

LANDMARKS

OF THE

FAITH

VOL. II 1936

Published by
A. H. Harris, 71, Birchwood Crescent,
Birmingham 12,
Printed by Ridouts Limited, Whitstable, Kent.

Some
LANDMARKS
of the Faith

BEING
OCCASIONAL PAPERS ON
SCRIPTURAL SUBJECTS

THE FAITH—once delivered to the Saints.
—*Jude i, 3.*

Remove not the ancient landmark which thy
fathers have set.—*Prov. xxii, 28.*

CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Faith	1
The Love of Christ	3
The Love of God	7
The Word of God	8
The Man of God	10

CONTENTS—*Continued*

	PAGE
Walking with God	12
I Shall Not Want	17
Food and Strength	18
The Strength of God	20
Food	21
The Bread of Life	27
Desire and Food	28
A Table in the Desert	31
Christian Fellowship	33
“ This Do ”	40
The Lord’s Supper	47
The Path to Holiness	49
The Divine Prisoner	50
The Gentleness of Christ	52
“ If it be so ”	54
Three Good Things	59
Paul and Timothy	60
The Ransom	65
Atonement, Propitiation and Reconciliation	66
The Glories of the Son of God	72
The Shepherd	74
Poetry	78
The Son of God and Son of Man	79
The Mystery of His Will	85



THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.

Jude, ver. 3.

WE read in 2 Tim. i, 10 that life and incorruptibility are brought to light through the gospel. This is welcome news to those held in moral bondage in this scene of sin and death. It comes as light from heaven to souls once in nature's darkness, and as received through the inward working of the Holy Spirit, becomes light in their souls. This is just what faith is,—light *in our souls* regarding the revelation of God in righteousness and grace.

On the occasion of the first miracle after Christ's ascension and the descent of the Spirit, Peter said that it was through faith in Christ's Name that the lame man was healed, adding "Yea the faith which is by Him hath given him this perfect soundness," Acts iii, 16. This was the individual faith of the man in "the power of Jesu's name," which gave him not only bodily healing, but soul healing as well, for he walked and leaped *and praised God!* From that day to this myriads of souls have been saved through faith,—a faith which is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God (Eph. ii, 8).

But later in The Acts we read of certain priests who were *obedient* to “ the faith ” (vi, 7), of disciples exhorted to *continue* in “ the faith ” (xiv, 22), and of assemblies *strengthened* in “ the faith ” (xvi, 5), so that there had come about a spiritual system, a circle of light and blessing, called THE FAITH, the great characteristic feature of it being its connection with One now out of sight, quite apart from any outward visible order of things, such as that which had preceded it. Hence it is *the faith*. Its outstanding features—its LANDMARKS—are clear and unmistakable to every divinely taught soul, and it may well be our exercise that none of them should be set aside or removed.

From what we read in Eph. iv, 5, the faith is *one*,—“ there is one faith.” The faith is a unity, all consistent with the revealed mind of God, and one of the most beautiful things said of the faith is in ver. 13, where we read “ until we all come to the unity of the faith.” This, with other things mentioned in the passage, is the result of the Spirit’s ministry through gifts given to the assembly by the ascended Head. True ministry will not be contrary to the unity of the faith, but will lead souls into it, and into the full measure of God’s mind for His people.

Sheffield,

C. W. W.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

“*CHRIST loved the church and gave Himself for it.*” (Eph. v, 25).

Surely this is the love of complacency and also the love of possession, though not in an individual sense, but in a collective sense. He gave Himself for the church in order that He might possess it for ever. Mark the threefold object or motive presented here. We may learn that Christ had this threefold object before Him in giving Himself; first, to possess it; second, to sanctify and cleanse it; third, to present it to Himself. We might say that the first thought is eternal, the second present, and the third future. This is, of course, the church in its bridal aspect,—a most blessed aspect.

The church as the body of Christ speaks of unity and fulness; but the church as the bride speaks of love,—of love, and of beauty, and of value. If the apostle can say “He loved me,” he also says “Christ also loved the assembly.” Speaking in the past tense, does he there refer to the earthly life of the Lord? Surely; but does the past tense in regard to this love go still further back? Does it not refer to an indefinite past, to the past that Prov. viii speaks of,—“My delights were with the sons of men”? Yes, we get a love here that had no beginning, as men speak; a love that was there before time was. He loved the assembly before it had any exist-

ence, before time was, before it had any being. He saw it in all its value according to the parables of Matt. xiii. "A treasure hid in a field." He saw it before Him in all the simplicity, and in all the beauty of bridal affection; in all the beauty of undivided love,—love for Himself. He saw it thus before it had being. He loved it in view of its present sanctification and cleansing by the washing of water. He loved it in view of its future presentation to Himself in glory; without spot, or wrinkle, but holy and without blemish.

We cannot afford to overlook one sentence, one word, in such a connection, on such a subject. We must remember that all that Christ saw in the church was His own ideal, His own conception: that the saints have no love, no beauty, no value of their own, that is naturally. But the Lord's conceptions were not mere conceptions, like human conceptions, vain and profitless. A man may, it is certain, invest a bride with his own conceptions, invest her with qualities which she does not possess in fact. This is frequently the case, and then comes a rude awakening. Or, on the other hand, a man may find in a bride moral qualities he never dreamed of. Yes! but all this is human. In regard to the Son of God we not only get divine and perfect conceptions as to the church, but creative power, the living energy to produce, to create, those conceptions; to create, to invest the church. So that she ever stood before His mind invested in all the beauty

of created, spontaneous, adoring and undivided love. The church as the bride is a vast system of spiritual and holy affections. But whatever love the church may be capable of toward Christ, that love is but a reflex of a greater and infinite love,—His own.

“ *The Love of Christ, which passeth knowledge* ” (Eph. iii, 19).

In this remarkable prayer of the apostle we get the greatness of Christ's love. We come here to a love, the love of Christ, that passes knowledge. It is a mistake to take this out of its connection: by so doing its true force is lost. This love goes wider than the church, this is evident. The love of Christ stands in this connection with the whole revealed purpose of God, with the many families in heaven and in earth. These are not the present heavens and earth, as is so frequently interpreted, but the coming heavens and earth, the age to come. This is the largest and most remarkable presentation of Christ's love on our side, the side of the creature. A love great enough, vast enough, to enfold and encompass the whole world to come in its embrace; great enough to encompass and fill the new moral universe, the blessed scene and sphere of God's eternal purpose in Christ. But let us dwell on this prayer. The apostle prays for strengthened and perfected affections for all saints, that our affections might be strong enough and retentive enough to embrace in the spirit of

love the whole extent of God's purpose in Christ, in order that Christ might dwell in our hearts by faith.

It has often been said that we cannot have the Christ dwelling in our hearts apart from the assembly; that if we love the Christ, we must necessarily love the assembly of Christ, because Christ and the church are morally one. But if we are to answer to this prayer we must go wider than the church. The church as a family,—one of the many families—has, doubtless, the first place, the pre-eminent place among the many families. But we have to learn, I believe, and what a blessed lesson it is to learn, that if the Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, these families on which the love of Christ is set, also dwell there. We may safely say that the one who prayed this prayer had not only Christ personally resident in his affections, but he had also that vast system which stands in immediate relation to Christ, in his heart.

The apostle opens out to us the blessed sphere in which the love of Christ finds its fullest satisfaction. Christ died not only for the assembly, but He died for those many families. He loved those many families. His divine eye looked forward, looked into futurity: He saw those many families: He loved them and gave Himself for them. It is on such a world, such a scene, that the love of Christ finds full outlet and scope. This love is so great that although the assembly is the object of it in a supreme and pre-eminent

sense, yet the assembly does not suffice for such a love. The love of Christ is too vast to be satisfied with *one* family. It has set itself in its divine volume on many families. It is vast enough to fill a universe, to fill every heart in the heavens above, and in the earth below, with responsive adoring affection. We get here a system, a world, which has its eternal subsistence in Divine Persons,—in the Godhead, fully revealed. The Father is the source, the Son the centre, the Spirit the all-pervading influence, and the love of Christ the moral atmosphere of that world.

H. S.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

“IF we will only consider Him in His works, we shall learn that God is nothing else but pure, unutterable love, greater and more than any one can think. The shameful thing is, that the world does not regard this, nor thank Him for it, although every day sees before it such countless benefits from Him : and it deserves for its ingratitude that the sun should not shine another moment longer, nor the grass grow ; yet He ceases not, for one moment’s interval, to love us and to do us good. Language must fail me

to speak of His *spiritual* gifts. Here He pours forth for us, not sun and moon, nor heaven or earth, but His own heart, His beloved Son; so that He suffered His blood to be shed, and the most shameful death to be inflicted on Him, for us wretched, wicked, thankless creatures. How, then, can we say anything but that God is an abyss of endless, unfathomable love? ” Martin Luther.

THE WORD OF GOD.

IF God were silent to us we should be like them that go down to the pit, but God speaks to man, and what He speaks constitutes His “ Word.” He has graciously committed many of His words and sayings to writing, to preserve them for our sakes. These constitute the “ Holy Scriptures,” and it is called a “ noble ” thing to test even the ministry of an apostle by them. (Berea).

So greatly did Jesus honour them, that when the roll of the prophet Esais was handed Him, He rose up to honour His Father’s written Word, and read it *standing*, while for His own Word He took the lower attitude of *sitting* to announce Himself the fulfilment of it. Again, He said of Moses, “ If ye believe not *His writings* how shall ye believe *My words*? ” Again, as a

witness, even resurrection cannot surpass “ Moses and the prophets ” (Luke xvi). Most touching of all, even hours of untold agony on the cross did not quench the faithful love of Christ for even the last little bit of unfulfilled Scripture, “ That the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith ‘ I thirst ’ ” ! Such was the regard of Jesus for them.

Again, “ God Who spake (using words) unto our fathers hath spoken (using words) unto us through His Son.” To deny the connection of the message with the words, is to deny verbal inspiration, which is one of the fundamental errors of the day. As far as they are correctly translated we have the Bible as the “ Words of His mouth,” which are to be esteemed “ *more than our necessary food.*” So true is this, that frequently the Scriptures are used for the conversion of souls, apart from human exposition, and not only so, but they are able also to completely revolutionise a life where they are directly accepted in the power of faith and by the Divine Spirit.

It is possible however to miss the Divine power as we read, having no sense of faith, as one may miss the fragrance of the rose, having no sense of smell. The fragrance nevertheless is there, and the Divine Spirit is with the very words of Scripture.

Bath.

J. B.-C.

“THE MAN OF GOD.”

TWELVE men in the Old Testament, and one in the New, are spoken of as “*men of God.*” Some are marked by the inspired writer thus, “There came a man of God to Eli ” (I Sam. ii, 27). Others were so named as having been apprehended in that character by those to whom they were sent, as the Angel who appeared to Manoah’s wife, “A man of God came to me ” (Judges xiii, 6). The prophet Elisha is spoken of as a “man of God ” more often than any, and is spoken of in both ways, i.e. as so named by the inspired writer, and also as known as such by those with whom he had to do. The well known instance in the N.T. is that of Timothy, whom the Apostle Paul addresses as “thou O man of God ” (I Tim. vi, 11).

They are all instances of men who were divinely marked out as having been intrusted with special service for God in days of declension and departure from God, and who in spite of the state of things, and the opposition they had to meet with and endure, carried out that service faithfully. It is remarkable that only twelve in the Old Testament, and one in the New are marked out in this way. Some are called by their own names, as “Moses the man of God ” (Deut. xxxiii, 1). Others are unnamed as in II Chron. xxv, 7, “there came a man of God

to him." Yet, that it is possible for others to be in that favoured position in these days, when the Lord Jesus is still in the place of rejection (as to the world) is clearly shewn by II Tim. iii, 17, "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

No one acquainted with Church history will question that there have been "Men of God" since Timothy's day; men who in the midst of appalling darkness, where light should have been, and in a condition in which corruption and wickedness held sway in that which still bore the Name of Him who is "The Holy and the True," held faithfully to the truth of His word, and devoted themselves to His service. In faithfulness to Himself and to His own, the Lord will doubtless bring out and maintain "men of God," till He come.

They may be unnamed amongst men, but, "having a little strength . . . holding fast His word" and "keeping the word of His patience," they will be "overcomers" where there is little in that which is seen outwardly, to encourage! May there be many such available to Him!

York.

E. A. F. C.

WALKING WITH GOD.

ENOCH was a man of whom God's holy word speaks in three different ways. Each of these scriptures is brief. But by reason of the fact that the day in which we live is similar in many respects to that in which he lived the very brevity of the statements in God's holy word should speak to us in no uncertain voice. Turning to the fifth chapter of Genesis we read—verses 22 to 24—“ And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three-hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.” If the reader will consult this chapter, this phrase will be noted—“ and he died.” Seven times it occurs in this chapter. The only exception is in verse 24:—“ and he was not, for God took him.” In the sixth chapter, verse 9, is a statement to the effect that Noah too “ walked with God.” Others in the Old Testament are referred to as having walked *before* God—but of Enoch and Noah only does the Spirit speak of “ walking *with* God.” Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David walked “ before ” God (Gen. xvii, 1, xxiv, 40, xlviii, 15, and Ps. lvi, 13). What then, is “ walking with God ”? Needless to state, the fullest conception of the thought is seen in the walk here upon earth of God's Beloved Son. Every movement of His was in entire consonance with the will of God. For the believer, He is

set forth as the perfect example:—“ He that abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked ” (I John ii, 6).

In Amos iii, 3, we read:—“ Can two walk together except they be agreed? ” Walking together, then, implies complete agreement of thought. But here a wonderful fact emerges—a fact which sets forth something of the wonderful grace of the God of Heaven and Earth. Genesis v, 24 states:—“ Enoch walked with God.” It is not stated that God walked with Enoch but that “ Enoch walked with God.” The solemn fact is, that with God’s people there is sometimes a tendency to walk in a path entirely unsuited to God and the result is disappointment and fruitlessness because God can maintain us only in that path which is in accord with His holy mind and will. This simple principle is one which each of us finds so difficult to take to heart. “ Walking with God,” sharing God’s thoughts—continuing in a path of obedience, having His interests at heart, was what marked Enoch’s life for a period of three hundred years until “ he was not for God took him.” But before God took him, he had this testimony “ that he pleased God.” Hebrews xi, 6 speaks of

“ *PLEASING GOD.* ”

“ By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death ; and was not found because God had translated him : for before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him ;

for he that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him ” (Heb. xi, 5, 6). God’s holy word here states that the great essential is faith and also that it must be a “ productive ” faith, entailing “ coming to God ” and the knowledge that God becomes a “ Rewarder of them that *diligently* seek him.” “ Coming to God ” clearly implies coming as “ worshippers.” “ *Diligence* ” is set forth in Luke xv, 8 where our Lord speaks of the woman who would light a candle and sweep the house and “ seek diligently until she find.” Coming to God as worshippers, diligence in His interests, both in their turn produce other things which are pleasing to God. Some of these may be enumerated :—

Rom. xii, 1. “ —present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable (or “pleasing”) unto God.”

Eph. v, 10. “ Proving what is acceptable (or “pleasing”) unto the Lord.”

Phil. iv, 18. “ I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, *well-pleasing* to God.”

Col. iii, 20. “ Children, obey parents in all things; for this is *well-pleasing* unto the Lord.”

Lastly, the apostle’s beautiful prayer in Hebrews xiii, 20-21 may be cited :—“ Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting

covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is *well-pleasing* in His sight, through Jesus Christ ; to Whom be glory for ever and ever."

And let not God's people fall into the error into which the servant in Matthew xxv, 24 fell. Our Lord is no hard Master. His " yoke is easy " and His " burden is light " and none is so easily pleased as He, provided the eye is single and His interests are uppermost in all that His people undertake in simple faith. But if God's people are found happily walking with God and pleasing Him, would these have the effect of rendering them indifferent to the sad state and condition of the unsaved all around? Decidedly not! It should produce what it produced in Enoch's case ; namely—

WITNESSING FOR GOD.

" And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these saying, Behold! the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him " (Jude v. 14 & 15). God shews here that those whom He in grace has taken up to walk with and to please Him, He has graciously condescended to take into His holy confidence as He did in the case of Abraham before the righteous judgment of God fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah.

In Enoch's day the scripture tells us that men were living to be several hundreds of years of age. It is not a simple matter for anyone now to acquire any adequate conception of the state of the world previous to the Flood. We can see something of the effects of sin in *this* age when the allotted span of life is three-score and ten years. When we consider that men in that period were living ten times that length of time, we can only marvel at the wondrous mercy of God as He lingered over that guilty scene. Even when the time was come for His righteous judgment to fall, in great mercy He gave " yet seven days " (Gen. vii, 4).

While Enoch judged all that he saw and heard which was contrary to God, yet he was maintained in high and holy companionship with the God of all grace. He testified—witnessed for God. Should Enoch's walk, his pleasing God, his witness for God be an exception? Indeed not; it should be just a sample of what should rightly mark everyone belonging to His Beloved Son. May all God's people be found more for Him in this scene, maintaining a closer walk with Him here, pleasing Him in all things, faithfully witnessing for Him and having before them Enoch's wonderful portion which speaks to them of their own glorious hope, viz.—to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air previous to their being among the " ten thousands of His saints " of whom Enoch prophesied.

London.

F.-J.



“I SHALL NOT WANT.”

AN aged Christian was reduced to circumstances of the greatest poverty, yet he never murmured. “You must be badly off,” said a kind-hearted neighbour to him one day as they met in the road, “and I don’t know how an old man like you can maintain yourself and your wife; yet you are always cheerful!” “Oh, no!” he replied, “we are not badly off, I have a rich Father, and He does not suffer me to want.” “What! your father still alive? He must be very old indeed!” “Oh!” said he, “my Father never dies, and He always takes care of me!”

This aged Christian was a daily pensioner on the providence of God. His struggles and poverty were known to all; but his own declaration was, that he never wanted what was absolutely necessary. The days of his greatest straits were the days of his most signal and timely deliverances. When old age benumbed the hand of industry the Lord extended to him the hand of charity. And often he went forth from his scanty breakfast, not knowing from what earthly source his next meal was to be obtained. But like David he could say “I shall not want,” and as certainly as he trusted in God, so surely in some unexpected manner was his necessity supplied.

FOOD AND STRENGTH

IN A DAY OF NEED.

I KINGS xvii, 9-16.

THE resources of faith were not to be found in kings' palaces nor at Jerusalem, the religious head-quarters! Obadiah, who "feared the Lord greatly" (I Kings xviii) knew not where to look for supplies even for the beasts during the famine. But Elijah was sent to a poor widow, who, feeling the condition of things, was just about to give all up! She had lost all hope, not realising the source of wealth in her house until she heard the word of the Lord. That word assured her that *what she had in the house should not waste or fail* so long as it was needed!

Are there not many Christians in a similar state of mind to-day? Feeling the pressure of things, and just ready to give up? Not realising that that which is set forth in the "meal" and the "oil"—Christ and the Spirit—are still available to faith, and can neither waste nor fail. Christ for food and the Spirit for power, till the Lord comes to take us to be with Himself, where famine and need can never be known—nor can it be known *now* to those who love Him and keep His words.

II KINGS IV, 1-7.

Here is another kind of need with apparently nothing to meet it. A woman under pressure from without; not a question of food yet the same sense of helplessness. As in the first case, the sufficiency was with her but she lacked the power to use it; she needed one who could tell her how to use it. She cries to Elisha. (If only in faith we took our difficulties to the Lord, what a difference it would make!) Elisha directs her to what she had in the house, and instructs her how to make use of it. Her estimation of it is small. "Not anything . . . save a pot of oil." And the pot of oil *was small* in view of the need! But her real resource was not in what she had; her real and true resource was in God who could *increase* what she had. Without Him her helplessness would have remained in spite of what she had. The Lord says "Without Me ye can do nothing." How we need to have our eyes and our expectations, ever on, and from Him! The Holy Spirit will not act apart from Christ. "Diversities of gifts but the same Spirit . . . of administrations, but the same Lord . . . of operations, but the same God which worketh all in all" (I Cor. xii, 4-6). In the hands of One who has the power the only limit is in the capacity of the vessels.

JOHN VI, 5-13.

This scripture shews yet another kind of need—the need of others. Those who were with the Lord were in close contact with that need,

but we see the same sense of helplessness in these circumstances as in the other cases! “ Send them away.” “ Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little ! ” “ Five barley loaves and two small fishes ; but what are they among so many ? ” Jesus said “ Bring them to Me . . . Make the men sit down . . . and Jesus took the loaves ; and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were sat down ; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.” In the hands of the Lord that little is more than enough. Have you and I tried it? We may account that what we have is but little, and ourselves less (and the less the better), but bringing what we have to Him, we shall be available to Him for use in His service ; though not necessarily in preaching and teaching. Thus we learn the truth of His Words, “ Without Me ye can do nothing ! ”

Scarborough.

C. S.

THE STRENGTH OF GOD.

*“ I WILL go in the strength of the Lord God :
I will make mention of thy righteousness,
even of thine only.”—Psa. lxxi, 16.*

Can I go in the strength of God,
As I face my journey here?
May I know His grace and His power,
The joy of His presence near?

I will go in the strength of God,
As I cross this desert wild :
I shall prove His love and His care,
Close sheltered be as His child.

Can I mention His righteousness,
Which in Christ has claimed its own ?
May I sing of His triumphs now,
Of grace on that mighty throne ?

I will mention His righteousness,
A preacher of Christ to be :
His glory and grace are become
My theme for eternity.

Bath.

V. W. J. H. L.

FOOD.

NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL.

NATURE teaches two lessons very plainly, namely, our absolute dependence upon the Creator, and that He in His great goodness has made bountiful provision for all our needs. No creature is *self-sustaining*; he must be supported by His wise and good Creator. The provision is ample, but the food has to be gathered and appropriated. The fruit of the tree grows in the air and sunshine, but it has to be *gathered and eaten*. The herb of the field grows out of

the earth, but it springs *upward* towards the sun in the heavens. The flesh of the animals given for meat is produced by natural generation, but when matured the animal must die to provide sustenance for man.

The lesson is easily read. God would keep His people near to Himself, ever conscious of their dependence and mindful of His great goodness and care, but the food which sustains them has to be gathered, eaten and assimilated. The food to sustain us naturally, when received from God with thanksgiving, keeps us in touch practically with God as revealed in His beloved Son, for it is sanctified through the death of Christ by “ God’s word, and freely addressing Him ” (I Tim. iv, 5 N.T.).

The same principles are clearly unfolded in connection with the spiritual food provided by God our Saviour. We have to be supported while in the world, which becomes only a wilderness to us when the fact of the rejection of God in Christ is really accepted. We have to work to provide things honest in the sight of all men. But what can sustain us in the privacy of own souls *with God* while doing these necessary things? The sustenance must come down; it cannot come from beneath. If I am to be secretly sustained by God whilst having to do with men of this world, it must be by grace—the grace that saved me.

THE MANNA.

NOW in the case of Israel God graciously and bountifully provided for them the manna "rained" from heaven (Ex. xvi, 15). There was abundance, but it had to be gathered and eaten according to the need of each individual. We know that the manna is a type to us of Christ, for in Him we see One who humbled Himself, and came into circumstances where support was needed. Morning by morning His ear was opened as the learner (Isaiah 1, 4). He continued all night in prayer to God (Luke vi, 12). He never moved without a word from God. He never did a thing unless it was God's positive will. In every circumstance and trial He was with God in unclouded communion, and He lived by "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Mat. iv, 4). In Him we see One who is the living example of man sustained by God. He could say—"All my springs are in Thee." The ground around was dry and barren but His sustenance and moisture came from above, and in every detail of life He fully answered to the mind of God regarding man. May we more diligently gather the daily grace, the heavenly food, so as to be more like Him now while in a scene where everything is opposed to the nature of which God has made us partakers.

THE TREE OF LIFE.

FURTHER, the Christian, though actually in this scene of death, lives already in a region of life. He has life, and has passed *out of death into life* (John v, 24). Does this make him independent? No, thank God, he is and ever will be dependent, and lives, and ever will live, in the life of Him who is the Source of life. The Son of Man, the Tree of Life, is the centre of that circle, and there all live by and to Him. Man, sustained by the fruit of that tree in the paradise of God, even now lives where God is fully revealed, where all His blessedness shines in the One come down from heaven. The Living Bread is sufficient to sustain all the redeemed, yea the whole universe, in the full vigour of life through time and eternity. Now this circle of life can be seen and entered into only by faith, and as Christ is appreciated and appropriated we live divinely in this region of life while surrounded by death. In a little while, having left death behind for ever, we shall be with Him in that scene of life where God is known in love which could only be revealed by the One ever in His bosom (John i, 18). But now we have the immense privilege of living there in mind and affection, and thus finding our joy in eternal realities instead of the frivolous and trifling things of time. May each of us know Christ, the Tree of Life, God's centre, better and enjoy more the life He has given us.

THE OLD CORN OF THE LAND.

NEXT, we know that Israel when they entered Canaan ate of the fruit of the land. This is spoken of as *the old corn of the land* (Josh. v, 11 and 12). This also is to us a type, for it is in Christ *glorified* alone, the old corn of the land, that the purpose of God concerning man is fully made known. Hence His beloved Son became flesh, was lifted up off the earth and thus presented to God as a victim upon the altar, for both His life and His death were a sweet odour ascending to God. Then when the whole work which He came to do on earth had been accomplished, He, the Man Christ Jesus, passed into the glory of God. There He is the exhibition of the whole purpose of God concerning man, and it is only in Him, and from Him, that we can learn all the secret thoughts regarding man. He, glorified, is the old corn of the land, the One to be appropriated as food, so that we may even now live in the blessedness that divine love has purposed us to enjoy in the heavenlies (Eph. ii, 4-6).

Let us briefly review the ample provision made by God our Saviour.

To be kept with God in the secret of our souls in adverse circumstances we need daily fresh grace, the true MANNA, which if gathered and appropriated proves that the grace that saves is also the grace that preserves.

Then to sustain us in the circle of life Christ, the TREE OF LIFE, the Revealer of God in all His blessedness, is provided, that we may eat and live eternally by what God is as made known in the Son of His love. The bread of life is the great formative food by which we gradually grow in moral likeness to God.

Lastly, to live *now* in the heavenly portion which grace has given us we must appropriate Christ in glory, the OLD CORN OF THE LAND, the One God had in reserve, the One around whom all His purposes eternally centred, and the only One in whom the whole purpose of God is livingly expressed.

London.

J. S. G.

Jesus, the Bread of life, is given
To be our daily food ;
Within us dwells that spring from heaven
The Spirit of our God.

Lord, 'tis enough, we ask no more ;
Thy grace around us pours
Its rich and unexhausted store,
And all its joy is ours.

JOHN NEWTON.

THE BREAD OF LIFE.

(JOHN VI.)

IT is evident that every form of life we see around us is sustained by food. Vegetation needs nourishment and men and animals food. Moreover man, being a moral and intellectual being, needs a furnished objective domain to meet those vital capacities of enjoyment which he possesses.

This is true as to spiritual things and to eternal life in particular. Therefore the Lord presents Himself as the BREAD OF LIFE. He not only has the power to bring souls into life by His quickening voice—"they that have heard shall live" (John v, 25, N.T.), but He is the true Tree of Life, for like every other form of life given to the creature, that life needs sustaining, it needs nourishment.

The Lord Jesus speaks of Himself in three ways—as having come down from heaven, viz., a man *on earth* in flesh and blood,—then as giving His flesh for the life of the world, viz., *in death*,—and lastly, as ascending up where He was before, viz., *in resurrection*. The soul feeds and delights itself in who He is, in what He is and what He has done. Christ *in flesh*—serving and suffering, Christ *risen*—in power, dignity and glory, Christ *glorified*—in supremacy and pre-eminence. In Him every moral quality proper to Deity blend and meet with every moral quality proper to perfect humanity.

Also on our side the Lord speaks of five things—believing, seeing, coming, eating and dwelling. The result of our feeding on Himself as the Bread of Life is formation or growth, enjoyment and character.

H. S.

DESIRE AND FOOD.

IT is necessary for a man to eat in order to maintain his strength. But also he has been so constituted that when in health he not only eats but enjoys his food. In the garden of Eden we read that the Lord God caused to grow “every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food” (Gen. ii, 9). So Adam was able to see, desire, taste and enjoy with thankfulness all that a beneficent Creator had provided for his good.

This life of simple happiness did not, however, last. Another kind of desire came in. We read “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat” (Gen. iii, 6). But this was a desire for and appropriation of what God had *forbidden*. (Gen. ii, 17). And herein lay the subtilty of the enemy, in that he was able to produce in man *evil* desires, and he, that is, Satan, has not failed to promote and minister to those desires ever since then. God is good in what He gives and good

also in what He withholds. Yet the mind of man now tends to dwell on what is withheld from him and this leads him into every kind of evil.

The law of Moses recognises this tendency of our hearts, and rebukes it. "Thou shalt not steal," it commands, and what is still more searching "Thou shalt not (even) covet." Yet the law gave no strength to man to do otherwise; like the plumb line, as it has been said, it shows that the wall is not upright, but leaves it thus.

Now when there was no help in man, God at last sends forth His own Son. It is said of Him that He was manifested to destroy (or *undo*) the works of the devil (I John iii, 8). But how can this be done? By causing the heart of man to dwell on the goodness and grace of God and the blessings He offers so freely in the gift of His Son. Then it is that new desires spring up in the heart and the enemy loses his hold over the soul.

Have we examples of this in the Gospels? Yes, clearly. To the woman of Samaria (John iv) the Saviour speaks so plainly of the gift of God, of Himself the Giver of living water, and its blessedness to him that receives it, that she is led to cry out "Sir, give me this water." Here is desire and desire for what is of God. And here already is being undone the work of the devil in her soul.

Further in chapter vi we have the way of our Lord with others also. He feeds a multitude with bread, becoming their Host in the desert and acting with such power and dignity that they

would have seized Him by force and made Him a king (v. 15). This He refuses but later speaks to those under the influence of the miracle about the true bread come down from heaven and of His Father as the Giver that they also, unable to hold back any longer, cry out “ Lord, evermore give us this bread.”

Thus begin in man those desires, not *natural* desires, as in Adam innocent, or *evil* desires, as in Eve when tempted, but *holy* desires, brought to pass by the Son of God in every new-born soul. Desires after God, His gifts, His people and His word. What a triumph for God is this ! And only grace, dear Christian reader, gives you and me to be a subject of such a work.

Why was I made to hear Thy voice,
To enter while there's room
While thousands make the wretched choice,
And rather starve than come ?
'Twas the same love that spread the feast,
That sweetly forced me in ;
Else I had still refused to taste,
And perished in my sin.

The enemy is still here and so is the system that he has built up to minister to the evil that is in man's heart. The Christian is warned against it. “ Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world . . . for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

God, however, has given us all that is sufficient to minister to our souls. Let us say with the Psalmist “ O taste and see that the Lord is good : blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. There is no want to them that fear Him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger : but they that fear the Lord shall not want any good thing.

EDITOR.

A TABLE IN THE DESERT

Ex. xvi.

WHAT a table hath God prepared in the desert, for abundance, for delicacy ! Never prince was so served in his greatest pomp, as these rebellious Israelites in the wilderness. How good shall we find Him to those that please Him, since He is so gracious to offenders ! If the most graceless Israelites be fed with quails and manna, O what goodness hath He laid up for them that love Him !

Their meat was strange, but nothing so much as their bread. To find quails in a wilderness was unusual ; but for bread to come down from heaven was yet more. From this day, till their settling in Canaan, God wrought a perpetual miracle in this food. A miracle in the *place* : other bread rises up from below ; this fell down from above : neither did it ever rain bread till now ; yet so did this heavenly shower fall, that it

is confined to the camp of Irael. A miracle in the *quantity*: that every morning should fall enough to fill so many hundred thousand mouths. A miracle in the *composition*: that it is sweet like honey cakes, round like corianders, transparent as dew. A miracle in the *quality*: that it melted by one heat, by another hardened. A miracle in the *difference of the fall*: that (as if it knew times, and would teach them as well as feed them) it fell double in the even of the Sabbath, and on the Sabbath not at all. A miracle in the *putrefaction and preservation*: that it was full of worms, when it was kept beyond the due hour in distrust; full of sweetness when kept a day longer for religion; yea, many ages, in the ark, for a monument of the power and mercy of the Giver. A miracle in the *continuance and ceasing*: that this shower of bread followed their camp in all their removals till they came to taste of the bread of Canaan; and then withdrew itself, as if it should say “Ye need no longer miracles.”

They had the types; we have the substance. In this wilderness of the world, the true manna is rained upon the tents of our hearts. He that sent the manna, became the manna which He sent, for He hath said “I am the bread which came down from heaven.” He hath substance enough for a world of souls; He hath more sweetness than the honey and the honeycomb. Happy are we if we find Him so!

From Bishop Hall's Contemplations (1634).

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

IF a believer in the Lord Jesus desires to know *only* the will of His Master, he can with great confidence turn to the Holy Scriptures to learn His mind and will, and the Lord Himself will instruct him (Psalm xxxii, 8). The Lord when on earth declared that “ If any man *willeth* to do His will, he shall know of the teaching ” (John vii, 17, R.V.). This knowledge can only be acquired through earnestly looking to the Lord, and by prayerful and careful consideration of the words and *how* they are used by the Holy Spirit *in the Holy Writings*.

The meaning of the word “ *fellowship* ” is often very vague in the minds of Christians generally, thereby leading to misunderstanding, and therefore it is necessary to seek to apprehend the *scriptural* meaning from the Bible, else it will be impossible for all to “ speak the same thing ” (I Cor. i, 10). The word, according to the Englishman’s Greek Concordance, occurs 20 times in the New Testament. It is translated “ *fellowship* ” 12 times, “ *communion* ” 4 times, “ *contribution,* ” “ *distribution,* ” “ *communication* ” and “ *communicate* ” once, and is viewed in three distinct ways :

As a circle or “ *companionship* ” into which believers are called (I Cor. i, 9).

That those called into that circle are privileged to share thoughts, feelings, etc., *with* the

Father and His Son and with one another in relation to all that the Father and Son are accomplishing and in regard to the foundation of all blessing (I John i, 3, 7; John xv, 15; I Cor. x, 16)

The expression flowing from the enjoyment of the communion belonging to that circle of fellowship.

These three thoughts may be expressed in English by “*fellowship*,” “*communion*” and the “*expression of communion*” as exemplified by *how* the word is translated, but it must be remembered that the one Greek word contains the three thoughts. These thoughts will become clearer by noticing that in the Scriptures there are only three fellowships mentioned:

Christian fellowship (I Cor. x, 15-17)

The fellowship of “Israel after the flesh” (I Cor. x, 18)

The fellowship of idolatry (I Cor. x, 19-22).

We have only to consider the first—Christian fellowship. The second, though of God, was set aside by the death of our Lord because of Israel’s rejection of Him. The third was positively of Satan. Our enquiry then is:—What is Christian fellowship? What are its privileges and responsibilities? What characterises those walking in Communion?

We need ever to remember that Christian fellowship is *on earth* where our Lord is rejected,

and where He died. When Christians walk in communion they enjoy heavenly things and heavenly privileges, for being “circumcised . . . by the circumcision of Christ” (Col. ii, 13), they are cut off by the cutting off of Christ though they are still on earth. This fellowship was established by the Holy Spirit through the apostles after Christ had died, risen, and had passed into the glory, and the early disciples “continued steadfastly” in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship (Acts ii, 42). It was quite *distinct* from that which had been divinely established in Israel, and entirely opposed to idolatry, which is Satanic.

The Lord had, by His death, “broken down the middle wall of partition” between Jew and Gentile, and had ascended to the right hand of God. He—in the glory—“having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost” shed forth that which the Jews saw and heard (Acts ii, 33). The Lord, the Beginner of a new order, had, as the Centre and Head of that entirely new order, received the Holy Spirit. Marvellous fact! the Man in whom God could find His whole delight, that One in heavenly glory received the Holy Spirit! But marvel of marvels He could and did impart the Holy Spirit that He had received to indwell every one of His members on earth. Christ and His own on earth were *one*—one body. He could therefore say to Saul—“Why persecutest thou Me?” (Acts ix, 4). Ponder this fact, dear

fellow believer, “ the Man, Christ Jesus ” has the Holy Spirit, and that same Holy Spirit dwells in you and in every one who believes upon Him. Hence you are united by the Holy Spirit to Christ in heaven and to every one of His own on earth. God, having made you a member of the body of Christ by giving you the Holy Spirit, has called you on earth to “ the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord ” (I Cor. i, 9). The divided condition of the saints obscures the thought, but the fact remains that you are called to be a sharer in a fellowship embracing all who love the Lord Jesus and have the privilege of sharing the joys, sorrows and responsibilities that the members of the body of Christ encounter.

In the Scriptures we neither read of persons being received into fellowship nor of their being put out of fellowship, nor of their coming into or going out of fellowship. But we do read of persons being called of God into the fellowship of His Son, and of the saints being exhorted to receive “ in the Lord ” and “ to the glory of God ” those who belong to that fellowship (Rom. xvi, 2; xv. 7). The brethren also exhorted the disciples to receive a brother who perhaps was not thoroughly established in the truth (Acts xviii, 27). Then fellowship is not *merely* breaking bread together, neither is a letter of commendation *merely* that a saint may break bread in another locality, but that that saint may share the privileges, responsibilities, joys and

sorrows of the saints in the place to which he has been directed by the Lord. If obedient to the Word we can neither join nor make a fellowship, but humbly walk before God as those called *by God* to the fellowship of which His Son is the Centre, and which was established by the apostles (Acts ii, 42; I Cor. i, 9). Surely we are not surprised at the expressed desire of the apostle that saints should enjoy—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost" (2 Cor. xiii, 14).

The privileges attaching to the fellowship are immense, and we are enabled to mention a few of them. The greatest privilege that could be conceived is—that man saved by divine grace and regenerated through mercy should have communion with the Father and the Son—that is to share their thoughts and feelings in the power of the Holy Spirit. No favour could be greater: no honour could exceed it. This is seen more clearly by carefully weighing *how* we are brought to share this immense privilege. The Son of God had to come in flesh, and there was perfect communion between the Father and the Son in relation to the fulfilment of divine counsel. Then the Son makes known to His own all those marvellous purposes of divine love.

Besides this He has declared His Father's Name, "that the love wherewith thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (John xvii, 26). Being thus formed in the divine nature with

the Holy Spirit dwelling in us the thoughts and feelings of the Father and the Son can be reproduced in us, so that we are actual sharers with the Father and the Son and with one another. God called Abraham to share His thoughts, and in this privileged interval God has made His saints the depository of the vast scheme of His eternal purpose (Eph. i, 9).

Another immense privilege is—that the Lord has provided a table at which there is communion with CHRIST and with one another concerning His blood shed, and His body given for us. Those emblems speak of the order of fallen man being ended and of the foundation upon which believers are introduced into the circle where—
“ Both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one : for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren ” (Heb. ii, 11). We are privileged to maintain this communion throughout the week, though the *expression* of it by the actual partaking of the cup and the bread belongs to the first day of the week.

There are other privileges expressing fellowship-with the Gospel (Phil. i, 5); with those that labour (Gal. ii, 9); sharing the sufferings of Christ (Phil. iii, 10); contributing to needy saints, etc. (Rom. xv, 26; 2 Cor. vi, 14; viii, 4; ix, 13; Heb. xiii, 16; Phil. iv, 14 to 18).

These great privileges bring responsibilities, and it is only as we know and enjoy the privileges that we are enabled to fulfil the responsibilities. God being revealed, communion is in the

light, and therefore we should walk as children of light. There is communion with Christ and with one another in regard to His death which is expressed by breaking the bread, and we are responsible to be consistent with our act. It is important to notice that when communion is mentioned the title " Christ " is used, but with the thought of responsibility the Spirit says— " Ye cannot be partaker of the ' Lord's ' table, and the table of devils " (1 Cor. x, 16, 21). We must never overlook that every privilege brings its responsibility, and therefore we are called upon to be faithful regarding everything found in our hands whilst living a life in flesh (Luke xvi, 8-17 ; Gal. ii, 20).

The marks of those walking in communion with the Father and the Son are—that they in measure already live in their eternal portion, and the communion known now will be perfected in His Father's house. Then while on earth their interests are the interests of the Father and the Son. If communion with Christ is known at His table it will keep us on the line of separation, prevent departure from the truth and from everything contrary to the will of God. The Lord's supper will be eaten, every member of the body will be cared for, the marks of divine love will be in evidence, and the word of edification will be passed on to others (1 Cor. ch. 10 to 15).

J. S. G.

London.

“THIS DO.”

A WORD TO YOUNG BELIEVERS.

Matt. xxvi, 26-28; Mark xiv, 22-23;
Luke xxii, 19-20; I Cor. xi, 23-26.

WE love to ponder over the words of departed loved ones. It may be that one has gone to a foreign land, never to return—or we have been present at that dread moment when the lips have been sealed for ever! We treasure their last words—it may have been a last request; for their sakes we desire to carry it out faithfully, would we not?

The two words at the head of this paper, found in the scriptures indicated, express the last desire of One who has loved us as no other,—the Lord Jesus!

If we value the words of earthly friends, who, as the hymn says “ may fail and leave us, one day soothe, the next day grieve us,” how much more value should we put on the words of One who is divine and eternal and unchangeable? One who came from heaven’s brightest glory into this world of sin and woe, yea into death itself, to prove His love to us; One who having in death, and by death, settled the question of sin for ever, has gone back to His Father from Whom He came. He expressed the Father’s love in death, and in life, and now with the Father has sent His Spirit to indwell the hearts of those who believe

on Him, that they might know the *fulness* of His love.

And what a difference there is between the departure of our loved ones, and the Lord's departure out of this world! *They* have left a vacancy. The Lord Jesus has not left a vacancy. Did He not say " I will not leave you comfortless ; I will come to you " ? (John xiv, 18). And again, " If a man love me he will keep my words ; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. " (Verse 23).

We link up in our minds the last words of loved ones with the time and circumstances in which those words were spoken.

In the same way we go back in our minds to the night—the darkest of all nights—when the Lord Jesus made known His last request to those who love Him. None can ever know the sorrow that weighed upon His holy spirit as He gathered them around Himself, saying, " With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. " What intense longing to be alone with His loved ones, to give them a last charge, to make one last request, and in the institution of the Supper to bring before His own from time to time by those memorials (the bread and the cup) His great love for them !

It is a profitable study to follow from that moment all that took place, and all that was said during those brief sorrowful hours. We must

approach with unshod feet, and the effect will surely be that a loving response will be drawn from our hearts to the One who endured so much for us.

The various gospels give an insight into the increasing sorrow which weighed upon the Saviour as the time drew nearer. Matt. xxvi, 12 tells of His body anointed for His burial. He sends the disciples into the city to such a man with the message, " My time is at hand ; I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples (verse 18). Matthew Mark, and Luke each give an account of the institution of the Supper. Each of these three also gives an account of that visit to Gethsemane. Here indeed we gaze with awe, and with unshod feet indeed, as we see that Blessed Man, the One in whom is all the Father's delight, with the whole weight of that which was to be laid upon Him pressing upon Him till His sweat " as it were great drops of blood, fell upon the ground " ! What an agony ! And the cry was wrung from the lips of Him who had ever done the things that pleased the Father (John viii, 29). " Father, *if it be possible let this cup pass from me.*" Yet in that same moment, the perfection of His manhood shone out in obedience, for he immediately added " Nevertheless not my will but thine be done." Who can measure in the least what it was for Him who knew no sin, to submit to be made the thing which His holy soul loathed ! Yet, " He who knew no sin was made sin for us." (II Cor.

v. 21). John's gospel gives the most ungrateful and the most despicable act that the world has ever known, in the betrayal by Judas; an act so despicable in the eyes of men that it has become a standard of base ingratitude. Did not the blessed Lord feel *that*? "It was not an enemy . . . then I could have borne it. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company." (Ps. lv, 12-14). John tells us "Jesus was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, Verily, I say unto you that one of *you* shall betray me." (John xiii, 21). What added sorrow upon His holy spirit that one of *them* should betray Him!

We follow the narrative to the Judgment Hall, where He endures all the cruelty and calumny that the mind of man, led on by Satan, could put forth. The spitting, the smiting, the purple robe, the crown of thorns, and then—**THE CROSS!**

"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before His shearer, so opened He not His mouth." (Acts viii, 32). And that cry! "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me" Does your soul and mine give an answer to that "Why"? (Matt. xxvii, 46). "It is finished; and He bowed His head and gave up the ghost" (John xix, 30).

With all this before Him He gathered that little company around Him when He instituted the Supper, and gave utterance to that last request, "This do in remembrance of Me"!

Do we not see as we read the various passages which record the Last Supper, that the Lord's desire was, that they should continue the remembrance of Himself? That from time to time as they remembered Him, the memorials which they would partake of would bring before them the intensity of His love for them? The bread speaking of His body, "My body given *for you*." The cup also reminding them of the love of God expressed in the gift of His Son! "Without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. ix, 22). "God so loved that He *gave*." (John iii, 16). "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed *for you*." (Luke xxii, 20).

These words were not spoken to the world. The world has no care for such love. They were spoken in the ears of those of whom He could say in the presence of the Father "They have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." (John xvii, 8).

Would not the Lord challenge your heart and mine as to how much we love Him? As to how much we really believe He was the sent One of the Father? He says "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John xiv, 15). And again in verse 21 "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." Verse 23, "If a man love me he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come and make our abode with him." What

compensation ! The Father's love realised ! The Father and the Son abiding with such a one ! One whom Jesus loved, and who " leaned on His bosom " (John xiii, 23) has written " His commandments are not grievous." (1 John, v. 3). Do we find His commandments grievous? Do I? Do you?

It may be said, " It was the twelve disciples that were asked to remember Him in this way. How can I know that it was His desire for me to remember Him in the same way " ?

It was not only on the night of His betrayal, while He was here on earth, that He made known His desire in this way for His own, but from the place where He now is He made known to His servant Paul the same desire. We do not know that Paul ever saw the Lord on earth, certainly he was not a disciple. Yet he says " I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you." He did not see the Lord till he saw Him in glory. (Acts ix, 1-5 ; I Cor. ix, 1 ; xv, 8). From the place where He now is, Paul " received of the Lord . . . That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread ; and when He had given thanks, he brake it and said, Take eat ; this is my body which is broken for you ; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood ; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as oft as ye eat this bread and drink

this cup, ye do shew forth the Lord's death till he come." (I Cor. xi, 23-26).

It may still be objected, "Yes, but the Corinthian Church has passed away; the generation which lived in the early days of Christianity has passed away too. A very different state of things exists amongst Christians to-day." Alas! that is only too true, but the word is, "Till He come"! And has not the Lord foreseen everything, even the lowest state of that which professes His name; and has He not provided for it, so that faith can still take courage? He has said, "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii, 20). And again "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." (Matt. xviii, 20). He has not yet come but He has provided for faith to enjoy the sense of His presence, and where the twos and threes are, it is still open to them to remember Him in the way of His appointing.

Much has been added in the way of ritual and ceremonial to that which the Lord instituted, the effect being to occupy men's minds with that which is after all only material—the bread and the cup, especially the bread. In this way Satan has succeeded to a very great extent in robbing the Lord's Supper in the minds of many true Christians of that which the Lord intended it to be,—a bringing to their minds of the true meaning of His death.

How blessed when faith rises above every hindrance and influence and in simplicity and in reality the believer partakes according to the Lord's desire of the material things—bread and wine—in which the Lord in His own loving way, brings before His own the things connected with the revelation of divine love in Himself, which can never be materialised!

It is open to every Christian to thus answer to the Lord's last loving request, and in so doing to realise the love of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

C. S.

Scarborough.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

(Extract from a letter addressed to the Editor).

My dear brother,

You remark that under present conditions it would be impossible to have the assembly together in one place. Even if it were possible, do you think it would be advisable in, say, Birmingham or any large town? I venture to think it would be somewhat inconvenient. But if the saints in Birmingham, or in any place, were *all one in mind and spirit*, what a blessed thing this would be! And this Scripture contem-

plates. But I fear it will not be witnessed in our day.

The first epistle to the Corinthians gives the needed instruction as to the saints coming together in assembly to break bread, also for the exercise of discipline, while the second epistle to Timothy gives instruction for the individual servant and saint. All is so blessedly precise and simple that it needs no interpretation.

In the Church of Rome this institution is made the occasion for religious pageantry—the work of the enemy using the religious mind—but according to the scripture the Lord's Supper carries four thoughts:—

Fellowship—“ The bread which we break is it not the *fellowship* of the body of Christ (I Cor. x, 16). This is for the saints to enjoy.

Remembrance—“ This do in *remembrance* of me ” (I Cor. xi, 24). This portion is for the Lord.

Food—“ Take, eat: this is my body ” (I Cor. xi, 24). This also is for the saints.

Announcement—“ For as often . . . ye do *shew* the Lord's death till He come ” (I Cor. xi, 26). This gives a manward aspect to the Lord's Supper.

H. S.

THE PATH TO HOLINESS.

THE Christian's life is a sanctified one by virtue of his calling. It is a life conditioned by three essentials, Faith, Love and Hope, or, paraphrased, a life that is characterised by reliance, love and expectation, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself being its sole secret and object.

The reason for such a life of self-forgetting service and love—not only to God but to man, for this it ought to be and nothing less—is a living faith in Him. Faith is a reliance or trust, which stepping off from self finds its rest and anchorage in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

The power or incentive for such a life is to be found in Hope, in the Lord Jesus Himself, for “HE is our Hope.” The “Blessed Hope,” “His appearing,” the “Seeing Him as He is,” the “Coming of the Lord,” our “Gathering together unto Him”; this is the goal to which our pilgrim feet are travelling; we are pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, to not only a moral, but to a physical conformity to Himself in Glory.

This hope in so far as it is an experience felt in the heart, becomes, under the Spirit's influence, not only the occasion for, but a mighty lever towards a deeper and more tender affection for Him, and a warmer and more coherent love towards all the saints.

To “ See the King in His beauty,” and behold in light the countenance of Him Who is essentially Love, this is the great impelling power in the christian life down here.

Furthermore, hope in itself is a great purifying principle, “ He that hath this hope in himself purifieth himself even as he is pure.” A life governed by the principles of Faith, Hope and Love, constitutes the surest path to holiness, for “ without holiness no man shall see the Lord.”

Bath.

J. B.-C.

THE DIVINE PRISONER.

IF we think of the Lord Jesus moving about and shedding light in this dark world, the Living Bread come down from heaven, bringing the goodness of God within the reach of men; and then view Him apprehended by men and taken Prisoner, we are struck by the hardness and cruelty of the human heart.

He who came down to deliver men from evil and the bondage of Satan, was *arrested* by them and His liberty curtailed.

Of course the Cross was in view, but I believe we see in this apprehension of His blessed Person by sinful men, a peculiar portion of His suffer-

ings. “ Then the band, etc.—took Jesus, and bound Him ” (John xviii, v. 12).

The scourging and the mockery caused very great suffering, but the fact that sinful men took Him and *bound* Him as a malefactor brought to Him great suffering also, as He said “ Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves for to take me? ” (Matt., Mark and Luke).

He was detained at their *will*; He, the *Holy One* Who hitherto moved about doing the Will of God. His release from their hands was by death. So our Priest on high can sympathise with any of His own who may be in prison or shut up for the testimony for His Name's sake.

And now as regards the saints—take Paul, a most active man. How he must have felt being in prison and his movements checked. His release was by death too. He could speak to the Corinthians of “ being in prisons more frequent ” than those who attacked him.

Philippians and Ephesians would shew how the Lord's sympathy sustained and encouraged him—also John exiled to Patmos—another example. And in the Old Testament Joseph, Jeremiah, Daniel (in lion's den) and David come before us as examples of sufferers in this way. See Psalm cxlii, v. 7, also Psalm lvii. David says “ bring my soul out of prison ” (in the cave). And then the saints down the ages, put into prison for confession of His Name, how they must have experienced support and sympathy

from their Priest who Himself had once been arrested and made Prisoner by sinful men !

Sydney, N.S.W. A. N. McDONALD.

THE GENTLENESS OF CHRIST.

“ I, Paul, myself intreat you by . . . the gentleness of Christ.”—2 Cor. x, 1. R.V.

GENTLENESS has sometimes been confounded with weakness, but nothing could be wider of the mark. It is, rather, the quiet utterance of power. There is none so gentle as “ the Lord God omnipotent.” We see and feel His gentleness in the way in which He daily confers His bounties, warns us of the passage of our life and the approach of death, chastening us and seeking to draw us nearer to Himself. Gentleness is a beautiful attribute of strength, both human and divine.

Most appropriately it characterized the Son of Man, our Lord and Saviour. It applies to Him in—

THE WAY IN WHICH HE EXERCISED HIS POWER. We are almost afraid of power in the possession of man. When we think of the Pharaohs, the Herods, the Cæsars, we shrink from the committal of power to any human arm. But we turn to Him Who had such power as these potentates had not, whose

word the elements of nature instantly obeyed, and who held life and death at His command; and we find that He did not brandish His power before the eyes of men, but studiously avoided all display; that He refused to put forth His hand to punish His opposers; that He wrought only to deliver and bless and there went virtue out of Him to heal and save, to revive and to rejoice.

THE WAY IN WHICH HE TAUGHT DIVINE TRUTH. Men of brilliant powers often like to flash them upon society, illustrious teachers have shone like comets in the sky; genius often dazzles and bewilders. But the Great Teacher went quietly and meekly to His work. He chose the humble wayside, the upper room, the shaded garden for His purpose. He met the solitary woman at the well and taught her truth to which all ages have reverently listened. But the gentleness of Christ is best seen in—

THE WAY IN WHICH HE TREATED ERROR AND FAILURE AND SIN. Gently He bore with infirm discipleship, correcting their frequent misunderstanding and enlightening their darkness. Gently He rebuked and restored failure and fall. One look of reproach, one short question thrice repeated—thus the erring disciple was convicted and restored. Gently He dealt with those who rejected Him. His spirit was altogether different from that of His disciples when the Samaritans

refused to receive Him. Gently He dealt with those whom others spurned; admitting the publican into His kingdom and even into His Apostolate, lifting the fallen woman out the mire and placing her among the daughters of wisdom and virtue. And gently He bore Himself at the last sad scenes, suffering insult and violence without resistance, even extenuating the guilt of those who crucified Him.

EXTRACT.

“IF IT BE SO . . . BUT IF NOT,”

or

THE TRIAL AND TRIUMPH
OF FAITH.

(DANIEL III.)

GOD has always maintained the lot of those who stood for Him in an evil day. The closer a man walked with God the more he was marked out by the enemy for attack, with the intention of intimidating and turning him aside. If subtle means failed, violence was resorted to.

The Hebrew captives were marked by separation to and dependence upon God—their harps were hung up. They were in an enemy's land surrounded by every kind of moral corruption. Satan seemed to be having his own way in Babylon, with the king at the head of his

system of evil ; and he was prepared to challenge and, if possible, put out of existence whatever was of God. His purpose was to exalt man and make him an object of worship so that God might have no place.

So far as the Hebrews were concerned everything for them was gone outwardly—country, friends, and privileges—but God was not gone. They could truly say, “ God is our refuge and strength, a help in distress, very readily found ” (Ps. xlvii, 1, N.T.). What an unassailable position was theirs, what an immutable foundation for their souls ! Around them was gross darkness, but they had “ light in their dwellings.” God alone was their portion, and what a portion—“ Rock, fortress, deliverer, buckler, horn of salvation, and high tower ” (Ps. xviii, 2, 3). Their position was impregnable. If the fiery furnace was suggested it was exhilarating to their faith, and instead of being intimidated they were bold. “ The righteous are bold as a lion ” (Prov. xxviii, 1). The trumpet gave no uncertain sound, there was no faltering speech ; they showed clearly to the king where and how they stood in relation to God as His servants, and in relation to the king and his gods and golden image.

The devil would have all men to be fools and to say in their hearts, “ There is no God.” Skilful and full of pride, Satan had produced a fine masterpiece in Nebuchadnezzar, who was

ever ready to ascribe glory to himself and to receive it from others. Pride and a haughty spirit marked him and therefore he must be brought down. “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov. xvi, 18). The strength of the Hebrews lay in their entire dependence upon God; and faith in Him enabled them to meet the situation with calmness, and to accept the challenge of the enemy with the sense that they were on the winning side.

The God whom they knew and trusted was greater and mightier than Satan or his agent Nebuchadnezzar, and as for the fiery furnace, God could walk there, as in days of old He had dwelt in the burning bush and amid the consuming fire of Mount Sinai! The king had said when threatening them with the fiery furnace, “And who is the God that shall deliver you out of my hands?” But they were not ensnared by the fear of man—not even by the great Nebuchadnezzar. While duly recognizing his purpose regarding them, they leave things entirely with God; for the decree of the king was a small matter to them, and they reply, “We are not careful to answer thee in this matter.” “If it be so” (if you put us into the furnace), “our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.”

Their joy and privilege was to be true to God and whether He delivered them or not they were

fully persuaded in their own minds how to act ; that it was better for them to sacrifice their lives, if need be, rather than the rights of God, so they further say “ But if not ” (if God does not rescue us) “ be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.”

How small the king was in the presence of such men ! His pride was wounded that anyone should answer him so, and defy his word, and despise his gods and golden image, and we read he was “ full of fury.” The storm was about to break upon them ; but they were sheltered, and soon, with their Deliverer, would walk in the sevenfold heated fire without hurt ! The king bids the mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. The rage of the king, the furnace heated seven times more than usual, and the binding by the mighty men, all show how determined Nebuchadnezzar was to destroy them and be himself supreme.

So long as they remained, and owned and worshipped the true God, he could not be first. It has often been said that Satan defeats himself. The Testimony of the God of Israel was there in connection with His servants in Babylon, and the Ark of the Covenant was cherished by them ; and God would deal with the unhallowed and uncircumcised hands that touched them. We read, “ Forasmuch as the king’s commandment was rigorous, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that had taken

up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego ” (v. 22, N.T.).

The king’s mighty men were quickly consumed by the flame of the fire that became a dwelling and refuge for the men of God, for who could lay hands on them there? They were as safe in the fiery furnace with God as when on the streets of Babylon! Their liberty was greater—no envious eyes rested on them there, no complainers, no raging king, but One like unto the Son of God walked and talked with them. What a reward for their faithfulness! God fully vindicated them in the stand they had taken for Him by identifying Himself with them in the circumstances. “ God was not ashamed to be called their God.” What encouragement and instruction this should give to us, beloved.

What a sense of the greatness of God the Hebrew captives had. Their reply to the king —“ If it be so ” and “ But if not ”—showed their confidence was in God alone, and that the set purpose of their souls was to have nothing to do with the gods of Babylon nor the golden image Nebuchadnezzar had set up. They could say “ The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge ” (Ps. xlvii, 11). His thoughts governed them as to the idolatrous system around them. Wisdom and understanding were theirs. God would bear testimony that they pleased Him by standing for and with them in the furnace, which unbound their hands and feet from the fetters

placed upon them, so that they walked in life and liberty where every man without God would have perished. Where God stood, they stood. The glorious majesty of God was seen. " Destruction and death say, We have heard its report with our ears " (Job xxviii, 22, N.T.). The flame of the furnace put the mighty men of Babylon to death, and only destroyed the cords that bound the Hebrews, so that the fire only consumed what belonged to Babylon—the rest was imperishable, as of God, and beyond the power of the enemy, and death.

Thus, the Divine standard was maintained by the three captives, in the face of the king's threat, witnessing to faith *in* and faithfulness *to* God—and thereby condemning the corrupt and idolatrous system of Babylon.

Pasadena, Calif., U.S.A.

T. R.

Three Good Things to Possess.

(DANIEL III, 17-18.)

AN ABSOLUTE CONVICTION. " Our God . . . is *able* to deliver us."

A STRONG HOPE. " He *will* deliver us."

AN UNWAVERING RESOLVE. " We *will not* serve thy gods."

PAUL AND TIMOTHY

or

HANDING ON THE TORCH.

“ Watch . . . endure . . . do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”

“ For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” (II Tim. iv, v. 5-6.)

IN the recent Olympic Games held on the Continent, a torch lit at Mount Olympus in Greece was carried across Europe by a relay of runners and used to ignite the fire of the opening ceremony.

Paul himself was familiar with the Olympic Games in his day and made frequent allusions to them in his various epistles.

Taking up the above incident we use it to suggest to our readers that Paul's last letter to Timothy, his beloved son in the faith, has the character of 'Handing on the Torch.' "The things that thou hast heard of me," says the apostle, "the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (Chap. ii, v. 2).

And we sincerely believe that faithful men have handed down from generation to generation the torch of truth, the light of the testimony of our Lord, the faith once delivered to the saints.

How firmly has the apostle himself held on his way amid all difficulties, trials and persecutions and now at the end he can say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

The Day of Jesus Christ is at this time much before his spiritual gaze. Three times in this short letter he speaks of 'that day.' Then shall the Lord the *righteous* Judge (perhaps in contrast to Nero) give him—not a painful death—but a crown of righteousness and also to all others who love his appearing.

Humanly speaking there was much to cause sorrow—to weigh down the spirit. Lawlessness was increasing, false teachers abounded, many of the saints of God were already led astray, their faith overthrown. The Jews were ever bitter opponents of the gospel and were filling up their sins. The wrath of God was soon to fall upon them and their city.

The apostle, too, had lived to see departure and apostasy come in in the very churches where he had laboured so faithfully. "All they which are in Asia," he writes, "have turned away from me." Nor does he expect things

to improve, but states that “ evil men shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” Thank God, however, it is ever true that “ the Lord knoweth them that are His.”

His own circumstances were very trying. He was now a prisoner at Rome awaiting a second trial at the hand of the emperor. His friends were becoming fewer. One had forsaken him, another is sick, Onesimus had oft refreshed him, but has now passed on. Others drew back from him at his recent trial. Only Luke is with him. Three times he expresses his wish to see Timothy — “ greatly desiring ” to see him.

Of worldly possessions and comforts he has little. So truly has he suffered the loss of all things that a cloak and a few books are all that he can call his own. Winter is coming (chap. iv, 21), the prison is cold, the prisoner lonely, will Timothy bring with him “ the cloak . . . and the books, but especially the parchments? ” (ver. 13).

Others have pointed out the striking and pathetic parallel to this request in the letter written by another prisoner, the martyr William Tyndale, from the damp cells of Vilvorde, in the winter before his death, asking ‘ for Jesus’ sake, for a warmer cap, and something to patch his leggings, and a woollen shirt, and, *above all his Hebrew Bible, Grammar, and Dictionary.*’

But the spirit of Paul is above all these trials. He never murmurs nor complains. He is neither depressed nor disappointed. In fact at this moment it is the heart of the young man that is failing, not that of 'Paul the aged.' Elijah and John the Baptist became despondent in similar circumstances but the spirit of the apostle is undaunted, and this, his last letter to Timothy is all joy and encouragement and the writer himself a bright and blessed testimony to us of how the Lord can sustain His servants in the darkest hour.

Turning our thoughts to Timothy himself, what do we find? Is he well equipped for the race? Will his hand, to use our figure, grasp firmly the torch that Paul is holding out to him at the close of his course?

Timothy has much to commend him. Marked by unfeigned faith, he has been the companion of the apostle for some years and has fully known his "doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long suffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions" (chap. iii, v. 10-11). Yet we find, on the other hand, that he is young and timid and delicate.

Perhaps we, too, dear reader, have these drawbacks in regard to the testimony of our Lord. Often we feel our youth, our lack of experience in these things. "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of

the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” A godly walk open to all, even the youngest, the apostle enjoins to any who may be reproached in this way.

But also he is timid. This causes the apostle more concern. A faint heart will never do to fight the Lord’s battles. So he bids him to stir up (literally to kindle up, to fan into flame) the gift of God which is in him and reminds him that “ God has not given us the spirit of fear (or cowardice) but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind ” (chap. i, v. 6-7). Lastly, he enjoins him to be “ strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus ” and goes on to use the figures of a soldier, an athlete, a husbandman—figures of faithful, energetic, and strenuous service. How we, too, need these reminders. Too often our hearts are faint, our knees feeble, our hands hang down, and therefore these exhortations are written for our good also.

Lastly, the apostle was not unmindful of Timothy’s ‘ oft infirmities.’ The health of our bodies is in the Lord’s hands and He can use the weak vessel as well as the strong. May all our readers be amongst the ‘ faithful men ’ who are running the race, keeping the faith, and ready if the Lord tarry to hand on the torch to others also.

EDITOR.

The Ransom.

“*THEN He is gracious unto him and saith,
Deliver him from going down to the pit;
I have found a ransom.*” —Job xxxiii, 24.

“ I have found a ransom ” —Oh how precious
Is the deep meaning lying treasured there,
What mind of man could fully meditate
The mighty truth those simple words declare !

’Tis God Himself who speaks—infinite pity
Seeking to save the poor enslavèd ones.
Eternal love, itself, has found a ransom,
The gift—none other than God’s own blest
Son.

The Father’s heart spared not itself the
anguish,
Devoting thus to death its treasured One ;
The Lamb of God must take the captives’
place,
Must bear the judgment due to sin—alone.

Yet love has done it, fully, fully paid,
Eternal freedom for the captives won ;
How blest the answer when the Father’s glory
Welcomed the Son back to the Father’s
throne.

A living glorious Man—oh wondrous truth !
He took His seat on high at God’s right hand ;

Where He awaits His ransomed ones' home-
coming,
Soon shall they join Him there, a Heavenly
band.

The Father then, His counsels all unfolded,
Shall joy in what Almighty love has done—
No captives then, a Bride in glory shining,
Companion meet for Christ th' Eternal Son.

Bath.

H. L.

Atonement, Propitiation and Reconciliation.

THE truth expressed by these three words is of immense importance in establishing us in the "true grace of God." Let us therefore seek in dependance on the Lord to gather from the Holy Scriptures the divine thoughts expressed by these words. "The Word of God is quick" (living) and nourishes the soul, and the mind of God expressed therein is revealed to any diligent soul through the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit. There are two statements which should greatly encourage us. The Lord says:—"If any man *will* do His will, he shall *know* of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself" (John vii, 17). He also said:—"When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth" (John xvi, 13).

There is clearly a very intimate connection between these three thoughts, for the fulfilment of each is through the death of our Lord. The difference between them is also of vital importance. Atonement and Propitiation have met all the claims of a holy God and the deep need of the sinner, and the reconciliation of both persons and things will be consummated upon this foundation. The work of atonement and propitiation has been entirely completed and nothing can be added to it, but though believers are *now* reconciled, the final consummation is before them as their hope (Col. i, 21, 22). Atonement and Propitiation view the work of Christ as meeting the demands of God's holy nature regarding sin, but reconciliation is our presentation to God through the *death of His Son*.

God had not to be reconciled to us. He had approached us in love in Christ, but we being enemies had to be reconciled to Him. In love God gave His only begotten Son to make propitiation, to do a work to meet the demands of His holy nature; by His reconciling us to Himself He has placed us before Himself in a condition pleasing to His eye and suitable for His holy presence, and we are enabled to glory in God. In giving His Son to make propitiation the Father has run to meet the sinner, but to reconcile him for the satisfaction of the Father's heart he must be arrayed in the *best robe*, the ring, the shoes and feast with the Father on the fatted calf.

In Rom. iv, 24, we believe in God who raised up JESUS :—“ Who was delivered for our offences,” and this expresses the thought of atonement. In Rom. v, 8, we read :—“ Christ died for us,” and in giving the Anointed One God “ commendeth His love towards us.” The underlying thought in this statement is that of propitiation. Then in Rom. v. 10, we are “ reconciled to God by the death of HIS SON.” The redeemed universe will be under Christ as Head, and the moral perfection and devotedness of His Son as fully expressed in His death will by a reconciled universe ascend to God as a sweet-smelling savour.

The death of our Lord should be considered in three ways : The death comprising the whole six hours that our beloved Lord was on the cross ; then the results for God, and lastly for the universe.

The following facts should also be carefully and reverently pondered :—

First, the Lord in His life on earth in the bodily condition of blood and flesh completely fulfilled in most trying surroundings the thoughts of God regarding man whom He created and placed in the most favourable circumstances the Creator could devise, but in which man disobeyed. Therefore our Lord in all the holy fragrance of that life could present Himself to be offered up on the altar as a sacrifice to God “ for a sweet smelling savour.” This precious life formed the altar upon which the sacrifice could be

offered up, and was foreshadowed by the holy linen garments worn by the high priest, and the unblemished victim (John viii, 25, 46; Rev. xix, 8; Lev. xvi, 4).

Secondly, Christ in the power of the eternal Spirit presented Himself to be offered up upon the altar His life had formed (Heb. ix, 14; John xii, 24, 28; Lev. xvi, 3, 7).

Thirdly, the offering up of our Lord upon the altar was according to "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," for He was the Lamb foreordained "before the foundation of the world," and during the first three hours on the cross He was in communion with God (Acts ii, 23; I Peter i, 20; Mark xv, 25-32). The killing of the victim typified His being taken by "wicked hands" and slain. He patiently bore every insult that the wicked heart of man could conceive, "leaving . . . an example that we should follow His steps" (I Peter ii, 21).

Fourthly, the offering up of our Lord upon the Altar was typified by the burnt offering and by the fat of the sin offering being burnt on the altar. But His being forsaken of God was foreshadowed by the burning of the sin offering *outside* the camp on ground where there was no altar. The contrast between the type and the real sacrifice which has taken away sin sacrificially is of vital importance. The bullock and the goat were burnt **AFTER DEATH**, for their blood could not take away sin. But Jesus drank the cup of wrath **BEFORE HE DIED**,

uttered words of triumph, and gave up the ghost in unclouded communion with God. We read: "Jesus knowing that *all things* were now accomplished . . . saith, I thirst." Then when the last Scripture was fulfilled, He said:—"It is finished" (John xix, 28, 30). The Victor in the calmness of achieved victory and perfect communion says:—"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," and expired (Luke xxiii, 46).

Fifthly, the EFFICACY of the blood must be distinguished from the SHEDDING of blood for the remission of sins. The efficacy will ever remain before God and its fragrance will pervade the universe, but the shedding of blood was *once for all*. In the type the blood for *remission* of sins was shed *outside in the court* (that is the laying down of the life of blood and flesh), but the blood speaking of its *efficacy* was first carried *within* the holiest and afterwards applied to the altar, etc., outside. The efficacy of our Lord's blood was owned immediately by the rending of the veil of the temple from the TOP to the BOTTOM, and later our Lord entered heaven having obtained eternal redemption and He Himself in glory is the abiding witness of its efficacy (I John ii, 2; Rom. iii, 25). The shedding of the blood was the life given up, and our Lord thus sacrificially ended the race of flesh and BLOOD (Lev. xvii, 10-16).

Finally, when Israel has been turned to God in the future and learned the value of the blood

shed on the cross they will be forgiven and the governmental consequences of sin removed from them, as prefigured by the scapegoat. They will then be an abiding witness on earth to the efficacy of the Blood shed for the remission of their sins. Atonement having been made to God by the blood of Christ for all that was offensive to God's eye, all saints in heaven and earth will be blessed through the " blood of the Lamb."

God has been fully revealed in Christ, and all the holy claims of His nature have been met in His sacrifice. Thus propitiation has been accomplished at the cross, and a triumphant Saviour is the Mercy-Seat on high. It is no longer blood placed on the mercy-seat, but a living Person in heaven is the Mercy-Seat in the value of His blood shed at Calvary. Christ having glorified God in His death, God is now able in holiness to fulfil His eternal purpose of having the redeemed in heaven and on earth for His own eternal glory and pleasure. All the blest will therefore be accepted in the value of the death of Christ as prefigured by the burning of the fat of the sin offering and the burnt offering UPON THE ALTAR.

Our place with God being eternally secured we are able to think of the positive delight God had in such a sacrifice of One who is His own beloved Son, who gave Himself to accomplish God's will that His purposes of grace might be accomplished. It is in the sweet odour of that sacrifice that God has reconciled saints to Himself, and therefore He can now regard

them with complacency and delight. They too (knowing the God who has at such cost reconciled them to Himself) glory in God, the Source from whence all blessing flows.

London.

J. S. G.

The Glories of the Son of God.

(A meditation on the 12th Chapter of John.)

IN this chapter we have the blessed Lord brought before us in a wonderful way. First at Bethany in the house of Mary, Martha and Lazarus, where the Lord could retire. The chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment that if any man knew where he was, he should shew it, that they might take Him.

What a privilege for these dear ones to receive Him into their house, and there make Him a supper, and that while others were seeking His life! What an opportunity for them to give joy to His heart! Martha happy in service, and Lazarus sitting at table with Him in communion. How precious to have communion with Jesus, it even gives him joy now, and surely great joy also to us!

Then we have Mary, the one that sat at His feet and heard His word, knew Him, was intelligent, and there worshipped Him, the Son of God. She took a pound of ointment of spike-nard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus,

and wiped His feet with her hair, and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. How blessed that we also, who know Him as the Son of God can worship and adore Him, the One that has redeemed us, put away our sins and made us clean every whit! There was one that murmured, and in Matthew we read that when the disciples saw it they had indignation, and said "To what purpose is this waste." Is not this the language of many to-day?

"On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet Him and cried, Hosanna! Blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the Name of the Lord" (verses 12 and 13). There were those ready to receive Him, but the leaders would not have this. Here was the presentation of their King, but they would not receive Him.

Then we read that certain Greeks had come to the feast to worship, and they came to Phillip desiring to see Jesus. "Sir, we would see Jesus," and Andrew and Phillip come and tell Jesus. What a wonderful answer we have from the lips of Jesus! "The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified." "Verily, verily I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (verses 23 and 24).

We know that Jesus was that Corn of Wheat, and that there could be no life, no blessing, apart

from His death. He has died, borne the Judgment due to us and put away Sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Thus He has made a way that God can come out in blessing to the poor sinner that believes, and now those that are His, the fruit of His death, can enter in and serve Him, have communion with Him, and worship Him.

In the coming day Israel will come forth and acclaim Him King. Then the Greeks, and all the world will come under His blessed rule. What a privilege to know Him now, but we need to sit at His feet and learn of Him. May we all know more of this.

Cron dall.

J. W. B.

The Shepherd.

(John x, 11 ; Heb. xiii, 20 ; I Pet., v. 4.)

THESE Scriptures bring the Lord Jesus before us as the Shepherd in three positions, viz.: on earth, in resurrection, and in manifestation at His coming again.

It is a delight to notice in John x the perfect harmony of thought and purpose between the Father and the Son. Such a chapter irresistibly reminds us of Abraham and Isaac, of whom it is recorded when on the way to Moriah : “ they went both of them together ” (Gen. xxii, 6). For Isaac a substitute was found, but this Shepherd “ willingly died in our stead ” : He is the One

who is surety for the sheep, and so appointed by the Father (v. 18).

How fully the Father and the Son “ went both of them together.” The Son, the peculiar object of the Father’s love, especially so in laying down His life in order to take it again. How secure are the sheep for whom the Good Shepherd lays down His life! Are they in the hand of the Son?—they are also in the hand of the Father (verse 29). Is the Son in the world, working to secure the sheep and to give them eternal life? He is doing the works of the Father (verses 25, 32, 37). He and His Father are one (verse 30). What a circle of life, love, and security is this into which He brings the sheep! There they learn the perfect devotion of the Son to the Father—the Father’s love to the Son, and in the power of the Holy Spirit “ continue in the Son and in the Father ” (I John ii, 24).

Reading through Heb. xiii, two passages may be noticed; verses 7 and 17.

Those leaders or guides who have ministered the Word of God in the past, must not be forgotten; their conduct and faith have left behind an example worthy of imitation.

The leaders of the present who manifest faithfulness to the interests of Christ by a godly concern and care for the souls of the saints, must not be ignored. But there is One who stands out greater than all; One who remains “ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever,” who

neither dies nor proves unfaithful : this is “ our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep.” There is none to compare with Him ; He is incomparable in greatness.

God has brought again the Great Shepherd from among the dead, where perfect, devoted service on earth had taken Him. There He lay, after the terrible conflict with sin, death, and Satan ; from thence God’s almighty power brought Him, to set Him as the supreme Head and Leader of His people now, in resurrection.

It is the “ God of peace ” who has done this. The victor among men is the one to dictate terms of peace, which may be severe or mild according to his disposition ; but the kingdom of God is wholly in men’s favour. They who submit to the One whom the God of peace has brought again from the dead, are saved, reconciled, and blest with every blessing for time and eternity, in Him “ to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen ! ”

It is interesting to notice how this presentation of the Lord Jesus would appeal to the Hebrew Christian. It is just such a Leader and Shepherd the Old Testament Scriptures had led him to look for. The reader will find it profitable to compare the passage in Heb. xiii with Ezek. xxxvii, 22 to 28, and Micah v. 1-6.

In I Pet. ii, 25, we are reminded of the condition we once were in : “ as sheep going astray,” and the fact that now we are brought under the control and oversight of Him “ by whose stripes

we have been healed.” Blessed change ! The love and care of this Shepherd begets a like love and care for the sheep, in the hearts of others ; this develops the exercise of actual oversight of the flock (I Pet. v).

Nevertheless, there are dangers. The Spirit, through Peter, would guard the under-shepherds against three things. The oversight must not be exercised as a mere duty, or by official appointment. The Chief Shepherd “ willingly died in our stead ” ; therefore, none but voluntary devotion to His interests can meet with His approval.

How plain also is the warning against money, or base gain ; and alas ! how many, professing to have the care of the flock at heart, have proved to be in the path of Balaam, who loved the reward of unrighteousness (II Pet. ii, 15). Only a disinterested motive will be commended by the Chief Shepherd.

Lastly, the flock is “ the flock of God,” which “ He has purchased with the blood of His own ” (Acts xx, 28, N.T.). The flock, then, is not the possession of the under-shepherds, and the oversight thereof must not have that character ; instead, the flock need guidance and example. Happy is that under-shepherd who consistently follows in the steps of Him who has left us a model of perfect love and devotion to His own (I Pet. ii, 21).

All this is for the guidance of under-shepherds while the Lord Jesus is still hidden at God’s right hand. Peter says in the first chapter :

“ Whom not having seen ye love,” but in the last chapter he speaks of the moment when “ the Chief Shepherd shall appear.” His first coming involved suffering and the cross, but when He appears the second time it will be to claim His blood-bought inheritance, and take things up in person. What will be the lot of those who, until then, have held fast to His things while He has been absent? The reward of faithful oversight is here brought before us. His appearing will be in glory, and that shall be their unfading crown; they shall be like Him, and share with Him the inheritance.

Blessed encouragement ! in the midst of snares, dangers, conflict, scorn and reproach, to have the light of that moment steadfastly before us “ until He come.”

Derby.

H. B. M.

A Hymn of Praise.

“God . . . hath . . . spoken unto us by His Son”
(*Heb. i, v. 1-2*).

Eternal Son, Eternal Word,
By Whom our God in these last days
Hath caused His voice thus to be heard,
We render Thee our gladsome praise.

Of all things the appointed Heir,
By Whom also the worlds were made,
We see Thee in the glory, where
Eternal praises never fade.

The Brightness of the glory Thou,
The Image of the great Unseen,
The crown of glory decks Thy brow,
The One Who into death hast been.

Thy word of power all things sustains.
The heavens and earth Thy power set forth;
While these shall pass, 'tis Thee remains,
For they can never speak Thy worth.

The waves of sorrow round Thee surged
When Thou didst hang upon the tree:
And on the Cross, sins Thou hast purged
And set Thine Own beloved ones free.

At God's right hand exalted high;
That glorious scene so bright and fair,
That right hand of Majesty
Is graced by Thine Own presence there.

Let holy angels Him adore,
Ten thousand times ten thousand they,
And in His presence bow before
That blessed One, and homage pay.

Worship and honour, blessed Lord,
Power and glory ever be
To Thee ascribed, and Thee adored
By the whole church eternally.

London.

J. E. F.

The Son of God and Son of Man.

OUR adorable Lord and Saviour ever commands the love and worship of those for whom He died and rose again. But in these closing moments of the history of the Assembly

on earth, when the characteristics of Laodicea are rampant, it becomes each individual saint to seek to apprehend and maintain the truth as to the Person of that Blessed One.

If the reader will turn to the gospel according to St. John, he will see that chapter 1, ver. 29, states:—“ Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” Passing on to verse 34 we read:—“And I saw and bare record that this is the SON of GOD.” Further on, in chapter 3, verse 13 states:—“. . . the SON of MAN which is in heaven.” Verses 16 and 17 speak of “ His only begotten Son ” and “ His Son ” followed, in verse 18, by the expression “ only begotten SON of GOD.” The Apostle Paul, speaking to the Galatian saints, could say also:—“ the SON of GOD, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” (Gal. ii, 20).

No simple saint doubts for a moment but that it is the Person of God’s Beloved Son which commands his loving adoration and thanksgiving. But the expressions referred to in the foregoing paragraph clearly shew that in the Person of Christ there are the two natures which, while they may be distinguished as to their manifestations, can never be separated, and the Scriptures of Truth maintain this fact. God’s holy word declares that sin came in “ by one man ” (Adam) “ and death by sin.” (Rom. v, 12). But while our Beloved Lord became a real Man,

had He been *only* a man and died, then we may reverently say, He could not have put away our sins. Why could not He? Because the same holy word asserts (addressing “ people ” and “ inhabitants of the earth, ” i.e., men) “ None can by any means redeem his brother nor give to God a ransom for him. ” (Ps. xlix, 7). But it was man that had sinned and therefore man must pay the penalties attaching thereto. Sin came in by the first man who was “ of the earth, earthly ” and the Second Man, “ the Lord from Heaven ” came to put it out and to make the way for and bring in the blessing. On the other hand, only God knew what sin had wrought and therefore only One Who was God could possibly know how to deal with the sin question. But again, had He been only the Son of God He could not have died, neither could He have been the perfect Substitute. Thank God, His Beloved Son came into this world. Eternally the SON, yet He has been here—come of a woman: the Mighty God, yet being Man He could and did die on the Cross, putting away sin sacrificially—“ by the sacrifice of Himself. ” (Heb. ix, 26).

All the eternal, divine counsels of God and all the affections and feelings of man were found, perfectly combined, in that Blessed Person. Well may the Spirit of God speak and say that His name should be called “ Wonderful. ” (Is. ix, 6). As really Man as though He were not God and as really God as though He had

never become Man. That Blessed One could say:—“ . . . the Son of Man which is in heaven.” The Father could say “ . . . My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased.” (Matt. iii, 17).

He came and did the mighty work of Redemption and said “ It is finished.” Then the veil of the Temple was rent from top to the bottom. The blue, purple and crimson of that veil set forth Himself as the Heavenly One, yet a man with royal Gentile and Jewish glory, manifesting in His life and death all the love and grace of Heaven, qualities which were not of man nor of the earth. The “ wrought cherubims thereon ” (2 Chr. iii, 14) spoke of the “ cunning (or “ devised ”) work ”—“ a body hast Thou prepared me ”—and all the characteristics of that veil contributed to speak of the Godhead, Manhood and perfect holiness of God’s Beloved Son.

He came and brought life and immortality to light. And let us remember that it is “ life ” according to God’s thoughts. “ Life ” in the Word is the contrast to “ death.” Life is peace, joy and salvation. Death is misery and woe. It is not, as some may aver, ceasing to exist. Christ tasted death for every man (everything) and simple faith in that blessed One gives *eternal* life.

God’s immutable word shews that it was an undivided Person, SON of GOD—SON of

MAN, who has wrought mightily for the eternal glory of His God and Father and for the eternal blessing of His beloved people.

As to His Deity, we need only note what the Word records in Matt. xxvi, ver. 62-66. The bulk of the nation was, at that time, in a most serious state of apostasy and yet when our Beloved Lord answered the high priest's question ("thou hast said") what took place? The high priest "rent his clothes saying he hath spoken blasphemy." Even to them in their apostate state and condition there was absolutely nothing between His being God or, if not, a blasphemer.

The efficacy of His wondrous death lies then in the fact that He is God and Man—distinguishable but inseparable—as given in the figure of the rent veil. His perfection and sinlessness are beautifully set forth in how He maintained His holy dignity during the first three hours of the darkest period in the world's history. He thought only of others. His piety and obedience are seen when, in Gethsemane, He "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears." (Heb. v, 7).

Yet another thought concerning Him as Son of God and Son of Man. Matthew records that the centurion and those that were with him said:—"Truly this was the Son of God" (Ch. xxvii, v. 54). Luke records that the centurion said:—"Certainly this was a righteous

man.” (Ch. xxiii, v. 47). If such remarks were drawn from one who most probably had become hardened in the carrying out of his orders and who could judge only by what he saw and heard as a natural man, what can we who are brought to know Him and have the Spirit do and say? As we contemplate our adorable Lord and Saviour in His life and death here, not only can we rejoice in the fact that God has had One here who ever gave His heart delight and was precious to Him, but we can rejoice that by His obedience even to the death of the Cross the Spirit of God can say:—“ Wherefore ” by reason of this—“ God hath highly exalted Him.” We know too that every knee shall bow at the Name of Jesus to the glory of God the Father.

By virtue of His death we are brought into a place of eternal favour, the Spirit given to us to enable us to share the Father’s thoughts and counsels concerning Him, to see Him already crowned with glory and honour, and to have fellowship with Himself in His death.

May each of us be brought to have a deeper apprehension of the glory, worthiness and eternal love of God’s Beloved Son so as to fill our hearts with praise, thanksgiving and adoration to Him, the risen, Living Lord in glory.

London.

J. E. F.

The Mystery of His Will.

WE read in Ephes. i, 7-12, of *the riches of his (God the Father's) grace, wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.*” Several things in this comprehensive passage demand our prayerful consideration.

First, the Church stands in such a relation to Christ—it is so intimately united to Him, and in Him brought so nigh to God—that God our Father in the riches of His grace “hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence, *having made known unto us the mystery of his will.*” As Joseph, prior to his exaltation, was an interpreter of dreams, and a revealer of the mind of God, so the Church is even now, before the dispensation of the fulness of times is ushered in, entrusted with the knowledge of the mystery of God's will respecting it. The whole intelligent universe will know this mystery when the time for its manifestation has come; but to the Church

is confided the knowledge of it *while it is yet unmanifested*, and as to fact, unaccomplished. “ We have the mind of Christ.” (1 Cor. ii, 16).

Secondly, the mystery of God’s will, the knowledge of which is entrusted to the Church, has reference to a period here termed “ the dispensation of the fulness of times.” Many have supposed that this denotes the present dispensation, confounding it with another expression used in Gal. iv, 4, “ But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son.” But the fulness of *time*, and the dispensation of the fulness of *times*, are two very different expressions. “ When the time appointed in divine counsels was fully come, God sent forth his Son,” would seem to be the plain, obvious meaning of the one. The other designates a period, “ the dispensation of the fulness of times,” in which all things in heaven and in earth are to be gathered together in one, that is, in Christ. This is evidently something future. The reconciliation of all things in heaven and in earth, as seen in Col. i, is future, though peace has been already made by the blood of the cross. The Church is now reconciled; but things in heaven and on earth are yet to be reconciled. So here in Eph. i—the Church is blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, and has confided to it the knowledge of the mystery of God’s will: but things in heaven and things on earth are not yet being gathered, much less actually *gathered*

together in one in Christ. The Church itself is being gathered for the heavens; but it is of *things* in heaven and *things* on earth that it is said they are all to be gathered together in Christ.

Thirdly, as to the meaning of the expression, “fulness of times,” it is important to observe that there are certain times or periods, each bearing its characteristic feature, which all run till they meet, as it were, and terminate in the dispensation yet to come. As another has written, “The dispensation of the fulness of times is that in which *all these several times* will have run out, and into which they all are now running. When the Lord Jesus leaves the right hand of God, *then* will God visibly interfere with all that is measured by these times. The time of *misrule* ends by Christ taking His power and reigning. The time of *testimony* ends by judgment. The time of the *Church’s sufferings* ends by her being glorified with her Lord. The time of *Israel’s blindness* ends by the veil being taken away. The time of *Gentile dominion* ends by the Stone cut out without hands smiting the image. The time of *creation’s thralldom* ends by the manifestation of the Sons of God; and this, we know, is when Jesus shall be manifested. And Satan, who had in the ministry of our Lord asked not to be tormented before the time, will then know that the time of his restraint is come, though his judgment will even then be in prospect. Surely a dispensation so marked is of the deepest importance—a dispensation in which all the apparent

failures of God will prove to have been but the means of displaying His power and wisdom.”

Fourthly, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, when Christ is the centre of unity and blessing to all in heaven and all on earth, all being under His Headship, and gathered together in one, even in Him, the Church is to share with Him this inheritance of all things—“in whom also we have obtained an inheritance.” Not only is Christ the second Adam, to whom universal dominion *on earth* belongs; God has “set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion; and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, WHICH IS HIS BODY, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” It is in the dispensation of the fulness of times that He is to be manifested as Head over all things in heaven and on earth. And the Church is to be manifested as His Body, His Bride. Wondrous destiny! Already is He seated at God’s right hand on high; but He waits for this inheritance of all things both in heaven and on earth. We now are seated in heavenly places in Him, and are waiting for the moment when we shall share this inheritance of all things, with our now rejected Saviour, Head, and Lord.

W. TROTTER (1852).