and tests unless these mighty truths are the energy of the soul. Therefore it is a necessity of Satan to prevent the Christian from being saturated with those invigorating truths, and one of his subtlest devices is seen in such suggestions as that "we meet to break bread," "we meet to remember the Lord," *not* to hear addresses; or that there should be no ministry before the bread has been broken; or, at any rate ministry should be occupied only with Calvary. So far have these injurious ideas been pressed that in one circle of Christians no ministry of the Word is permitted at the breaking of bread. The practical result is general starvation, with the resultant spiritual sickness and weakness of the famished. And one of the alarming symptoms is that the under-fed dream they are well nourished, and know not that they manifest to all the ill health of their spirits in feelings and actions sadly unlike Christ.

On the facts presented it is evident that much of the Lord's instruction that night was concerned with the spiritual state of His followers. This is ever a paramount necessity, which can be seen in Paul's dealing with the Corinthians. He had to tell them plainly that they were in such a state of soul that it was not possible to eat the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 20), and he gave such instruction and warning as healed them.

One severe winter I was plainly guided by the Lord to take a toilsome journey of many hundreds of miles from one foreign land to another which I had not before visited. In a remote mountain village there was an assembly of believers in such a poor condition that they had wisely ceased for six months from breaking bread and risking the judgment of the Lord for doing so unworthily. Nor was there found any spiritual energy to deal with the condition. Their need was instruction, and the Spirit so applied the very first talk given as to begin in the heart of a stubborn leader a work which presently developed into general healing.

Such is the condition and the need of churches without number. That village church might have met indefinitely, have droned out favourite hymns, have offered routine and

empty prayers, and have partaken outwardly and bodily of the bread and wine but have gone from bad to worse for want of instruction. "The grace of God hath appeared instructing us" (Tit. ii. 11, 12), and the false and subtle ideas above mentioned are so many devices of the Evil One to curtail the instruction the Lord would still give, as He gave it that night of old.

Acts xx. shows clearly that long hours were occupied with such conversation and instruction before the bread was broken, and that afterward the dialogue continued till dawn, forbidding the idea that ministry ought not to precede. These facts stare at us out of the pages of Scripture, yet in disregard of them believers will give the hour to many hymns, to long pauses, wearisome prayers, a formal partaking of the bread and cup, and they depart as empty of grace as they came. It is feeding that they need; yet in one such assembly where there lived a well known teacher his brethren complained that he would give at the Lord's table general instruction, and they did not want it. The assembly paid the price by being underfed and weak.

When the Lord and the apostles had concluded the feast, before leaving the upper room they sang a hymn. One hymn in the whole evening! Almost certainly this was the Hallel, psalm 118. That they sang permits congregational singing.

That night at Troas was spent entirely in intercourse over the truth of God. To think of believers passing a whole night together without singing! The usual Nonconformist service includes three or four hymns. Many a "morning meeting" has five or six hymns in an hour or an hour and a quarter. One wonders how the time would be filled out without the hymn book. The Epistles contain only two brief references to singing among Christians (Eph. v. 19: Col. iii. 16). Moreover, this exercise was not for self-pleasing, nor even for "worship;" it was a form of "teaching and admonishing one another." The Lord has His portion not by the outward song but by the melody of the heart. The exhortation "speaking *to one another* in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; teaching and admonishing *one another*," requires solo singing—impelled by the Spirit; it is not fulfilled by all singing the same words together. This continued well into the second century. Thus Tertullian (about 197 A.D.), describing a Christian love feast, includes that "every one is invited to sing, either from holy scripture or from the prompting of his own spirit some song of praise to God for the common edification" (*Apology* chap. 39).

How greatly later formalism and human ideas have superseded apostolic practice. It is a sign of spiritual weakness that such large place is now given to singing. It shows little appetite for divine knowledge and much love of self-pleasing. If the average modern Christian could find himself in a meeting of the early church he might wonder where he had strayed.

Will anyone be so foolish as to suggest that the whole time that night at Troas was used considering only Calvary? They had indeed gathered to break bread, but in those early days they still experienced the leading of the Spirit of Christ and that at the Supper He occupied hearts with the fulness of Christ in all His offices, past, present, and to come, not with the cross only, though that had its due place.

The human notions and rules mentioned are a denial to the Spirit of His divine right in the house of God, and this restricting of the Spirit is grievous in its nature and results. It is both impious and ruinous. *In principle* the imposing of man's wishes at the Supper is exactly the same as imposing a human ceremonial as in the Roman mass; externally there are differences; in essence they are alike; men offer worship guided by their own ideas, not by God's Word and Spirit. Alas, that word may become as sadly true in the church as it was solemnly true in Israel, that "in vain do they worship Me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men" (Mat. xv. 7-9).

There is more to be learned than can be mentioned here. The passage on the Lord's Supper in 1 Cor. xi begins with instruction on prophesying and praying. Prophesying was utterance by immediate impulse of the Holy Spirit. At what formal "sacrament" or "communion service" is room allowed for this.

In verse 17 Paul connects these exercises with the Supper by the words "In giving you this charge," that is, concerning praying and prophesying. It is also clear that women, not only men, were used by the Spirit to pray and prophesy, for they, equally with men, were directed as to the head being covered or not covered. The Lord would not have said their head must be covered when prophesying or praying if in fact they were not permitted to do either. The Spirit reserved His right to use whom He will.

Is it not clear that there has been great departure from the intentions of the Lord as revealed in His word? In every attempt to restore what is of God we are met by difficulties and we feel our weakness. "The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is very much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall" (Neh. iv. 10). Yet God protected and prospered, and they finished the seemingly impossible. The Son of God knows that we have but little power, but those who are resolved to keep His Word will be established (Rev. iii. 8).

"Who is wise, that he may understand these things? prudent, that he may know them? For the ways of Jehovah are right, and the righteous shall walk in them: but transgressors shall fall therein" (Hos. xiv. 9).

THE WAY BACK (3)

by J. L. STANLEY

Chapter IV

BELIEVE IN HIM. FAITH

“ *He that cometh to God must believe that He is* ”—Heb. xi. 6.

“ *He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life* ”—John vi. 47.

“ *Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness* ”—Gal. iii. 6.

SELF-EVIDENT things are the most difficult to prove, and simple things are the most difficult to explain. They are like those substances which cannot be analysed, because in the process the substance itself would be destroyed.

Thus it is with faith. It is an act so simple, that the attempt to explain it seems almost to obscure it; and instruction is needed, not so much to describe faith itself, as to clear away the fog of questions and erroneous notions which have enveloped it.

Before answering the question what is faith? let us clear the ground by observing what it is *not*.

Faith is not credulity. Between the two there is a wide difference. Faith believes a truth upon proper evidence; credulity believes a statement without any evidence at all. Credulity leads a man to adopt the religion of his parents, or that in which he has been trained, simply because his parents and others believe and practise it. Faith accepts the truths of Scripture upon the evidence which accompanies them, and because they commend themselves to the man's mind and heart. It is constantly the case that men who taunt Christians with their faith, and boast of their own reason and judgment, are themselves the subjects of the grossest credulity. Credulity is the act of a weak mind; faith is the act of a sound mind.

Faith is not feeling. Nothing is more common in religious experience than the confounding of these two. Persons in the deepest distress of soul, and whose search after God is characterized by the purest sincerity, are often staggered at this point, and kept in long anxiety and suspense. Instead of obeying a command, they are waiting for an experience; instead of doing as God tells them, they are looking for a comfortable sensation. They are, in fact, very much in the position of a sick person who is waiting to feel better before taking the medicine. Such persons will often say they do believe, but they cannot *feel* that they are saved; and because they cannot feel it, therefore they doubt their salvation.

Yet the salvation in no wise depends upon our feeling. It is not written, “ thy *feelings* have saved thee,” but it is written, “ thy *faith* hath saved thee.” Our feelings are

variable and deceptive, being influenced by health and conditions; consequently, were they made the basis of our assurance, our experience would be necessarily a fluctuating one. Feelings have their place, but it is not their place to supplant or precede faith. If faith be exercised, the feelings will follow; when we are saved through faith in Christ we shall not be long before we are happily conscious of it. Reader, are you halting at this stage? if so let your feelings alone, disregard them entirely, do as God tells you, cast yourself in simple faith on Christ, and your feelings will soon be right.

Faith is not a mere assent. The faith which saves is not a mere assent of the intellect. It includes not only the assent of the understanding, but of the conscience, the affections, and will. It is a wholehearted acceptance of the truth and of the Saviour. "Assent to a speculative or abstract truth is a speculative act; assent to a moral truth is a moral act; assent to a promise made to ourselves is an act of trust. Our belief that the earth moves round its axis is a mere assent; our belief in the excellence of virtue is of the nature of a moral judgment; our belief in a promise is an act of trust." A mere cold assent to the truths of the gospel, such as would be accorded to the facts of history, is not that spiritual act which connects the believer with Christ and obtains salvation.

What, then, is faith? Faith is either belief in a testimony, or trust in a person. The faith of a Christian partakes of both these characteristics; he believes the testimony which God has given concerning His Son, and he trusts in the Son Himself. If we can believe the word of a fellowman, how much more should we believe in the word of God! If we can trust a fellow-creature, how much more should we trust Christ! God does not ask us to do any extraordinary or difficult thing. He simply asks us to treat Him with a confidence like to that which we repose in an earthly friend—to believe that He speaks the truth and means what He says. We find it an easy thing to believe the statements of men whom we know to be truthful; we place confidence in their word and act upon it. In like manner God requires us to place confidence in His word, and believing what He says to act upon it.

Faith and trust are equivalent terms; they mean the same thing. We are exercising trust in one another continually; without it society could not hold together for a day. If we travel by rail, we exercise trust in the competency and skill of the engine-driver, and if we travel by water, in the competency and skill of the captain. If sick and under medical care, we trust in the doctor to effect a cure; we believe him to be capable of understanding the case and applying the right remedies. In business life men place confidence in the commercial soundness of those with whom they trade, and are therefore willing to entrust them with goods.

In all these cases the trust may be misplaced and the

confidence abused but this does not alter the fact that trust is constantly exercised. Now, in order to obtain salvation, that which we are called upon to do is simply to place our trust, our full and whole-hearted reliance, in the Lord Jesus Christ, believing that He is able to save us. We must commit ourselves to His hands without questioning, having full confidence in His truth, love, and power.

The Word of God furnishes us with the best expressions and illustrations of faith. There is *the look of faith*. When the serpent-bitten Israelites looked at the brazen serpent they lived. There was no virtue in the serpent, nor in their look; the virtue was in God; but their look fulfilled the condition and secured the blessing. That looking was an act of faith, an expression of faith, and an illustration of it. The sufferers could not understand *how* the cure was to be effected by this means, but that had nothing to do with it. They had simply to do what God told them, viz., “look,” and in looking they showed that they believed God, and also obtained the deliverance promised.

Then there was *the step of faith*. God said to Noah, “Come thou, and all thy house, into the ark.” Noah did so, and his step over the threshold was an act of faith in God. He believed that God could and would save him by means of that ark, and he trusted Him to do it. It was but *one* step, off the doomed earth into the ark of safety—a little thing, a momentary act, yet it formed the point of transition from danger to safety, from death to life. It was Noah’s part to step in, and he did it: it was God’s part to save, and He performed it.

There is also *the touch of faith*. The poor woman who crept up behind the Saviour, said to herself, “If I may but touch His clothes, I shall be whole.” She reached Him, and touched Him, and was healed. That touch, though timid and trembling, was an act of true faith. She believed there was power in Christ to heal her, and that her touch would draw it forth. When we believe in Christ we do by faith touch Him, and thereby obtain spiritual healing, forgiveness, salvation.

Another important feature of faith is obedience, so we read of *the obedience of faith*. Speaking of the obstinacy of the Jews, Paul says, “But they have not all *obeyed* the gospel” (Rom. x. 16); and he foretells the condemnation of the impenitent because they “obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” While the message of the gospel is an invitation of grace, it is also of the nature of a command: God “now commandeth all men everywhere to repent” (Acts xvii. 30). Unbelief is an act of disobedience; faith is an act of obedience.

The Palsied Man who was let down at the feet of Jesus furnishes an illustration of the obedience of faith. Our Lord said unto him, “Arise, take up thy bed and walk.” Here was an order from Christ, but to obey it required

faith. The man might have said, "I am paralysed, and can't." But believing the word of Christ, he arose, and *in obeying* the power came. It is just so with sinners in coming to Christ for salvation. In obeying Christ's word "believe," the spiritual power and joy and liberty are realized.

The Man with a Withered Hand is another instance. Our Lord said to him, "Stretch forth thy hand." The man might have pleaded weakness and inability, but he believed in Christ's power, and at once did as he was told. That was the obedience of faith. He knew Christ would not tell him to do that which He would not enable him to do.

The Blind Man of whom we read in John ix is another example. To him Christ said, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." There was nothing in this command appealing to the man's reason: he might have hesitated and argued about its unreasonableness, but he did as he was told, and his own words are, "I went and washed, and I received sight."

Now it is in this simple way that we obtain salvation. We do not at the time, nor perhaps for long afterwards, understand the "how" and "why," but we do as Christ tells us; we trust in Him, we commit ourselves to Him, we plant our feet upon His word, and find it to be solid, immovable rock.

Many make the mistake of *looking at their faith* instead of looking to Christ. All their attention is set upon their faith, and so they are always questioning whether it is of the right *quality*, or of sufficient *quantity*. They don't know whether they have believed aright, or whether they have believed enough. Do you suppose any bitten Israelite was disturbed by such considerations as these—whether he looked aright at the serpent or whether he looked enough, whether his gaze was steady or whether it was dim? Did ever an offerer puzzle himself as to whether he laid his hand in the right way, or whether he laid it heavily enough, on the head of the victim? No, no: the one looked and lived; the other laid his hand on the victim and was forgiven. So we should not look at our faith, and weigh it and measure it, but think of *Christ*, fix our mind on *Him*, and before long we shall be trusting Him with all our heart's confidence.

The same blessed Spirit whose work it is to convince of sin also begets faith in the hearts of penitent sinners. It is His office to lead to Christ. Very beautifully is this illustrated in New Testament narrative. To the aged Simeon it was revealed by the Holy Spirit "that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ." Then, it is further added, "he came by the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for Him after the custom of the law, then took he Him up in his arms." Here the Spirit is seen leading directly to Christ. And thus He continually does, opening the eyes of the blind and revealing to them the Saviour. "No man can say that

Jesus is Lord but in the Holy Spirit ” (1 Cor. xii. 3). It is He Who opens our eyes, and turns us from darkness to light; it is by His new creating power we are made to live, and exhibit the first signs of life in a humble confidence and confession in the Saviour of sinners.

Before leaving the subject of faith, let us notice the peculiar wisdom which is manifested in making it the initial act of the Christian life. There is nothing arbitrary or capricious in the arrangement.

Firstly, the act of faith by which we obtain salvation is a complete reversal of that state of heart which issued in the Fall. It was through unbelief that man fell; he believed the words of Satan instead of the words of God, and the result was open disobedience. It is through faith that man is restored. Just as unbelief was the first step in the downward path, so faith becomes the first step in the upward path. “ Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing to Him. ” (Heb. xi. 6). Not until we begin to exercise faith in God can any works of ours be accepted by Him; we are unregenerate, unreconciled, and all our deeds, however good in themselves, are vitiated by that fact.

Secondly, our first act of faith is but the commencement of a *life of faith*. It is not an isolated act, something which is done at a particular moment, and to be looked back upon with complacency as a finished transaction. Our natural life began with the first breath we drew, and it is sustained until this day by a constant repetition of the same act; when we cease to breathe, we cease to live. And so it is with our faith; the first simple and trembling trust is followed by a life of faith in the Son of God. “ He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life ” (John iii. 36). Mark, “ he that believeth ”— it is a continuous act. The assurance is given not to a *past*, but to a *present* exercise of faith. On what ground does Scripture place our hope of salvation? Not on the fact that we believed on Christ some years ago, but on the fact of our belief in Christ *now*.

Our Christian life, from its commencement to its close, is one of constant dependence on God, and the first step in that course is preparatory to the walk of faith which follows.

The first step which the tottering infant takes prepares it for the second and the third, and so on until it can walk firmly and strongly. But the steady movement of the full-grown man is the same *in kind* as that of the feeble infant. Faith becomes stronger through exercise, but it is faith still; and faith lies at the basis of every act of obedience to God. Our entire spiritual life is grounded upon this grace. Look at the long summary of saintly biography contained in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. That chapter stands like some lofty memorial pillar, on which the hand of God has engraven the names of ancient heroes and the deeds which rendered them famous. Various are their

deeds of patriotism, devotion, self-sacrifice, obedience, bravery, and endurance; but one virtue stands out conspicuously as the root and spring of all the rest, and that is FAITH.

D. L. MOODY

SPEAKING in Bristol in 1904, on the individual Christian leading men to Christ, Dr. R. A. Torrey told this incident. When he was a student in a Theological College it was learned that a young man was holding gospel meetings in the town and the students thought it would be nice to give him some encouragement, in other words, to patronize him a little, by attending his meetings. But they soon saw that this uneducated young man, who was D. L. Moody, had some secret of winning men of which they were ignorant; so, as Torrey said, they pocketed their theological pride and asked him to meet them and tell them the way to do it. Moody talked to them about some passages of Scripture and then said, "And as to the way to do it, gentlemen, why, THE WAY TO DO IT IS TO DO IT!"

While Dr. Dixon was minister at The Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, he spoke one Monday at the noon prayer meeting then held in Aldersgate Street, in the city. He said that when he was a minister in Chicago there was a man of influence in city affairs who was well known as a notorious rogue. His reputation was so bad that Dr. Dixon had spoken against him by name from his pulpit. He was waiting for Moody in the hall of an hotel and this rascal was there speaking with some friends. Moody came in; at once went to the man and said; "Mr. X., we do not know one another, but I daresay you know my name; it is Moody. If you have never made the acquaintance of the Lord Jesus Christ I should be very happy to introduce you to Him."

Dr. Dixon learned that there is a more Christian way, and more hopeful way of dealing with a sinner than the way he had taken with this man.

There used to be a tract which told of a prosperous business man in a town in U.S.A. called Peoria, whose name was William Reynolds. One day a business acquaintance asked him how long they had known each other. He replied that it might be sixteen years. The other then asked him if he were not a Christian? He assented, and his acquaintance said, "Well, Mr. Reynolds, how it is that all these years you have never spoken to me about my salvation?" Taken aback, he replied that he ought to have done so, and then asked what had now aroused the interest of the other in this matter? He answered that he had been lately in a

train. A man took the seat beside him and the following conversation arose.

The stranger remarked, "Fine weather, this."

"Yes," I replied.

"Don't you think we ought to be very thankful to God for all His mercies?"

"Yes," I answered, "I suppose we ought to be."

"My friend, are you a Christian?"

"No, I don't know that I am."

"Well, I should like to pray for you!"

"I don't know that I should have any objection if the place was suitable."

"Oh, there is no better place than this." And he drew my head down beneath the division of the seats and offered a few words of earnest prayer that God would save my soul.

The train stopped; he jumped up and said "Goodbye, I must change here."

But before he got away I asked his name.

"Oh," he said, "my name's Moody, I live in Chicago."

"Now, Mr. Reynolds," the other went on, "this is the first time that any man ever showed any interest in my soul. I have heard of this man Moody, and his work in Chicago, and I mean to go there and see him again." But William Reynolds was too good a Christian for the other to need to go to Chicago, and he himself led him to Christ.

This incident brought to William Reynolds deep exercise of conscience and led to a mighty advance in his Christian life, so that the people of his town presently said that William Reynold's business was to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and he packed pork to pay the expenses!

"The way to do it is to do it."

"GO THOU AND DO LIKEWISE."

AN IMPORTANT TEXT

If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from among the dead.—Phil. iii. 11.

DEALING with the first and select resurrection the Lord spoke of those that are accounted worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from among the dead (Luke xx 34-36) "That age" (singular) is not a Bible term for eternity, which is not one age but many, "the ages of the ages" (thirteen times in the Revelation). "That age" is set by Christ in direct contrast to "this age," and so means the age of the kingdom to follow this age. A general resurrection the Jews expected (John xi. 24: Acts xxiv. 15), but here Chris speaks of "the resurrection which is out from among the

dead" (*tees anastaseos tees ek nekron*). This is the first clear intimation of such a limited, select resurrection (this doctrine being rooted in a germinal saying of Christ), and its terms are the key to and must control all subsequent instructions upon the subject. And it is made very clear that this resurrection is a privilege to which one must "attain" and be "accounted worthy" thereof. The notion that a share in the first resurrection is a certainty, irrespective of attainment and worthiness, can only be held in direct disregard of this primary declaration by the One who will effect the resurrection and determine who shall participate therein, the Son of God.

It was through Paul that the Holy Spirit saw fit to give in permanent written form fuller particulars as to this theme (1 Cor. xv : 1 Thess. iv), and it is Paul who elsewhere repeats the words of our Lord Jesus just considered, declaring that, whereas justifying righteousness is verily received through faith in Christ, *not* by our own works, yet, in marked contrast, "the resurrection which is from among the dead" (*teen exanastasin teen ek nekron*) is a privilege at which one must arrive (*katanteeso*) by a given course of life, even the experimental knowledge of Christ, of the power of His resurrection, and of the fellowship of His sufferings, thereby becoming conformed unto His death (Phil. iii. 7-21). Surely the present participle (*summorphizomenos* becoming conformed) is significant, and decisive in favour of the view that it is a process, a course of life that is contemplated.

It has been suggested that Paul here speaks of a present moral resurrection as he does in Romans vi. But in that chapter it is simply a reckoning of faith that is proposed, not a course of personal sufferings. The subject discussed is whether the believer is to continue in slavery to sin (*douleuein*), as in his unregenerate days, or is the mastery (*kurieuo*) of sin to be immediately and wholly broken? It should be remembered that when writing to the Philippians Paul was near the close of his life and service. Could a life so holy and powerful as his be lived without *first* knowing experimentally the truth taught in Romans vi.? Did the Holy Spirit at any time use the apostles to urge others to seek experiences other than the writer had first known, and to which therefore he could be a *witness*? And again, if by the close of that long and wonderful career Paul was still only longing and striving to attain to death to the "old man" and victory over sin, when did he ever attain thereto? Such reflections upon the apostle are unworthy; and, as has been indicated, the experience set forth in Romans vi. is not to be reached, or to be sought, by suffering, by attaining, by laying hold, by pressing on, or any other such effort as is urged upon the Philippians, but by the simple acceptance by faith of what God says He did for us in Christ in relation to the "old man."

Thus this suggested exposition is neither sound experimental theology nor fair exegesis. Paul indicates as plainly as language can do that the first resurrection may be missed. His words are: “*If by any means I may* arrive at the resurrection which is out from among the dead.” “If by any means” (*ei pos*) “I may”—“if” with the subjunctive of the verb—cannot but declare a condition; and so on this particle in this place Alford says, “It is used when an end is proposed, but failure is presumed to be possible:” and so Lightfoot: “The apostle states not a positive assurance, but a modest hope:” and Grimm-Thayer (Lexicon) give its meaning as, “If in any way, if by any means, if possible;” and Ellicott to the same effect says, “the idea of an attempt is conveyed, which may or may not be successful.” Both Alford and Lightfoot regard the passage as dealing with the resurrection of the godly from death, and Ellicott’s note is worth giving in full. “‘The resurrection from the dead;’ i.e., as the context suggests, the *first* resurrection (Rev. xx. 5), when, at the Lord’s coming the dead in Him shall rise first (1 Thess. iv. 16), and the quick be caught up to meet Him in the clouds (1 Thess. iv. 17); comp. Luke xx. 35. The first resurrection will include only true believers, and will apparently precede the second, that of non-believers, and disbelievers, in point of time. Any reference here to a merely ethical resurrection (Cocceius) is wholly out of the question.” With the addition that the second resurrection will include believers not accounted worthy of the first, this note is excellent.

The sense and force of the phrase “if by any means I may arrive” are surely fixed beyond controversy by the use of the same words in Acts xxvii. 12: “the more part advised to put to sea from thence, *if by any means* they could *reach* [arrive at] Phœnix, and winter there” (*ei pos dunainto katan-teesantes*), which goal they did *not* reach.

Further, speaking upon the very subject of the resurrection and the kingdom promised afore by God, Paul used the same verb, again preceded by conditional terms, saying (Acts xxvi. 6-8), “unto which promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope *to attain*.” Here the force of *elpizei katanteesai* “unto which they hope to attain” is the same as his words in Philippians *ei pos kantanteeso*, “if by any means I may attain.” This hope of the Israelite of sharing in Messiah’s kingdom is plainly conditional (Dan. xii. 2, 3). It is assured to such an Israelite indeed as Daniel (xii. 13), and to such a faithful servant of God in a period of great difficulty as Zerubbabel (Hag. ii. 23). It was also offered to Joshua the high priest, but upon conditions of obedience and conduct. Joshua had been relieved of his filthy garments and arrayed in noble attire (Zech. iii. 1-5), but immediately his symbolic justification before Jehovah had been thus completed, and his standing in the presence

of God assured, the divine message to him is couched in conditional language: "And the Angel of Jehovah protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, If thou wilt walk in My ways, and if thou wilt keep My charge, then thou also shalt judge My house, and shalt also keep My courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by" (ver. 6, 7).

It is at this point that the "ifs" of the Word of God come in, and are so solemn and significant. Whenever the matter is that of the pardon of sin, the justifying of the guilty, the gift of eternal life, Scripture ever speaks positively and unconditionally. The sinner is "justified freely by God's grace," and "the free gift of God is eternal life" (Rom. iii. 24; vi. 23), in which places the word "free" means free of conditions, not only of payment. Eternal life therefore is what is called in law an absolute gift, in contrast to a conditional gift. The latter may be forfeited if the condition be not fulfilled; the former is irrevocable. But as soon as the sinner has by faith entered into this standing before God, then the Word begins at once to speak to him with "Ifs." From this point and forward every privilege is conditional.

PAGES FROM AN ORDERED LIFE (6)

INDIA, 1909-1911

THE spiritual service now available was varied and fruitful. At "Ooty" (short for Ootacamund) there were three services weekly at the Union Church, and sundry gatherings at "Montauban," a home of rest similar to "Brooklands." The influence was not measurable by numbers but rather by the indirect help to the work of God all over South India, and indeed much further away, by workers coming to the Hills to recuperate being instructed and strengthened in spirit. This applied also to the many Christian officials and men of business who returned to their spheres refreshed for the wars of the Lord.

In a heathen land it is perforce better understood than in England that life is verily a wrestling against wicked spirits in heavenly places. The servant must be also a soldier. These evil beings have gripped and ruled these lands for thousands of years. All minds are blinded by their ideas, all feelings dulled or fired by their cruelty, all morality debased by their vices, the whole atmosphere is poisoned by their satanic spirit. It is this that makes it so foolish and dangerous that young men and women from a comparatively elevated Protestant land, should go to a heathen or Moslem region before having understanding of, and real experience of, this spiritual warfare, and of the secrets of victory over

demons. It is especially necessary to know by personal experience the part that prayer conflict has in this warfare. For want of such training in advance the young recruit too often goes under in the conflict, of which the following is an instance.

There came to me at Coonoor an earnest young woman, a teacher in a school. She bemoaned that for a long while she had found herself plagued with jealousy of her fellow-workers. If the Principal but spoke kindly to or looked kindly at another of the staff she felt wickedly jealous of her. So obsessed was she, and so ruined was her inward life, that she felt she must return to her home in America, unless deliverance could be gained. Now it is important to make sure that such a disease in the moral realm is not a symptom of disease in some physical organ. This can be the case. But in this friend there was no reason to think this was a factor. She had never been so troubled in earlier years and her general health was good.

I told her that the Bible gave an explanation of her case, but that it was sorrowful and humiliating. James iii. 14, 15 says that where bitter jealousy is found it is earthly (not from heaven), soulical (not of the new spiritual nature), yea, *demoniacal*; and that in some way, no doubt unrecognized by her, she must have given access to a demon to infect her with this evil feeling. I then pressed upon her that, if she would humbly accept this as God's explanation of the matter, then she could claim such a promise as 1 John iii. 8: "To this end was the Son of God manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil." With bitter tears she bowed before God, claimed the promised deliverance, and was set free immediately and permanently.

In the text cited above the word "destroy" (*luo*) means to loosen, untie, disentangle, and so set free, as a bird from a snare or a captive from the cords of his captor.

On another occasion at "Brooklands" there came for conversation about the "Tongues" movement and its claims a lady of perhaps fifty-five years. She had been used of God in a notable and difficult service among fallen women in a distant part of Central India, and was had in reputation by all who knew her. We were to resume the subject the next morning, but very early it was impressed upon me that we were not to renew that theme but that I was to explain to her the opening part of Ephesians ii. I pointed out that it is involved in our being seated in heaven with Christ that His authority over the powers of darkness is ours and it is for us to use this right. Thus when Paul would drive the demon out of the girl at Philippi he did not ask the Lord to do this but did it himself, using the name of Jesus Christ: "I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour" (Acts xvi. 18).

It was suggested that all too many Christians are like

the wrestler who is under his opponent struggling to rise, instead of being the man on top holding his adversary down. To illustrate the position I remarked that the Lord Chief Justice has a wide authority over the whole judicial system of England, but the village policeman has authority only in his small area and limited measure. Yet within his sphere the policeman has the same authority as the Lord Chief Justice, for they both act in the name of the sovereign. Similarly Christ can command the whole system of Satan everywhere, and they must obey, whereas I can act only in my small realm; but within that realm they are bound to obey me, acting in His name.

After some time this friend wrote from the north to say that from her youth she had been perpetually urged by Satan to commit suicide. She is not the only Christian I have met thus harassed. What a brave and stern battle must she have waged those long years, and with success so far as that she had not yielded. But, she said, from the day she had seen her place and right in Christ she had dared Satan ever again to tempt her like that and he had never done so! Thus at last was she more than conqueror through Him that loved her. But how much better it might have been had she been instructed in her youth in the methods of the Adversary and had gained deliverance then. How much fuller all those years could her testimony have been to Christ as the Conqueror and Deliverer.

For myself, in England, on race courses, in slums, in gospel work in a priest-ridden village, and, indeed, and alas, in the church of God also, I had been given preliminary experience of Satan's kingdom, its atmosphere, dangers, and strength. I had been in active and varied labours for eighteen years before the Lord sent me to India in my thirty-sixth year. But for this I could easily have collapsed under the moral and spiritual assaults not to be avoided on such Devil-ridden territory.

In India this experience was greatly enlarged by being privileged to join in one of the strenuous battles of that doughty soldier of Christ, Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur. Were the long-drawn fight to rescue the girl Muttamal from Satan described in full it would indeed instruct and inspire many in the warfare for souls. Among other lessons it showed how real and strong can the work of the Spirit be in a Hindu Christian, for Devadas Pillai (whom I met in Madras), the barrister who fought for her in several hearings in the Courts, not only endured bravely opprobrious treatment from a British judge, but would take neither fees nor travelling expenses, though he journeyed several times from Madras to Palamcotta, many hundreds of miles each way.

It was this battle that prompted me to write the booklet *Prayer, Focused and Fighting*.

Another experience of prayer conflict, taken from this

period, is given on p. 14 (ed. 1949) of *Praying is Working*: it reads:

Again, in a certain heathen land a serious difference arose in a very large circle of missionaries. It threatened to issue in a public cleavage, and this before the native Christians and the heathen. The centre of the trouble was a wholly sincere but very determined man, one always difficult to persuade or turn. For months negotiation and prayer had proceeded, in view of the annual missionary conference before which the matter would come; but to within two weeks thereof no sign of reunion was seen. The tension was great, and forbearance was much taxed.

At that point three friends joined for a half-night of prayer, seeking general reviving. About midnight their hearts were powerfully drawn to deal with this special matter, and they found great liberty in spreading out the whole case before the Lord. They specially committed to Him for His definite dealing those mainly responsible, and in particular the beloved worker who had precipitated the crisis. Nor did the spirit of intercession cease to impel them until they were fully assured that the situation was mastered, and that the Lord would effectually intervene.

The conference duly met, and for six long sessions, occupying two whole days, discussion proceeded, but without result; and at the close the feeling expressed was that matters must take their course. But one of those who had prayed that night was convinced to the contrary. He had observed that throughout those wearying hours of debate a remarkable restraint had been upon all, so that, in spite of the acute feeling existing, not a speaker had said any word which hurt another. He therefore pointed out that the Lord's ideal for His church is a oneness that the world would see, and be impressed (John xvii. 21); and that the Lord could be trusted to bring this to pass, if faith did not fail, but patiently waited upon Him.

The next morning the subject was unexpectedly resumed, but without any progress to agreement being apparent. But shortly, to the amazement of nearly all, the very brother who had brought about the crisis said that, *contrary to the wishes of those who thought with him*, he had resolved, for the sake of peace, to desist from the course upon which he had thought it right to enter! The happy result was the restoration of harmony; and the Spirit of the Lord, being no longer grieved by dissension, was shortly able to show the solution of the original matter of disagreement.

In *Earth's Earliest Ages* (p. 316) Pember narrates the beginning of the modern spirit outburst in the Fox house in America in 1848. The advance was from the side of the spirits, by means of raps on the wall of the chamber of two

young girls. Alongside of this put the following fact. At Ootacamund I saw often, in 1909 and 1910, an earnest Christian woman, whose witness to Christ was clear and owned of God. She knew nothing of the Fox incident, but narrated to me a precisely similar experience of her own when a girl, peculiar and systematic rappings on the wall of her room having occurred, though, happily, failing to lead her into the toils, as the Fox family were led.

She was of a susceptible temperament. In her worldly days she had been much in demand for amateur theatricals. I suggested to her that, on this account, the spirits had probably judged her to be a likely subject for enticement, and had approached her. This led her to tell me the further incident that, when once, in those unconverted days, she had been at a party at a European bungalow, she observed a tall gentleman leaning on the piano, listening to the lady playing. She was struck by him, because she had thought that she knew all the English people of the district, and because his clothes were of a somewhat out-of-date cut. After the party she asked the hostess who he was, and described him. The lady replied that she must have been dreaming, for no such person was known to her, or had been present. She, however, was sure she had seen him; and on the matter being mentioned to the oldest resident of the part, and the description being repeated, he said at once that he knew quite well who it was, a Mr. So-and-So, and that he had been murdered in that bungalow.

These two incidents seem capable of one of two explanations. Either, as the heathen believed, the dead, or some of them, can on occasion re-visit their old haunts, and re-enact their former experiences; or spirits, designing to alarm or attract the living, can reproduce former events, and afterwards cause the facts to become known to the persons they would entice. In either case, how important it is for us to be fortified with the knowledge that God has most sternly forbidden such intercourse from either side.

On 22nd July, 1909, there was at Coonoor a baptism in a mountain stream deserving of record. Thirty years before a heathen had been converted in connection with the Church Missionary Society. He had great natural gifts of memory and speech. The power of God was upon him. He was appointed by the Society an evangelist and was used to innumerable conversions. Thomas Maynard of Tinnevely told me they numbered thousands. He was brought to England, more or less lionized, and thereby injured in soul. He returned to India weakened spiritually, and presently lapsed into a life of vice lower even than before his conversion. It was a sorrowful reproach throughout South India. After several years he was restored and was again used in the gospel, and now was baptized by immersion as a believer.

After having spoken in his native Tamil, he did so in English, giving a brief outline of his life as above, and adding that not very long after his conversion he had seen in the New Testament the true meaning and method of baptism; but that he knew that, were he immersed, he would lose his post and salary as an evangelist under the C.M.S.; that on this account he fought against what he saw to be the will of God, which was the beginning of the decline of soul that issued in public collapse.

Such was the story of V. D. David ("Tamil" David). It rebukes the fallacy that one who backslides deeply and long can never have been born of God. It reproves the want of faith that doubts if such an one can be restored. It exhibits the peril attaching to human arrangements in the things of God, such as an official position and a stated salary. It exhibits the love and fidelity of the Good Shepherd Who goes after His lost sheep until He finds it. Let us join Him in His search.

My time was divided roughly between "Brooklands" and Ootacamund. At the Union Church, Ooty, I preached three times a week and visited. I lodged mostly at Shoreham Hotel, which had a large compound nearby surrounded by tall mimosa trees. In the flowering season the scent was almost overpowering. It was one of the only two places in India which I knew where it was safe to drink the water unboiled. The house stood higher than the surrounding parts, so that no water could percolate from higher levels and huts or houses and contaminate the well. Yet this was kept covered and locked. "A garden shut up is my sister, my bride; a spring shut up a fountain sealed," and so undefiled (*Song of Songs*, iv. 12).

There stayed at the hotel a man named Coleman. Miss Brealey had dealt with him about his salvation and had asked me to continue this. But he had sealed himself against me. Only once in some months did I entice him into such conversation, and then after a few minutes he closed the talk by saying with a laugh, "You missionaries are clever beggars: you deserve to succeed: I made up my mind that you should never speak to me about these things, and yet here you are at it."

He was Irish and had the customary humour. It was his regular daily routine to walk at the same hour in a park. One often there asked him why he came so habitually. He replied that he did not like to have his private affairs talked about, but if the other would promise never to repeat what he said he would tell him. The promise being given he said: "I am minding my own business." He had been in the police in Burma and gave an instance of what a fine command of English Orientals can gain. He asked a native official if he would do him a certain favour and the instant reply was:

“To be sure; of course; why not? yes; certainly!” It would defy an Englishman suddenly to string together these expressions more appropriately or emphatically.

But Coleman had lived a vicious life and was hardened. On the eve of my leaving the country, and burdened in spirit with his state, I resolved on journeying specially to his town to make one further attempt to reach him. On my arrival, the monsoon rain was pouring steadily. When I reached the bungalow where I was to stay it was just the breakfast hour, and an inward discussion arose as to whether I should, as inclination prompted, go in and refresh myself after the journey, or trudge on through mud and rain and first see my man. I finally decided to go. He met me with unusual cordiality, and, to my great wonder and delight, in a very few minutes we were engaged in close, personal converse as to his life and eternal prospects. The change in his attitude was altogether extraordinary; but on my return to the place whence I had started the explanation was found. Shortly after I had left, Miss Brealey had gathered twelve other praying workers, and for over two hours had continued in steadfast supplication for this one case and concerning my interview with him. They had commenced praying just before I had to decide whether to breakfast first or no, and had continued in powerful intercession until a little after I had left him, although they had no knowledge as to what part of the day I might be with him.

Such concentration of supplication may be compared to “barrage” artillery fire, by which a desired objective is isolated from opposing forces, and thus is the more easily relieved or captured. We would not unduly press a preposition beyond its normal force, but let it be remarked that when our great Advocate spoke of a spiritual conflict in which He had intervened by intercession, He said to the subject of that conflict, “I made supplication *around thee*” (Luke xxii 32), and so, though Simon, for his own good and for his later usefulness to weak brethren, was suffered to be severely mauled in the battle, his faith, being protected by his Lord’s intercession, was not finally overwhelmed. A high privilege does the Captain of salvation share with His faithful followers in enabling us to take hold of shield and buckler and stand up for the help of the oppressed: a blessed thing it is to be able to draw out the spear and stop the way against those who pursue after souls for their ruin (Ps. xxxv. 2, 3).

I had one more opportunity of meeting Coleman by making a special journey to a Jesuit boarding house in another part whither he had removed. He was then softer and spoke feelingly on religious topics. It was interesting to learn that the Catholic priests had convinced him that his fornications were wicked in the sight of God and rendered him liable to judgment. But they had not shown him the way of forgiveness through the blood of Christ. This I did,

and could only leave him, with the prayer that ere life closed he might seek and find that abundant pardon.

Another man at Ooty was named Booth. He was born in Yorkshire. His father was a churchwarden, but led a double life, of which his wife did not know, though the boy did. It turned him wholly against the evangelical faith which his father professed but disgraced. He went to India as a locomotive driver on the Southern Marathi Railway. For thirty years no one spoke to him about his soul. He married a Eurasian and had four children. Leaving the service he took the toll-gate on the Ghaut road from Ooty to Coonoor. It was a mile or two from Ooty. He was a violent man and threatened to kill his wife if she read the Bible to the children.

This summer he was taken to hospital with pleurisy, where, in August, I visited him by desire of a lady who was being kind to his family. Only because I came at her request was he civil to me, and whenever I spoke of Jesus as the Son of God, or of His atoning blood, or of the eternal doom of the sinner, he became angry and would say things hard for a Christian to hear. At such outbursts I would quietly rise to leave, but he would promptly ask me to stay, from which I inferred that his Unitarianism was superficial and unsatisfying.

Returning to his little house he commenced secretly to read the Bible, and coming to John vi. he read the words: "I am the living bread which came down out of heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever" (ver. 51). Under the influence of the Spirit of truth his mind for the first time worked rationally on these themes. He said to himself: "I always allowed that Jesus was a good man; but if He was a good man I ought to believe what He says, because good men do not tell lies. So as He says He came down from heaven I ought to believe it." Believe it he did. As he said to me: "I ate of the bread;" and the result was the reception of the new life promised. He knew it and was joyful. And his wife knew it and said: "It was a tiger changed into a lamb," an apt figure borrowed from the jungle around their home.

He was now seemingly well, but in only a week or two an internal abscess developed; he was hurried to hospital and died. "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" (Zech. iii. 2). It would have been well worth while to have gone from England to India for the salvation of Booth alone. But more was to follow. His wife was left without means and the matter of the children was acute. I knew not whether there were Protestant orphanages at all accessible; but God's arrangements work like smoothest machines. Exactly then there came to me Miss Mergler, a Eurasian and Secretary of the Eurasian Missionary Society. She said that the folk at Ooty contributed annually the support of an orphan in

their Orphanage. But the child came from a distant place, and she thought they would contribute more did they know they were supporting a local child. Did I know of one? I replied, that I knew of three, urgently needing a home, and we drove out.

But Mrs. Booth said No; decidedly, No ! Her father had lately married a Romanist, and there would be no end of trouble if she gave the children to Protestants. They must go to the Catholics. I said to Miss Mergler that we should not get the children unless the mother was brought to Christ. The whole of the next morning I spent in prayer concerning her, went out in the afternoon, and she was led by the Spirit to receive the Saviour, and we had the children. There lies before me a grateful letter from her written as I was leaving the district in December.

During the days I was at Coimbatore, on the way to the Hills, there came into the office of Mr. H. C. Golden, a Brahmin lawyer, Bala Krishna Iyer, the Public Prosecutor of the district. He was learned and wealthy, and was later a member of the Governor's Council of Madras Presidency. Hearing that I wished to go to the other side of the town he courteously drove me in his brougham. The next day, on entering the second-class railway carriage to go to Coonoor I found this gentleman seated there. He did not see me. Shortly there came in a rough, blustering Britisher and ordered him to leave the seat for he had already taken it. The lawyer expostulated quietly, pointing out that there was no article on the seat to show it had been taken. But he had not noticed a small parcel on the rack above. As he did not at once rise the other seized him by the shoulder and dragged him up. The Brahmin's eyes flashed furiously, but, with the admirable self-control that marks them, he said nothing and quickly left the compartment.

I said at once to the uncouth man that, as a newcomer from England, I regretted greatly to see a native gentleman treated so rudely: that only the day before he had been very kind to me, a stranger; that he was a public official, learned, and rich. The other replied savagely: "Then let him go first-class." This he had done, and at the first halt I went to him and expressed my sincere regret that he had been treated thus and repeated what I had said. He was touched that an Englishman should champion an Indian against an Englishman. As a rule the British, especially officials, behaved fairly and justly to the Hindus; but one dead fly causes the ointment to stink and one sinner destroys much good. Such arbitrary and offensive behaviour, even if only occasional, did much to foment a spirit antagonistic to British rule. And it was not the only instance I saw.

I met Bala Krishna at Ooty and he asked me to his bungalow. There I drew him out to tell me his Hindu

philosophy of the universe. He explained that Brahma, the Creator, made the universe and ruled it for an inconceivably vast period. Then Vishnu, the Preserver, took it over and maintained it for a further inconceivable period. Then Siva the Destroyer would take the rule and would, through another immeasurable period, destroy it. Whereupon Brahma would again create and the whole immense cycle would be repeated; and so on endlessly.

Whilst he was dilating fervently upon the majesty of this stupendous programme a postcard was handed to him and his enthusiasm was struck dumb. It said that his brother's little son had been drowned in the fishpond in their garden. Then was seen the vanity and emptiness of human philosophy. It left his heart blank. He was an illustration of Deck's lines:

The people sit in darkness; yea, in death's dark midnight gloom;

No ray to cheer the passage to the dark, devouring tomb:
The mourners weep despairingly around the open grave;
No hope is known to enter there, for they know none to save.

It was a bitter exposure of the false notion that Hinduism is good enough for the Hindu and he should not be troubled by Christian propaganda. This is a working of the Strong One to keep his goods in peace, a wile of the Devil to hold his blinded captives.

When leaving the hills I saw this man once more in his office, and pressed upon him the difference between salvation by faith in a Substitute and the heathen and Roman Catholic plan of reliance on our own works. Later I sent him a Revised Version of the Scriptures. Let us sow beside all waters.

(to be continued)



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