

GOSPEL GLEANINGS

EDITED BY

W. J. HOCKING.

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Gospel Gleanings

AN INTERVIEW BETWEEN A NORFOLK FARMER AND OUR LATE QUEEN.

MR. SMITH of Dickleborough, in the county of Norfolk, was a simple-minded earnest Christian, who had lived through those glorious times for the British farmer, when Napoleon I. turned all Europe into one vast battle-field, and wheat was selling at from fifteen to twenty shillings a bushel. He was a genius too in his way, and invented a plough which was a great improvement on the cumbrous implement then in common use. His invention came under the notice of Prince Albert, who took great interest in agriculture; and he sent for him to explain certain matters connected with this plough. The old farmer, accordingly, journeyed to Windsor—no light undertaking in days when the railway had not altogether supplanted the postchaise, the stage coach, and the carrier's cart. He reached Wind-

sor in the twilight of a summer's evening, and reported himself at the castle. A gentleman of the household came to him, and told him that he would have to present himself at ten o'clock on the following morning.

"Yes, that's all right," said the farmer, "but what am I to do for a bed?"

"A bed," said the Colonel, "oh, you'd better go to an inn." And he mentioned one where he would be made very comfortable for the night, but Mr. Smith did not take very kindly to the suggestion.

"Wu, there now, Cunnel," he said, "that dew seem mighty quare, that raly dew. Goo to an inn! That's very illconvenient and costyve. I didn't come here because I wanted to come. I come because you axed me, and I had to come, and the laste you can dew is to give me a bed. If you was to come to Dickleborough, my missus, she'd find you a bed. I know right well she would, specially if we'd axed you to come; and if you was as hungry as I be, I warrant she'd find you suffen to eat, in the bargain."

Old Smith said this in his pleasant way, and the Colonel was taken by storm. He brought him up to his own rooms, had a good supper put before him, and gave orders for his accommodation for the night. The two spent a very pleasant evening together.

“Then the Cunnel, he say, ‘I’ll ring for your candle, Mr. Smith, and the man, he’ll show you to your room.’

“‘Thank’ee, Cunnel,’ I replied, ‘but there’s one thing I allays do afore goin’ to bed. I have family prayer. I know my missus is having it at Dickleborough, and it won’t do for her master not to have it because he happen to be away from home. Will you let’s have your Bible, if you please?’

“The Cunnel, he say, ‘Oh certainly, Mr. Smith,’ and he put it on the table, and I say to him, ‘Well now, will you rade and I pray, or shall I rade and you pray?’ He make answer and say, ‘I think I’d better do the rading, Mr. Smith.’ So he read a Psalm, he did, a buttiful Psalm that was tew, but that was one of the shortest in the book; and arter he’d done we knelt down, and I prayed, and I asked the Lord to bless him and the Queen and the Prince of Wales, and the dear babes. He took the candle from the man that was browt, and he showed me to my bed-room his own self, and a rare good grip he gave my hand when he bid me good-night at the door.

“Well, in the morning, I had a rare good breakfast, and at ten o’clock I was took to see the Prince. He shook hands with me quite friendly, and he got atalkin’ about my plough, and I showed him how it worked. Arter we’d bin

atalkin' for a bit, the door opened, and a big man with his head powdered, and a uniform on, he say, 'Her Majesty,' in a loud voice, and in came the Queen. When I saw her come in, I was right stammed [astounded]. I thowt she'd have had a goold crownd on her head, and a goold sceptre in her hand, and her gownd all a tralin' ahind, same as we see in the picters. But there she was, just a plain, simple woman with a kind look on her face. She spoke to me quiet and friendly like, and said she was very glad to see me, and what a long way I had to come to show them my plough; and she hadn't spoke them words afore I was no more afraid of her than I am of my nabor's wives.—not half so much as I am o' some on 'em. She was just as simple and kind as if she warn't no more nor nobody; there warn't no mucky pride about her. But when I had to spake to her, I let her see that I knowed who she was, and that I respected her. She saw right well she did, that John Smith of Dickleborough warn't the man to take no liberty because she was kind to him.

“Well, we had a rare pleasant talk arter we'd done with the plough. The Queen axed me a lot o' questions about the farmers in our parts, and the poor folk, what wages they got, were their cottages comfortable, did they go to church reg'lar and all manner o' what, and I told her the best I could. By-an-by I began to get a bit onaisy.

'Smith bor,' I say to myself, 'you're browt before kings and princes, and you must testify.' I said, 'I 'ool,' and I looked to the Lord for an opening and twarn't long afore 't came. The Queen, she say to me, 'Mr. Smith,' she say, 'howiver did you come to think o' this clever invention o' yourn?'

"'Well, your Majesty, mum,' says I, 'I had that in my head a sight o' days afore that come straight. I see what was wanted plain enough, but I couldn't make out how to get at it. I thought an' I thought, an' I better thowt, but that did not come clear nohow. So at last I made it a matter o' prayer, and one mornin' that came into my mind like a flash, 'ust what you see in that there model.'

"'Why, Mr. Smith,' she say, 'do you pray about your ploughs?'

"'Wu, there now, your Majesty, mum,' says I, 'why should'nt I? My Father in heaven, He knowed I was in trouble about that, and why shouldn't I goo an' tell Him? I mind o' the boy, Tom—he's a fine big man now, keeping company along o' my neighbor Stebbins' darter he is, an' a rare good gal I know she be—but when he was a teeny mite of a boy I bowt him a whip, and rarely pleased he was with that. Well, he came to me one day cryin' as if his little heart was bruk. He'd bruk that whip, he had, and he came to me with it. Well now, your Majesty, mum, that whip

worn't nothing to me, that only cost eighteen pence when 'twas new—but it was suffen to see the tears a runnin' down my boy's cheeks. So I took him on my knee and I wiped his eyes with my handkercher, and I kissed him I did, and I comforted him: 'Wu, don't you cry, Tom my bor,' says I, 'I'll mend that whip I 'ool so that'll crack as loud as ever, and I'll buy you a new one next market day.' 'Well now, your Majesty, mum,' says I, 'don't you think our Father in heaven, He care as much for me as I care for my bor, Tommy? My plough worn't o' much consekence to Him, but I know right well my trouble was.'

"Well, now would you believe it, when I'd said that, the Prince he tarned away and he blowed his nose with his pocket handkercher; and the Queen, she had tears in her eyes, and I see one on 'em rolling down her cheek.

"'You're a good man, Mr. Smith,' she say, 'I'm thankful I have such subjects as you.' Them were her very words. I'm proud on 'em; I've told my son Tom he's never to forget 'em, and he's to tache 'em to his children, if so be as God gives him a family. When the Queen say them words to me, I say to her, 'Your Majesty, mum,' I say to her, 'I haint got nothing good about me but what comes from God.' And she say, 'No more aint none of us, Mr. Smith.'

"The Prince he joined in, and we had a rare

good talk; 'twas for all the world like a band meeting. Folks may say what they like, but it aint no use o' them saying it to John Smith o' Dickleborough; he know and he say to all the world, 'Queen Victoria is a right good, godly woman, and Prince Albert, he's another—least-ways—well—you know what I mean.'

"It was getting nigh on noon by this time, and the Queen at last she say to me, 'Mr. Smith,' she say, 'you will find lunch provided for you and the man who waits on you will take you over the castle if you wish. There are some fine paintings and other things you might like to see.' 'Well now, your Majesty, mum,' says I, 'I aint much o' a judge o' pictures, but there is one thing I should rarely like to see.' 'What is that, Mr. Smith?' she say. 'If I might see the dear babes.' The Queen she laughed, and she looked right tickled, and she say they was out a walkin' in the park and someone should go with me and show me the way. So she bid me goodbye, and so did the Prince; and a man came and took me away."

Mr. Smith was taken to the park, and there met the royal children. His conductor said something to the lady in charge of them, doubtless telling her of Her Majesty's commands; and the good old man talked to the children in his kindly way for a few minutes; then he took off his wide-brimmed beaver hat, and, standing bareheaded in the

sunshine, he prayed that the blessing of God might be upon them and abide with them.

Then he turned his face homeward and went back back to the simple, everyday life of a Norfolk farmer.

Not long after, he received a box which had been brought from London by the carrier, and in it he found a most beautiful family Bible with a note explaining that it was a present from the Queen and Prince Albert. Mr. Smith carefully packed it up again and returned it with a letter to the Queen, asking her "if she would be as good as to put her name in it."

The Bible came back in due time with the autograph signature, not of Her Majesty only, but of the Prince also and of all the children—even the baby's little hand had been guided to write its name. Under the signatures the Queen had written with her own hand, "A memento of the visit of a good man." Mr. Smith had a large glass case made to cover the Bible, and on certain set days he used to show it to sight-seers at threepence a head.

The money thus earned was dropped into a missionary box together with the contributions of the family; and when the annual missionary meeting came round, the box and the story were always produced to the great satisfaction of the audience, who never grew tired of hearing the good old man tell the tale of his interview with the Queen.

WELL DONE.¹

SERVANT of Christ, go on! Thine eye on things above.
His eye is counting all that pleases Him;

His heart is for His own—let thine be so:
Toil on for these in love, as He hath done.

The praise of men seek not; their scoffs despise,
As He despised them all, when here below.

His path and strength are thine: look up,
He beckons thee the prize on high to win.

In love and holiness find out His hidden ones;
His consolations, from thy heart, pour into theirs.
Pity the erring ones, and bring them back to Him;
The harvest comes, these be thy sheaves to gain.

Though rough the way, faint not, nor slack thy pace,
Press on, leave things behind; behold the goal,
Till soon to hear His own sweet voice, "Well done,"
And enter there above, with Him, at home.

JESUS THE TRUTH.

JOHN XIV. 6.

NOT only is Jesus the sole way to God, and to God as Father, but He is also the truth. He alone shews out the reality of every one and every thing. God as such, or the Father, is never said in scripture to be the truth; Jesus is. He is the image of the invisible God.² No one hath seen God at any time; the Only-begotten Son Who is in the bosom of the Father,—He declared Him.³ He that hath seen Him hath seen the

¹ Matt. xxv. 21—23.

² Col. i. 15

³ John i. 18

Father ;¹ for being the Son and withal become man, He alone could adequately shew us the Father. It was His mission, and He fulfilled it perfectly, whether men received or rejected Him. If they received Him, it was life eternal. If they rejected Him, they must die in their sins, God's wrath abiding on them.

How could it be otherwise, if Jesus be Who and what He is? To reject Him is not only to be a lost sinner, but morally blind, deaf, and dead to God in the person of Jesus meeting me in reconciling love, and providing a complete propitiation for sins. O sinner, careless, hard, and haughty against the only true God, why listen longer to the enemy, the deceiver, the destroyer, and perish? Call on the name of the Saviour you have so long despised, and you shall be saved. So His word assures ;² and His word according to both Testaments stands and endures for ever.³

For consider how clear and all-important it is that Jesus should be the truth. If asked about God, where shall I seek, where find, Him apart from Jesus? Nowhere on earth is He discoverable by creature eyes. I cannot go up to heaven to search Him there ; indeed were it possible for a sinner to look on His glory, it must be death. I cannot pierce the depths after Him ; and if I could, it were quite as vain. Destruction and death

1 John xiv. 9

2 Rom. x. 13

3 Isa. xl. 8 ; 1 Pet. i. 25

say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears. Alas! this is no gospel for my soul, but rather a knell to my conscience, for I want salvation and life. Jesus is the answer of God's grace;¹ Jesus reveals Him here and now as a just God and a Saviour, and not to Israel only but to all the ends of the earth.

If we would know man, either as he ought to be, or as he really is, who can shew it? Certainly not the first man who disobeyed God and brought in sin and death. Jesus is man who never did His own will but God's only. Jesus was dependent and obedient unto death, yea death of the cross.² This is what He was in a world of sin: what is He now in heaven and above the heavens? Crowned with glory and honour³ on the throne of God. Here only is man in moral perfection, here only man in glory according to divine counsels.

Do we ask about Satan, the old serpent, the devil? He is the personal enemy of the Son of God, His constant adversary in all His thoughts, affections, and ways of goodness toward man, and man's habitual seducer against God, the liar and murderer⁴ in dark contrast with Him Who as man came full of grace and truth⁵ to glorify God, and win man at all cost to God by redemption.

1 Isa. xiv. 31, 32 2 Phil. ii. 8 3 Heb. ii. 9 4 John viii. 44

5 John i. 14; 1 Tim. i. 15

Thus might we apply the name of Jesus to every object in heaven or earth or beneath, and learn that in all He only is the truth or reveals the truth of what is outside Himself. But let us turn to yourself: what is the truth about *you*? Jesus makes it at once and for ever clear. He is the unfailing test. Have you received Him from God, sent not to judge the world as by-and-by, but to give you by faith life eternal,¹ and save you from your sins, and to fit you to share the portion of the saints in light? Do you reject the Lord Jesus, and neglect so great salvation, though the word is near thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart?² If it be so, make it certain in your own case that you prefer the pleasure of sinning to the remission of your sins, Satan to the Saviour, present life to life eternal. But you are thus warned of the truth which Jesus has fully declared, that you might be reconciled to God and born of Him, and live to Christ Who died for all that those who live should no longer live to themselves but to Him Who for them died and was raised.³

For "the Father loveth the Son and hath given all things [to be] in his hand." Hence, "he that believeth on the Son hath life eternal; and he that believeth not [or, is not subject to] the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him."⁴ Jesus is the truth, and reveals it for you

and every other. "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh," and now "speaketh from heaven."¹

THE OLD LADY'S CONVERSION.

"**S**o you want to know how I was converted, do you, miss?"

These words were addressed to me some time ago by an old lady of whom I had often heard, but until then had never seen. I was staying with some friends in a little country village, when one morning my friend asked me to accompany her to see old Mrs. W——, whom she described as a most interesting old lady, and withal such a particularly bright and happy Christian as to have gained the title of "house-top" saint.

I was only too glad to avail myself of the opportunity, and answered that I should be delighted to go. So we started at once and, after a walk of about twenty minutes, stopped before a pretty little cottage, and the door being open, after having gently knocked, we walked in and found the old lady resting awhile in her little parlour. Everything around looked so particularly bright and cheerful, that one could imagine it had caught the reflection of the old lady's happy countenance.

In the course of conversation, my friend said that I wished to hear about her conversion; and

this called forth the remark at the head of this narrative.

Never shall I forget the way in which she answered my friend's statement. I wish you could have seen the look she gave me, as bending forward a little, she said with great earnestness, "The first thing is to know whether *you* are converted, because if not, you are on the broad road to destruction; where I was once."

I was very happy to assure her that I had been a believer in the Lord Jesus for many years.

"Then," she said, rising and taking my hand, "we are sisters, and if we never meet again on earth we shall in heaven. The Lord be praised." And tears of joy streamed down her face, as quickly as she wiped them away.

"Well," said she, sitting down again, "it is near upon forty years ago, since I first knew Jesus as *my* Saviour. I was a wild careless girl, and used to laugh and mock at Christian people. There was another girl, about my own age, who was quite as bad, if not worse than myself; I didn't know much of her, except that she was very worldly and careless. Well, all at once I lost sight of her, and some time afterwards a neighbour came to me and said, 'Have you heard about S——?' 'No,' says I, 'what news?' 'Why, she has turned religious!' 'Well, I don't believe it.' 'Ah,' says she, 'it's true for all that.'

“Well, I just could not believe it. S—— turned religious! I thought, why she is the last person to do that; however, I’ll go and see! I did not know this girl to speak to, and she did not know me; but the next morning off I started, and when I got there she shook hands and kissed me so friendly like, just as if I’d known her all my life.

“I shall never forget that morning! How she did talk, to be sure, and seemed full of the love of Jesus. I had made up my mind to laugh and jeer at her, but I couldn’t do it for the life of me; and when I rose to go, she said, ‘Let’s have a word in prayer.’ I was so astonished that I could not say a word; but she took my hand and we both knelt down, and I remember some of her words to this day. She said, ‘O Lord, I don’t know who this young woman is, but *You* know, I don’t know what her name is, but *You* do, and I don’t know what she has come here for, but *You* do. [I had not told her what I went for, and she did not ask me.] If she is not saved, Lord, *do* save her now. Show her what a sinner she is, and make her very miserable about her sins, and, Lord, show her what a Saviour *You* are.’

“And I was unhappy too; I don’t know how I got home that day, and for a long time after that I was miserable.

“Well, one day a friend of mine (a dear Christian) said, ‘Will you come and hear Mr. ——

preach to-morrow morning?' I said, 'Yes,' and went: the place was full of people, and the preacher was so earnest; he spoke of God's great love to us, and at the end gave out that hymn,

'One there is above all others,
Oh! how He loves.'

"When we got outside, my friend said, 'Oh, have we not had a splendid time?' and her face looked almost heavenly. But I felt cross, unhappy and miserable, and did not believe that God loved *me*, or that He would make me happy; so I said I did not like it and would never go again. 'Oh, but,' said she, 'Mr. ——'s son is going to preach this evening, and you must hear him.'

"So I altered my mind, and thought, God did not care for me. I would go for a bit of fun and make game of the 'parson.' I went, and the preacher took for his text, 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon *us*, that *we* should be called the children of God.'¹

"Well, dear me, I thought, it is all about love again, but I don't believe God loves *me*, for all that; I'm too bad I know. But the good man seemed as if he knew all about me, and I felt as though he was speaking to no one else.

"However, I did not get peace that night by a long way. I went home feeling more miserable and unhappy than ever. I did not know what to

do with myself, and felt if it lasted much longer I should go mad.

“Some little time after, I had one day been over to W——, another little village. It was a very hot dusty day, and I was about half-way home, when all at once I stopped, for I thought I heard a voice speaking to me (I wish I could show you the spot now ; it was just under a tree). I looked round, but there was no one there, yet I seemed to hear these words distinctly : ‘ Daughter, thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace.’ Oh, I can’t tell you how happy I was ; I just fell down on my knees under that tree, and thanked God over and over again : how I got home that day I don’t know ; I seemed to fly over the ground. I don’t remember anything after getting up from my knees, until I got home : everything seemed different, so much happier and brighter.

“Directly I reached home, I told them all I was saved. I could not have kept it to myself for anything : and I can tell you it was all over our village in no time. I did not have an easy time of it either. Everyone was bitter against me. But I did not mind that a bit, and told them all how God had forgiven all my sins for Christ’s sake, and would do the same for them if they would let Him.

“And that all happened near upon forty years ago. I’ve never doubted Him since. He is always the same, and has loved and cared for me all these

years, and He will keep me right on to the end.”

This, then, was the old lady's story. Will you not, dear unsaved reader, just take the Lord at His word, as she did? Why dishonour Him by doubting any longer? God is offering salvation to you: will you not take it before it is too late? Christ is *now* saying, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;”¹ and again, “Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.”² God is surely as good as His word. Oh, *do* trust Him *now*.

◆

“THIS IS HE THAT CAME BY WATER AND BLOOD, JESUS CHRIST.”

FELLOW-TRAVELLER, we are on the voyage of the life that now is. As you journey on, have you eternity distinctly before you? It were wise, if not insured already, to seek insurance without delay. The terms are as easy to you, whoever you may be, as the security is perfect; for God is concerned in all, and His character and resources are at stake—the God of all grace Who cannot lie. Let His interests be yours, as yours beyond doubt are His.

The terms were not easy to Him, for they cost Him His Son, His Only-begotten. They involved the Creator of heaven and earth and all things in

a life of humiliation, in a death of suffering and shame. Was this all, wonderful as it is for such a One? It was but the outside, the pathway in its course and end here below, but not that which made the Saviour sweat as it were great drops of blood; nor yet that which drew out the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Very weak servants of His have triumphed over torture for His name; the most vacillating of martyrs even fondled the consuming flame with his own "unworthy" but repentant right hand. He, the Lord of all, in tasting death for everyone, must drink the cup of divine judgement of sin, if any sinners were to be righteously saved. He must be abandoned at that supreme hour, if the believer, once consciously unclean and guilty, is not to be abandoned but blessed now and for ever.

What was this to such a Father of such a Son? What was it to forsake the Anointed One Who had glorified the Father in obedience all through the days of His flesh? A deeper question was now raised. Would He, Who is the Eternal Life, glorify God *about our disobedience*, about our sins, that righteous judgement might take its course, no less than saving grace? Would He suffer for sins once for all, Just for unjust, that God should be vindicated beyond measure in His truth, love, and majesty, and man be delivered from all that is against him in a way worthy of God?

The cross of Christ is the answer. The atoning work *is* done, not doing nor to be done, but even now accepted for, and applied to, every one that believes in the Lord Jesus Christ. "This is he that came through water and blood, Jesus Christ: not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." Out of His pierced side, when already dead, flowed blood and water. John "that saw it bare record, and his record is true, and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe."¹

You, if you have not bowed to the truth of God and received the blessing in His grace,—you need cleansing as well as atonement. Here not eternal life only but remission of sins and purification are to be found, only in and through the Lord Jesus. Believe on Him and be saved: so preached the great apostle; so taught the beloved disciple. The Spirit Who inspired both is truth. God calls you to believe the gospel. Come in, and be blessed of Him Who will have the Son honoured, even as the Father is. Oh! tarry not without, unblessed of God, indifferent or hostile to the Son, a slave of self, sin, and Satan, with death before you, and after this the judgement. "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."² "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life."³

1 John xix. 34, 35

2 John vi. 47

3 John iii. 36

“JESUS ONLY.”

WONDERFUL indeed was the moment in the history of Peter, James, and John, when on the Mount of Transfiguration “they saw no man save Jesus only,” and were “eye-witnesses of his majesty”! Before this, they had been privileged to witness the power of Christ in raising from the grip of death the little daughter of Jairus; afterwards, in Gethsemane’s garden were they in the presence of those sufferings which Calvary’s cross alone surpassed. But here, on the mountain top, it was the momentary display of the intrinsic glory and majesty of His person which caused them to fall on their faces, while the Father’s voice rang out from the excellent glory, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him.” “They saw no man save *Jesus only.*” Mark the sweet exclusiveness of these two precious words, and how the doubtless well-meant but yet indiscreet desire of an impulsive disciple to make “three tabernacles,” only proved to be an occasion for the expression of God’s infinite delight and satisfaction in the ineffable perfection of His own well-beloved Son! Not even a Moses nor an Elias, honoured servants of God as they were, could for a moment compare with Him Whose transcendent glory shall yet fill the universe with ceaseless joy.

Peter, however, did not forget the lesson learnt that day upon the holy mount, and good is it for us, in a later day, to treasure in our souls the Father's thoughts of Christ! "No man knoweth the Son but the Father;" and to possess divine knowledge of the Father and the Son is life eternal. Yes, Jesus must ever be pre-eminent, not only in heaven, but on earth; and the scene of His murder shall yet witness the glory of His coming kingdom! Meanwhile, for us, whether saints or sinners, what priceless blessings are wrapt up in those two precious words, "Jesus only!" Should the reader of these lines be far from God, yea, ruined, guilty, lost and undone, this is the Saviour Whom God has provided (for there is none other), even "Jesus only." Do you know and own your sins, and desire pardon and peace? You shall surely find them through simple faith in the blood of "Jesus only." Are you weary in heart? "Jesus only" can give you rest. Have you a burden on your conscience too heavy to bear? "Jesus only" can give relief.

Resting on the divine Person, work, and word of "Jesus only," the believing sinner passes from death unto life, and from Satan's kingdom into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Should you be a backslider, and therefore have lost your joy, turn not for help to man, but to "Jesus only," Who loves to restore the truly repentant soul. Should

you be a failing saint, tried and tempted from without and within, then let the eyes of your faith look upward to the throne of God, where, in "Jesus only," you will find your living Advocate. Are you weak and feeble, knowing not which way to turn for strength and guidance? "Jesus only" is all-sufficient; for, as your great High Priest, "He was in all points tempted like as we are, sin excepted," and "He is able to succour them that are tempted." Is the conflict raging all around too much for your troubled spirit? Then forget not that "Jesus only" is still the mighty Captain of your salvation, Who is bringing many sons home to glory, and through Him you will yet come off more than conqueror. Have you no earthly friend? Nay, "Jesus only" is a "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Have you no definite object in life? God's voice makes answer from the sky, let "Jesus only" be that object. Is it heavenly wisdom that you need for your path? Then remember that in "Jesus only" are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Yea, is He not made to all who believe "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption?"

In a day when tens of thousands are only following men, may you be like those two of John's disciples who followed "Jesus only," saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him.

Yes, Christ is all and in all, the brightness of

God's glory, and the express image of His Person. Faith in Him secures the victory all along the line; and should you, dear fellow-believer, be called to pass through death's dark waters, "Jesus only" will be with you then. Therefore fear not, neither be dismayed! But each moment as it passes brings us nearer to the glory, and ere another sun has set you may be with Him and like Him for ever!

As that event will consummate your joy, so then may the watchword of your life be "Jesus only!"

"Jesus only," can it be
He hath given Himself for me?
That from His dear wounded side
Flowed the precious crimson tide?

Yes, 'tis true, His blood was shed,
Now He liveth Who was dead;
He hath given my soul release,
"Jesus only" is my peace.

Though I pass through scenes of strife,
"Jesus only" is my life;
Though the tempest rageth long,
"Jesus only" is my song.

"Jesus only;" precious name!
Now and evermore the same;
God alone its worth can tell,
Jesus "doeth all things well."

"Jesus only" now I see,
Seated on God's throne for me;
Having tasted death for all,
At His feet the angels fall.

"Jesus only" is my stay
All along life's desert way;
Then my watchword needs must be
"Jesus only" now for me.

SELF CONFIDENCE.

THIS is an age when self-reliance is regarded as a most important factor in a man's character. Self-help is made an integral part of the education of youth. If you are engaged in commerce, you learn that you must crush every competitor out of your own resources, or be yourself crushed. You are told that this is because of the great universal law that the fittest survives, and that the weakest goes to the wall.

Now it may be and is true that in the selfish sinful world around us men act on this principle. In the markets, in the manufactories, in the schools, the man who relies on himself and lives for and works for himself is commonly the man who succeeds, and whom the world on that account delights to honour. But scripture unfolds a different truth altogether. It shews the vanity and sinfulness of the life that makes self its centre and circumference, while it calls upon the children of God no longer to please themselves, nor to live unto themselves, but unto Him Who died for them and rose again.¹

¹ Rom. xv. 1 ; 2 Cor. v. 15

This idea, moreover, of the all-importance of self-effort is one on which men too readily rest for the security of their souls. They look about them, and argue that as earthly rewards come only to the diligent and zealous, so the gift of eternal life is unto such as sufficiently strive after it. As the busy man looks forward to secure a period of ease and comfort in the evening of life on earth, so he hopes by earnest attention to spiritual affairs to secure the rest that remains for the children of God. As in the daily struggles of life he trusts his own mother wit and his keen business instincts to bring him safely through, so in his responsibility Godward, he trusts in himself that his own righteousness and probity will render him acceptable to God.

Alas! what self-delusion! God has pronounced His own solemn sentence as to the condition of all—“There is none righteous, no, not one.”¹ Trust not your own opinion of self, but God’s word concerning you. There are no works better than those prescribed by the law, yet a man is not justified in the sight of God by the works of the law,² but by faith in Christ Who died, the Just for the unjust. Think not that by any strenuous exertions of your own, you can hope to enter heaven. But what you need Christ will give; for He says, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”³

1 Rom. iii. 10

2 Gal. ii. 16; iii. 11

3 Matt. xi. 28

FEAR CAST OUT.

THE consequences of sin are not known yet. God is saving now, not judging in righteousness. There is the time coming when He will rule in righteousness. He is saving souls now for a better state hereafter, but then the "sinner dying a hundred years old will be accursed." We cannot judge of people's state of soul by their circumstances; we cannot say those on whom the tower of Siloam fell were worse than all that dwelt at Jerusalem.

When I come to that point, to say (not the world is wicked, but) I am wicked, I have the "daysman" between me and God. He is the One Who has come to me in all the wickedness of my heart, and has come to me because I am so. Now I have, not only God working in me, sending Satan to plough up the fallow ground, and to shew to my conscience what was there long before, but God doing a work for me. He brings in a righteousness (His own) for the sinner. He works a work for us.

The first thing I find then is that this my state has not kept Him away from me, but it has

brought Him to me. That is grace, not righteousness. Hiding my sin from me would not be mercy. Not letting me see things as God sees them is not mercy. It is in meeting me just as I am, and acting above the sin, that He has shewn mercy. Christ never alarms people who come to Him in their need. To the hypocrite He speaks terror, but to the poor in spirit it is "Fear not; I am all that you need."

You say, "I am such a sinner." Christ says, "That is just the reason I am come." You reply, "I have an awful will." "That is the reason I am come," says Christ: "I will break your will." "Neither do I condemn you," said He to the woman accused by the Pharisees.

I defy you to find a case where Christ brought fear upon a convicted conscience. He takes the fear away instead of causing it. He comes in the poorest and the lowest way to meet with those in need, and that they might not be afraid of Him. Grace reigns—it has come in God's own blessed sovereignty.



How often, when our heart is melted, our spirit tender, we are led to say, "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." What is His answer? "Go and shew it." The test of our love is obedience. This is the touchstone. It sweeps away a whole mass of natural feeling, and shews what is gold and what is brass.

DELIVERANCE.

THE Lord Jesus came to proclaim deliverance.¹ Now deliverance implies release from captivity, slavery, or restraint of any kind. It also means rescue from some impending danger.

We have a striking illustration of deliverance in the case of the children of Israel at the Red Sea. The hosts of Egypt were behind them. Mountains were on either side, and the sea before them. They were hemmed in without a way of escape. Then in this extremity, God, in a miraculous and unprecedented manner, opened a path for them through the sea, by which they crossed to the other side. Their enemies, on attempting to do the same thing, were drowned in the mighty waters.

Thus were the children of Israel delivered from bondage, and from the wrath of Pharaoh. Now what was true of Israel's condition in Egypt is true of every sinner spiritually. Morally he is in bondage to Satan, the god of this world. Yet one often hears persons priding themselves upon being independent—they are "free agents," they say. If my reader be of this class, let me say you never made a greater mistake. But a similar delusion has been characteristic of man in all ages. The

Jews, for instance, in the Lord's time made the same blunder, and the Lord corrected it by shewing them, that, instead of being free, they were the bond-slaves of sin and Satan, and nothing but the truth could make them free.¹ Need I say there is no other way of escape from the thralldom of Satan to-day? Only the truth, as it is in Jesus, can make free—yea, He Himself, Who is the truth.

Moreover it is to this condition of bondage that judgement attaches. No matter how faithfully one serves the devil, he cannot shield from this at the last. The Lord bought everyone, therefore all are His by right of purchase,² and His also by creation.³ Thus He has a claim upon the service of all. But if man will not serve Him now, He has the right to judge him at the last, for his disobedience. In fact the clouds of God's wrath hang, black and lowering, over every unbelieving sinner now.⁴ In a little while they will burst and overwhelm such an one in sudden destruction. Such, then, is man's condition without Christ, and such the prospect before him. Truly he needs deliverance, and, therefore, a deliverer—one to go down to the place where man was, beneath the wrath of God.

This the Lord Jesus did. Hence His word, as recorded in the Psalm, "Thy wrath lieth hard

1 John viii. 30—37 2 2 Pet. ii. 1 ; 1 Tim. ii. 6

3 Acts xvii. 25 4 John iii. 36

upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves.”¹ “The wages of sin is death.” “He tasted death for everyone.” Judgement awaited the guilty. The Lord Jesus bore God’s judgement when the load of man’s guilt was laid upon Him. Then He exhausted the vials of God’s wrath against sin, and fully vindicated all His righteous requirements.

Now, therefore, God can and will forgive everyone who believes in Jesus. Yea, He cannot do otherwise and be consistent with Himself. And when God forgives a man’s sins, His judgement has no further claim, because that to which judgement attached—his guilt—is gone, and there is nothing to judge. Surely this is deliverance indeed, wrought out for everyone believing in Jesus.²

But there yet remains in every child of God, an evil nature, of which sinful thoughts and actions are but the fruit. This is the root, the source from which they all spring, and it is ever seeking to assert its right to be heard and to be attended to. Hence all that is wrong in the Christian’s life is the result of listening to and allowing the assumed claims of the “old man” within. How important then is deliverance in this case.

But it is not obtained, as many affirm, by “the root and inbeing of sin being destroyed.” For

1 Ps. lxxxviii. 7

2 1 Thess. i. 10;

this evil nature is born with everyone, and remains with him so long as he is in this world. Neither can it be improved in any way. On this the word is most emphatic, "The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."¹ God saw it was too evil for any improvement. He therefore crucified it with Christ. Hence the word, "Our old man is crucified with him." Again, "I am crucified with Christ." All that I have, therefore, as a living man in the world, is gone—"not, of course, as a mere matter of fact, but, what is far more important, as a matter of faith." And I have a new life. Christ liveth in me, and the life is of the faith of God's Son. Thus, although the old nature remains in me, it is robbed of its power, God having pronounced sentence of death upon it. And I can walk, by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the new life, which I have in Christ, having been delivered from the bondage of sin and the power of Satan.

Again, the Spirit Who dwells in the believer, as the power of walk, and as giving the soul consciousness of its deliverance from sin, because of its peace in Christ, is also the witness that the mortal body, as well, shall be delivered in its time. Hence the word, "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies.

by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”¹ It is not a *new body*, created and given me, but this mortal body changed. And this will be true of every believer, whether sleeping or waking, when the Lord comes. The dead will be raised incorruptible, and the living changed. And thus and then both dead and living saints will bear the image of the risen and glorified Christ.

In conclusion then, we have seen that the work of Christ is a perfect work. And the emancipation of every believer is complete, commencing in forgiveness of sins and exemption from judgement, and ending in a glorified body in heaven. May every one of God’s people learn to value more the rich blessings we have in Christ.

AN INVITATION.

“**C**OME unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” This is the invitation of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who is no dead Saviour that simply lived and was crucified hundreds and hundreds of years ago—He is the living Lord, Who indeed died, but Who lives again in the power of an endless life, and His word lives too, and abides the same for ever; so that this kindly invitation

stands good for to-day: *I* will give you rest. He says this, Who not only speaks the truth, but Who is Himself the Truth itself, so that He can be most fully depended upon. He Who says this has put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and so He is able to give rest to the sinful. "*I will give you rest.*" Let no burdened sinner fear or doubt, for He Who spake as never man spake, says, "*I will give you rest.*" Yea, "*I will give you rest*"—nothing to pay, for He has *paid* it all. Nothing to do, for He has *done* it all, finishing completely the redemption-work His Father gave Him to do. Therefore it stands written, "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him," for He hath said, "*I will give you REST.*" Do you not need it? Will you not have it? Behold! He now says, "Come!" "Come unto ME . . . and I will give you rest."

JESUS THE LIFE.

JOHN XIV. 6.

THERE is another boon (little believed even by believers, yet absolutely needed by every one of them) which Jesus is and gives. He is not only the way, and the truth, but the life. If it were possible to have the foregoing without life, what could they avail to God's glory or for our

wants, without the new nature to apprehend them, know God, and enjoy His nature and grace? It would be an inconceivable state; and the wisdom of the Lord is evident in revealing this essential blessing. To ignore it, now that He came and assures of it, is without excuse. All three, though distinct, are indispensable and inseparable. Jesus is the whole of them in Himself, and He is each and all to the believer at once, though one ought surely to learn much more of them as he goes on.

But the prevalent notion that in conversion there is only a great moral change of the heart wrought by the word and the Spirit of God is altogether short of the truth. Such a change there is beyond a doubt, but it is the effect of a supernatural work of grace. Spiritual life is imparted in receiving, through Christ by faith, a life which not even Adam possessed before he fell. It is of the last Adam, Who is a life-giving Spirit;¹ and hence Christ is declared to be our life.² It is as real a thing as our natural life, and incomparably more important: without it we cannot walk as saints, we cannot live to God. Like our Adamic life, it has its thoughts and feelings, its motives and its aims, its emotions and affections whether of aversion or of love. But unlike the old man, one hates the sin he used to love; one loves Christ from

1 1 Cor. xv. 45

2 Col. iii. 4

Whom he used to shrink; one trusts God Whom he dreaded, and, if the truth be told, feared horribly. An evil conscience wrought real torment and misery when it wrought at all.

But the Son of man lifted up on the cross for guilty sinners meets the conscience overwhelmed with the burden of great and countless sins. Oh, what relief to hear on divine warrant that *God* so loved the world, the Christ rejecting and crucifying world, that He gave His Only-begotten Son, the Son of man, the Son of God, that *whosoever* believeth on Him should not perish but have life eternal!¹ If so strange a thing could have been as your name or mine written in the gospel message, could it have yielded really personal assurance? Many a one has borne the one name and the other; and the tormenting question *which* person was meant must have been incapable of a reliable solution. But in the glad tidings of God is sure and solid comfort to every one that believes. As it runs, it is as worthy of God as the insertion of this or that name among men would have been fruitless caprice.

But it is due to God for a sinner to own his own sins, his guilt, and ruin by sin. For at this wondrous sight of Christ suffering for sins he is arrested. It is God's providing Himself the lamb for a burnt offering, the Son of God His Lamb!

He is convicted as well as attracted; he is a lost sinner, an enemy against such a God. Yet the eyes of his heart open to the truth of divine grace in Jesus. How thankful to find no vagueness in "whosoever," but ample largeness to receive him who never felt his real need before. Such love as can only be in God encourages him, while the light of Christ shows himself hateful and hating, vile and guilty. For "herein was manifested the love of God in our case, because God hath sent his only-begotten Son that we might live through him."¹ This was our prime need, because we were dead. No saint nor angel, no apostle, nor the Virgin mother, could give me the life that was in the Son. But God had anticipated all, and sent His Son that we might live through Him.

This then is the life of which our Lord Jesus spoke. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. This life He over and over again declares is given to him that believes. So He said here before He died for our sins;² and so He said yet more of those who should believe after He died.³ For His death as propitiation not only removed the burden of sins, but set the soul free to judge self and enjoy Christ and God Himself growingly. It was then life abundantly;⁴ for it was in the character and power of His resurrection,

1 1 John iv. 9

2 John vi. 32—50

3 John vi. 51—56

4 John x. 10; xx. 22

the manifest proof of victory over all that could be against us. For Christ had borne our sins and annulled him that had the might of death, and was raised again for our justification. "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more having been reconciled we shall be saved in (or by) his life."¹ And so will it be to and at the glorious end; ' that as sin reigned in death, so might grace reign through righteousness unto life eternal through Jesus Christ our Lord."²

THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE.

BORNE helpless on a tide of ceaseless flow,
Methinks he lives not who ne'er wished to know,
As he perceived each day, the herald sure
Of coming morrows, what, when times mature
And comes eternity, will be his fate.
The heavens their silent story e'er relate
Of vast infinity; viewing those skies,
Where countless worlds of most stupendous size
Roll on, majestic, in their ordered path,
Mysterious acquiescence to the truth
Of a vast age beyond, he finds within.
Then, as he sees the violence of sin
Only below—here, where his home is found—
Feeling, innate, an eagerness to bound
Each barrier that may his will oppose;

The deep impression made, still deeper grows.
 Strength wins the battle in his native place ;
 The swiftest wears the laurel of the race ;
 "And," argues he, as conscience makes him pause,
 The guilty centre of God's broken laws,
 "If I would know eternal life begun,
 My title to the treasure must be *won*."
 Long years ago, near to the Saviour drew
 A Jewish lawyer bold ; "What must I do,
 Master, to make this heritage my own ?"
 Thus questioned he, and in reply is shown
 The holy law's demands : "If thou would'st live,
Do this." But who can true obedience give ?
 Banished from Eden, had the exile striven
 To reach the place whence he through sin was driven,
 Death only met him on the toilsome road
 That led to life within that blest abode.
 A sinner too, could'st thou withstand the claim
 Of truth, that, like the guardian sword of flame,
 Turns every way 'twixt thee and life beyond ?
 Well might'st thou, cast upon thyself, despond !
 Although the way is plain, and life seems near,
 Unflinching truth makes hope all disappear.
 But, in thy doubt, Another speaks to thee ;
 "I am the way, the truth, the life," says He :
 'Tis Jesus Who, below, was always seen,
 Embodying all that gentleness could mean.

* * * * *

But, hear again His cry of agony,
 "My God! oh, why hast thou forsaken me?"
 The heavens, that shew God's majesty, were veiled
 In darkness, when in direst grief He wailed :
 But, answering, came no comforting regard,
 Their bond of perfect intimacy marred
 By sin, our sin, that robbed God of His due,
 And blighted all earth's beauteous prospect too ;
 Against God's fellow His dread sword awoke ;
 It fell on Him, o'erwhelming was the stroke.
 Then, while we watch to see, in doubt and fear,

If I ope must evermore be buried here,
 Unbounded is our jubilant amaze,
 As God His arm in righteousness displays!
 Oh, who can tell with what complacent love
 His holy eye beamed from the heavens above,
 In light undimmed, on that sepulchral bed?
 The Father's glory raised Him from the dead.

* * * * *

Dear soul, behold God's own eternal Son,
 But most approachable, all-gracious One;
 In Whom is life, and only on thy side
 Is dreaded truth, because Himself has died:
 He offers thee Himself, the living Way.
 Oh! take the gift: make haste, this very day
 With contrite, thankful heart, thy strivings cease,
 And, saved by grace, through faith, go thou in peace.

CORPORAL C——'S CONVERSION.

CORPORAL C—— was a Roman Catholic, and was serving at the time of his conversion in the Lancashire regiment at Gibraltar, that "impregnable rock," abounding with dens of infamy and shame, to the moral destruction of the soldier and the sailor. The Buena Vista barracks in which he was located was situated close to the Europa Mission Home, where gospel services were held every evening. The singing of hymns from the roof—for it was a flat one—before the service began, often attracted the soldiers from the surrounding barracks.

C—— was the regimental postman, and hence came into contact with many Christian soldiers. The barracks were often visited by the brethren and sisters from the Home, and many invitations were given and words of encouragement spoken to the King's soldiers as to God's rich grace and love. Corporal C—— was one who often received a warm invitation to the preaching, but being a Roman Catholic, it was a hard matter indeed to persuade him that there was a welcome for him to come and hear the gospel of the grace of our God.

One evening, however, found him in the meeting, and he was, apparently, so interested that he came again and again, until the Lord opened his heart to believe His word and own himself a poor, lost, hell-deserving sinner, but that "Jesus died for him."

What rejoicing there was that night! And with what joy that soul, hitherto blinded by false teaching and sin, went away. In leaving, one said to him, "Now C——, you will be obliged to confess Christ," and he answered, "Yes."

But how was he, who was a Roman Catholic, to do so? He departed troubled in mind, but not as to conscience. The first person he met was his chum. "How can I confess Christ to my chum?" were his first thoughts. He, however, asked the Lord for help, and when he opened his mouth, he said,

“Chum, I’ve been to the mission home to-night.’

“Have you, chum?” said the other.

“Yes, chum. *And I got converted.*”

After a moment’s silence, the chum said, “I wish to God I was.”

What a victory this was for our brother! What encouragement! And he lost no time in bringing his chum to hear the gospel.

But that night’s troubles were not ended yet. He had to face his comrades in the barrack-room, with whom he had been accustomed to play cards night after night, and there the old debauched faces were to be seen. He was therefore invited to sit round as usual, but thanked them and declined, much to their surprise. Now came his trial. How was he to pray before he entered his cot, while these old companions, most of whom were Roman Catholics, were in the room? *It was a most severe test*, dear reader, whether you are saved or unsaved—a cross which few of us, apart from God-given grace, could bear. But the Lord proved, as He always does, true to His word. Grace was supplied, and beloved Corporal C—went on his knees, and thanked the Lord for saving his precious soul. A shower of boots fell on him, but this did not daunt him. With a prayer for his enemies he turned into his cot, and slept the sweetest sleep of his life.

Up in the morning early, bright and happy,

making melody in his heart to the Lord, was he; and when dressed, he saw a strange pair of dirty boots by his cot. He thereupon polished them as never before, and put them beside the cot of the owner, who was much surprised.

The proof of his faith in Christ was thus immediately shown, and his comrades saw that he was a changed man. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation,"¹ was certainly exemplified in his case, and nothing caused him to waver. The twenty-third Psalm was a favourite portion of his. He looked to the good Shepherd to lead him into the green pastures of His word, every morning.

Once he was accosted by a priest, who saw him reading the Bible and remonstrated with him for reading a book which only the Fathers could interpret. But C—— told him that the Lord had opened his eyes to see the truth for himself, and that he had believed what was written, and he *was saved*.

While serving in South Africa, at Spion Kop, the Lord took our much beloved brother Sergeant C—— to Himself.

AN awakened person often rests on the way in which it sees the blood of Christ. But, precious as it is to have the heart thus impressed, this is not the ground of peace. Peace is founded on *God's* seeing it.

ADAM'S SIN.

IT is not only the word of God which lets us know that there is sin and misery in the world. Man knows very well that iniquity and defilement are in himself; and no one is satisfied with his portion here below, because he is ill at ease in his own heart.

The word of God shews us much more—how Satan entered the world, and the consequences of sin in our relations with God.

The first thing the old serpent did was to put something between God and us, to put himself between both. The only thing which can render us happy is for there to be nothing between God and us, and to know that God loves us.

Satan begins by rendering the soul distrustful of God, and suggests to the woman to wish for a forbidden thing, and to satisfy that wish, hinting that God does not love to gratify us, and would keep some great good from us.

The enemy does not direct our minds either to the goodness of God, or to our obeying God. The woman knew well why she ought not to eat of the fruit of that tree, and that death would be the inevitable result. Had not God forbidden and threatened?

God warned of the consequences of sin. He

had said, "In the day that thou eatest, dying thou shalt die." But Satan, who ever seeks to deny and lower the truth of God, said to the woman, "Ye shall not surely die ye shall be as God." And it is true that the fall has rendered man much more intelligent relatively to good and evil; but Satan hid from him that he would be severed from God, and with an evil conscience. Their eyes were opened, it is said; and they knew that they were naked, as they looked at themselves.

All that which is near us appears more important and greater than that which is still distant. The forbidden tree being near, and the judgement of God far off, Eve takes of the fruit and eats. So the spirit of falsehood says to this day to men, Ye shall not die; the threatenings of God will not take effect. Man conceals from himself the warnings of God; and one does then what Satan and one's own lusts push one on to do. If a Christian is not vigilant, his conscience will lose its activity, and in place of seeing God he will see his own nakedness. Man still uses leaves to cover his nakedness. He does his utmost to hide from himself the evil which is there; but when God reveals Himself, it is quite otherwise.

God draws near as if nothing had happened; then what ought to have been a joy for man without sin, becomes because of sin, the source of immense alarm. Adam flees, and seeks to hide

from before the eye of God, as if he had succeeded in veiling his nakedness to his own eye. What a horrible thing for man to be thus hiding himself before God!

Adam fears, for conscience is always touched by the presence of God; it takes away every hope of enjoying sin when it penetrates into our conscience. Then one only sees God, Who is feared, without our being able to appreciate Him. The relations of man with God were thenceforward broken, and in a manner irreparable as to man.

“Who told thee that thou wast naked?” says the Lord. Adam answers by accusing the woman, and God Who had given her to him. Dastardliness always comes into the soul with sin. Adam wishes to excuse himself by lies, and to leave the fault and blame between his wife and God. He leaves to God the care of arranging the thing with the woman. Thus a bad conscience fears God too much to confess its sin, yet it knows too well that it has sinned to deny it. If you had full confidence in God, and were perfectly sure that God loves you, you would be very happy. But Satan is here; and his great power consists in producing distrust where there is happiness and intimate relation with God to destroy in our hearts. You trust your own will and your own efforts for your happiness; but, distrusting God, you will not, you cannot, confide to Him the care of this

happiness, and leave yourself to His mighty love.

The beginning of sin is the unbelief which doubts God. Thereby in effect Satan began. He persuaded Eve that God had kept something for Himself that the creature might not be too happy and blest.

The woman was wrong in conversing with Satan; she ought not to have listened to a voice which insinuated distrust of God. Satan persuades every man that God is too good to condemn us because we sin; and man, spite of his sin and his conscience, hopes and persuades himself that he will not be condemned. It is the voice of the old serpent. Now God has shewn by the death of His Son that the wages of sin is death.

◆

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.

“Again, you have trials which come still nearer. I am sorry for them, but not surprised at them. You must expect such things, if you become Christ’s disciple. He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me. But whosoever forsaketh ALL for My sake and the gospel’s, shall receive a hundred fold more in this present time, and in the world to come eternal life. In the mean time much meekness, and great

tenderness and respect, with but little said; a persevering firmness in the line of duty, together with many prayers offered in secret; will probably be of blessed consequence in the Lord's time, which it behoves you to wait.

“Again, many think there is no occasion to make so much to do about religion. If the acquisition of ten thousand pounds a year were in prospect, these same persons would think you could not be too active, and earnest, and circumspect, and careful to miss no opportunities, and to leave no flaws. How much better is the inheritance of the children of God, than that of ten thousand pounds a year? Therefore how much more commendable to give all diligence and care to make all sure; and rather to overdo than run hazards. Not that worldly business is to be neglected; for it is a part of our duty, and we are God's servants therein, who are to be diligent.”

“ALL HER LIVING.”

THERE would appear to be a very definite spiritual relationship between the widow of Elijah's day¹ and the one who attracted the eye of the Lord Jesus as her mites were quietly added to the costly gifts cast by the rich into the treasury.²

The Lord appraised the value of those two mites in the balance of the sanctuary, and they turned the scale in her favour in spite of the rich offerings that others had lavished; "for she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

Human reasoning might have endeavoured to persuade her that she could ill afford to give—urging the prior claims of home. Certainly many of us would have been tempted to do so in the case of the widow of Sarepta. Unbelief would have been as ready to argue against the word of the Lord in the mouth of the prophet as now when it is found between the covers of our Bibles.

It was assuredly the same source of inspiration which led each widow to do otherwise. The word of the Lord was heard and believed, and each in spirit must equally have proved that as a result of faith the barrel of meal and cruse of oil failed not, in spite of the Lord's claims having first been satisfied.

Our penury or want, dear reader, may take different forms. It may be a penury of leisure, of health, or of means. The question to ask ourselves is what we do with it. Do we place what we have in the treasury, or do we make it our excuse for not giving *at all*, whatever the crying need in the Lord's vineyard?

How really the widow of Sarepta proved (and I

have very little doubt the other also) "there is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."¹

The instrument is after all a very small matter; for the best is useless unless wielded by the power of God. But if thus energised He can make the half-hour of the busy man and the cup of cold water of the poor offered in His name in willingness and dependence, more fruitful than the life-work or fortune of one going forth in his own strength.

At the same time the solemn responsibility of those who are rich in means, health, or time ever remains; for the word says of believers, "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price."

A BOY'S TESTIMONY.

AT the end of the year 1893, we conveyed a batch of boys from *H.M.S. Achilles*, to the Mediterranean fleet. Among them we found such a sweet Christian lad, that I would like to record his testimony for the encouragement of any young believers who may read this.

The brethren in Christ were sitting on the

wash-deck locker on the top-gallant forecastle of the ship I was in, talking together concerning Jesus and His wonderful love and grace to poor sinners, when one of the boys came up, shouting for boy W——.

“Here I am, J——,” says W——.

“How are you getting on?” J—— asked, with a shake of the hand.

“Quite well, thank you, J——. I’m a Christian now, you know, J——; not like I was on the training ship, *for the Lord has saved me!*”

J—— (who was a Roman Catholic) immediately said, “So long.” May this boy’s testimony, at such a time and in such a place, prove a blessing, not only to J——, but to all who heard it. Personally, I was put to shame to think of many such opportunities on which I had failed to confess Christ. “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”¹

CHILDREN’S CORNER.

DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

The last time I wrote for *Gospel Gleanings* the leaves were falling and the howling winds were warning us of the approach of winter; now the snow is on the hills and before this reaches

you, another year will have gone, the first of the new century. Some of you are perhaps enjoying the Christmas holidays. If you have all worked hard at school through the term you deserve a holiday, and I hope you will have a very happy time. I only wish, as I have said before, I could have some of my young readers round my fire to hear their hopes and fears of the future, and have a nice talk about Jesus and His love.

Now I do hope none of you are among those who think that if you begin to talk of Jesus you are warning your friends that death is near, or that some great trouble is at hand; whereas the theme of Jesus and His love ought to be the happiest we can talk about.

You would think so I am sure if you could have seen what I have in a heathen land and noted the difference it makes where His name is not known. It is true the natives in India, the country of which I speak, call Christmas day "Burra Deen," or great day, but that is because the Europeans give large parties to celebrate it, just as they do at home.

For many, many years God's faithful servants have been preaching and teaching the people of India the way of salvation, and so now there are thousands of Hindoos and Mussulmen or Moham-medans who know the truth of Jesus and His love, and have accepted Him as their Saviour.

In spite of these rays of light it is still a land of heathen darkness, and perhaps a story connected with this may lead us to value our privileges in being able to approach, in simple faith, the Saviour Who came preaching "deliverance to the captives," and "to set at liberty them that are bruised."¹

I cannot talk to you about it, as I should like to do, so I will write and tell you of some of the superstitious cruelties and penances which these people are ready to undergo to gain heaven, such as make one long that they might know the One Who is the true and living way.

When quite a little child, I remember once being terribly frightened by seeing a ghastly, gaunt figure of a man come close up to the venetian blinds behind which I was sitting, and a hand pushed forward with a request for money. His long black hair was in tangled masses, matted together till it looked like black ropes dipped in clay. His face was tattooed with hideous white marks till it looked scarcely human; his clothing was a long ochre-coloured cloak down to his feet, and, to add to the repulsiveness, one arm was held straight up with the fist tightly closed, and had been kept so long in this position that the nails had grown through to the back of the hand. This terrible object was looked upon as sacred,

for he was a "Fakir," or holy beggar, and received the deepest veneration from the Hindoo community. He was supposed to be too good for earth, and therefore ready for heaven.

Another victim of priestcraft and heathen degradation I met, when, some years later, I was riding on a quiet country road. I could scarcely believe my eyes when I saw a poor creature lying on his chest, and drawing himself along like a crawling worm. This was to be done for I do not know how many miles, to fulfil a vow he had made to visit a particular shrine! Oh, it made my heart ache to see him grovelling there like an animal, in his heathen ignorance struggling to be made fit for heaven through bodily suffering, for, by this time, I knew that Christ had come to set the prisoners free.

Both these were Hindoos; but the followers of Mohammed, though they do not mutilate their bodies, have their own ideas of sanctity, whereby to secure an entrance into paradise. They starve for thirty consecutive days, from sunset to sunset, till they are perfectly exhausted, and will undergo untold privations and fatigue to reach Mecca in Arabia, where the tomb of their Prophet is.

I have seen hundreds of them huddled like sheep on the open deck of a steamer, exposed to terrific storms, only to have this wish gratified. They are taught to believe that one visit to Mecca

secures paradise, and a second renders them sacred. They know nothing of a change of heart or of leading a holy life, and so, after all their privations and pilgrimages, they are worse than ever, for it makes them arrogant and proud, and gives them licence to do what others dare not, and so gratifies their pride.

There was only one thing I noticed among them which was a rebuke to Christians. They were never ashamed, on sea or land, to kneel down at sunset and call on Mohammed. Of course it was only an outward act, but still I think it was a lesson to those who profess to be followers of the Lord Jesus, not to be afraid to confess Him in the presence of His enemies.

Now, dear young friends, I have been telling you of the heathen and Mohammedans, who have never heard of Jesus and His love. Let me ask how you hope to get to heaven? You know penances will not save you, do you think praying will do it? Or being kind and charitable? There is only one way, and the question is, What do you think of Jesus, Who is the way? Is that blessed name no more to you than some great name in history, which you know about, but the knowledge of which has not the slightest effect upon your soul? If so, as yet, heaven is not for you. No! Jesus is a living, loving Saviour, Who wants your *hearts*, not penances nor bodily suffering, but just

your full trust in Him and His work. The moment you trust Him you are free, freed from sin, free from the fear of death, and out of bondage; for if Christ sets you free, you are free indeed. Free, not to do as you please when you have undergone certain privations, like the poor Mohammedans and Hindoos I have told you about, but to serve the Lord in the liberty of the love which He awakens in the heart. Free, and brought into the family circle, where you can say in truth, "Our Father," because the Lord Jesus said to His disciples, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God." Will you accept or refuse His love? The condemnation of those who refuse will be greater than that of the heathen, for life having been offered you and refused, death must be the alternative, as there is nothing between, and there is thus added to your sin, the crowning sin in God's sight, of rejecting His Christ.

Jesus has died, O blest proclamation,
Hidden with Him, then no condemnation,
Judgement and sins now cannot appal,
Jesus has borne, and paid for it all.

Jesus has risen, grand consummation,
Satan o'ercome, and present salvation.
Will you refuse His sweet, loving call?
Come, ye sin-stricken, He'll welcome you all.

A TELEGRAPH MESSENGER'S CONVERSION.

“SOME five years ago,” said a friend to me a little while since, “I was a telegraph messenger at a sub-office in the South of London.

“I was a rough customer, and after a time, I was transferred to the chief office, owing to my having been reported for loitering, swearing, betting and fighting.

“Soon after my transfer, whilst waiting one day in the kitchen, I was told that a small messenger then present was a Christian. On hearing this, I went to him, and said, ‘Are you a Christian?’ He replied that he was. ‘Well,’ said I, ‘You’ll have to give that up; I’m senior boy here, and I’m not going to have any religious boys about.’ Boldly he looked into my face, and said, ‘But Jesus loves me so, and I can’t give Him up.’ I said, ‘You must.’ He replied ‘I can’t.’ I said again, ‘You must, or I’ll make you.’ But still he replied, ‘I can’t give Him up.’

“By this time my temper had risen to almost boiling point. Full of anger that he should still be religious, as I called it, in spite of my threats, I

struck him full in the face, knocking him down to the floor. With eyes full of tears, which soon streamed down his face, he stood upon his feet again, and holding out his hand for me to shake, said, 'You may be a Christian yourself some day.' But his readiness to forgive had no effect then upon me, and I roughly thrust the offered hand away from me.

"That same evening the leader of a mission, carried on in the neighbourhood of my home, sent for me to come to a class for young men held by him in the mission-hall. I went, and on arriving, I found about a dozen lads reading a portion of scripture with the leader. This being finished, a prayer meeting was held, in which all present prayed. Amongst other petitions, they asked that I might be saved.

"Up to this point I had been only an amused spectator of the proceedings, but now I began to be interested, wondering why they should pray for me. My thoughts flew back to the scene in the messengers' kitchen that morning, where the little lad had shewn how forgiving a Christian can be. I reflected how grand it was to shew such a spirit. Then it dawned upon me how great a sinner I was, and that I needed salvation before I could be like him. At last I could hold out no longer against the new convictions wrought in my heart by the Spirit of God, and there, just as I

was, I gave my heart to God. When they had finished praying, I, too, prayed, asking God to keep me, as I now wished to serve Him. On making my desire known, they again joined in prayer for me—but with a different petition this time, for it was now that I might be faithful to my new-found Master and Lord.

“The next morning, on reaching the office, my first action was to find the little fellow whom I had knocked down the previous day, to shake hands with him, and tell him that I was now a Christian. Of course it was a nine days’ wonder in the office, and I came in for no small amount of chaff from the other boys; but, thank God, He has kept me until now, and will keep me till the end.”

Dear reader, you may not have gone so deeply into open sin as my young friend had gone, when God in grace brought him to Himself, but on the authority of God’s word, you are a sinner, and you need salvation as much as he did.

In Romans iii. 23, we read, “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,” and it is because of this, and to vindicate His own righteousness, that God gave His only-begotten Son, Who died, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God. And now, God, in love to the sinner, sets forth Christ as the all-sufficient Saviour, One able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him.

Delay is dangerous, for soon the door of mercy will be shut, and God's offer of grace will no longer go forth; but *now* the Christ Who died, and rose again, waits in long-suffering love to welcome the returning sinner to Himself.

Oh, my reader, before it is too late, take God's offered salvation, and find in Him your joy and peace and rest, now and for all eternity.



ARE YOU RECONCILED TO GOD?

IF you heed the scriptures, you must know that in your natural state you are not only weak but ungodly, a sinner, and an enemy of God. Can any state be more serious? No ceremony can rectify this. You are a moral being, and guilty before God, Who sends to you in sovereign grace the word of reconciliation.

Your case is aggravated by unbelieving indifference to Jesus Christ our Lord, God's Son; for He came in flesh here below as Man among men, to bring God into the world, as He has done, and to put sin out of it, as He will do. As it is written, God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not reckoning to them their offences, and having put in us the word of reconciliation.¹ This last was when He commissioned the apostles to preach the

gospel. But man, as God knew and foretold, would not have Him at any price. He was "despised and rejected of men."¹ He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.² The world by wisdom knew not God. Were the Jews who had the Old Testament any better? He came to His own things, and His own people received Him not.² The miraculous proof was as clear as the prophetic, the moral simpler and clearer if possible than any. But the nation abhorred His humiliation, in which He did God's will and glorified the Father, and the Gentiles yet more endorsed their scorn; and both united, if for nothing else, to crucify the Lord of glory.

Man was thus proved as he could be by no previous way. Innocent man at the first temptation lost his first estate. Man, left to himself now fallen, went farther and farther from God. The earth was corrupt before Him, and the earth was filled with violence, till the end came under the waters of the deluge. God instituted the principle of government in Noah, who failed to govern himself, and had to pronounce a curse on his impious grandson, Canaan. The call of God to Abram presented His promise and set apart the line to Himself; but the sons of Israel forsook His mercy; and, forgetful of the promise, they undertook to keep the law, which could be to

1 Isa. liii. 3

2 John i. 10, 11

such only a ministry of condemnation and death. This after wondrous patience eventuated in the captivity for their persistent idolatry, and in their final ruin and dispersion for their rejection of Jesus the Christ.

It was not only failure in duty, but contempt of grace, even to casting out of His own world the Son and Heir, as truly God as He Who sent Him in fulness of love. For He came to compassionate and bless; but they would not be blessed. He came reconciling not the Jews only but the world; but the world would not be reconciled. He was among men, the Holy One of God, not reckoning to them their offences, in contrast with the law. But they loved darkness rather than light, for their works were evil. They were dead in sins, but they would not come unto Him that they might have life. Yet in Him was life, and the life was the light of men. Grace and truth came through Him; but all His appeals by word and deed ended in the death of the cross.

In that death, which was man's most grievous sin, divine grace triumphed on behalf of sinners. Him that knew no sin God made sin for us, that we might become God's righteousness in Him.¹ Reconciling is not now, as in Christ's presence, a gracious offer which man might and did reject. Through Christ we have now received the recon-

ciliation.¹ It is the blessed fact of the right relationship with God made good, the enmity gone, and establishment in favour through the death of God's Son. The believer *is* thus reconciled to God.² It is God's act. It is no gradual process, but an accomplished fact, like justification. It excludes degrees of less or more. The Christian is a new creation in Christ, an object of God's grace not only as alive from the dead, but as the fruit of His work. No wonder that being thus blessed we glory in God.

The notion that the Corinthian saints are in verse 20³ besought and entreated to be reconciled to God is fundamental ignorance of the gospel. All saints are now reconciled to God, as confirmed by Ephesians ii. 14, Colossians i. 22, and indeed by the foregoing verse 18, which is in no way confined to the apostles. Scripture never treats it as practical but as absolute truth, which such an error annuls.

The apostle simply tells the saints how he applied the ministry of reconciliation. Hence, if we would translate unequivocally, it is better to drop the "you" and "ye," saying, We entreat for Christ, Be reconciled to God. So were the ambassadors for Christ to preach in the absence of Christ, but with the blessed basis laid in His atoning death to make reconciliation effectual to

¹ I Rom. v. 11

² Rom. v. 10

³ 2 Cor. v. 20

every soul that believes. It was no doubt for the Corinthian saints or any others to preach in their measure; for such is the word now, the word of reconciliation. It is not that the apostle addressed it to those or any saints such as were *not* reconciled or only in part. So he preached, as we ought, to the unbelieving world.

Hear then the voice of the Son of God, and live. Submit to God's righteousness, and be reconciled to Him Whose love in Christ is above all thought of man.

“WHAT IS TRUTH?”

I.—THE TRUTH ABOUT MAN.

“**W**HAT is truth?” Such was the question put by the Roman governor to the king of the Jews; and though a more important or interesting one was surely never asked in this world, yet Pilate waited not for a reply, but deliberately turned his back on the only One Who could answer that question, and Who of all others alone could say, “I am the truth.” In that same short interview in the judgement-hall, Jesus had already announced the glorious fact that He had come into the world to “bear witness unto the truth,” and He had added those significant words, “Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.”

Long before this, He had told the inquiring Nicodemus, "He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God;" and John, in a later day, bears further testimony to his Master's faithful words by declaring that, "No lie is of the truth."

Bearing this in mind, let us never forget that it was Satan's lie about God that first blighted the opening page of man's history, and though the world is now well nigh six thousand years old, yet the deadly hiss of the Serpent is still heard all around, while the voice of the Son of God has no charm for the ears or the hearts of men.

Alas, alas! God's words to Adam, and Christ's words to Pilate, have been alike forgotten. What is the sad result? Man's "heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Hence, it is useless to look within its precincts to discover the truth about anything, remembering that He Who is the truth hath said, that "out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, and foolishness."

What an awful list is this, dear reader, and oh, how sadly true of all of Adam's race, for "as in water face answereth to face, so doth the heart of man to man."

The rebellious lips of men dared, in their folly, to pronounce the only sinless One "guilty of death;" but the Judge of all the earth has reversed all this, and by His verdict, which none can challenge, has declared the whole world to be "guilty before God." Had Pilate only waited for an answer to his own question, how different might have been his eternal future!

Reader, have you yourself yet heard the voice of Jesus, and thus learnt the truth about yourself?

2.—THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD.

What the truth is about God, who can tell? Let scripture answer; "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God;" and "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Hence, if man is to know the truth, either about himself or about God, he must learn it from the lips of Him Who is "the truth."

As "it is impossible for God to lie," so also, "he that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." Hence if God had not fully revealed Himself (which He has in the Person of His own dear Son), the truth that He is light, life and love, would never have been known. Grace and truth having come by Jesus Christ, all that God is in Himself is now fully revealed.

Now the truth is not only the faithful exposure of all that is false and unreal, but it is also the accurate, complete, and perfect expression (exactly as it is) of everything that exists, faithfully unfolded in all its parts, whether in words or ways, in persons or in things, with nothing hidden, and nothing obscured. This, of course, alike refers to the past, the present, and the future, which, though hidden from the eyes of men, are known absolutely to God. What eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, God hath fully revealed; and thus when Christ, the Father's well-beloved Son, was here below, He not only revealed all that was in man, but also all that God is in His own divine and holy nature. "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." One chief reason why men so hated Christ was just because He read them through and through, and knew the exact truth as to the unspoken motives of their hearts. Yet was it equally true, that while the light revealed the state that man was in, love (God's love) attracted to His Christ, Who found it ever His delight to give life (eternal life) to those who were, by nature, dead in trespasses and sins.

Have you this life, dear reader; and is your soul fully assured, on the authority of God's unchanging word, that you possess it now in Christ?

God declares that "he that hath the Son hath life ; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Such is the truth, but do you believe it, or are you, even now, making God a liar by doubting His word? "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life." "And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Reader, do you possess it?

TOO LATE.

THE above words, dear reader, recall an exciting experience of mine the other day, shewing God's watchful care over man, and His wonderful deliverance from danger.

I was travelling in North Lincolnshire ; and at a level crossing near B——, I was talking to a man in charge of the gates (which were large ones and partly open on the line at the time), when to our surprise the whistle of an engine sounded near to us.

The gateman ran to shut the gate. He seized the iron propping it open, but, alas ! he was two or three seconds *too late* to move it. The engine and train dashed past, smashing the gate up like

matchwood. Hundreds of fragments of wood and iron, mingled with clouds of dust, flew round us in all directions, so much so, that the engine which caused the destruction was hidden from our sight.

What a wreck in a moment! Yet the man who held the gate at the time escaped with only a slight wound on his arm. I had stepped forward to pull him away, but was *too late* to get hold of him, while he was *too late* to save the gate. Still God in grace and mercy was watching over us both, and He was *not too late* to draw the man clear of the train, to preserve his life from the jaws of death, and to give him another opportunity of accepting Jesus as his Saviour (for he did not profess to be a Christian).

What a God of love, Who with tender care is continually watching over us. "He hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Had this man been killed, the destruction of those gates would have been as nothing compared to his never-dying soul falling down into eternal woe, *lost! lost!* And why? Because of not accepting Jesus as his Saviour, before it was *too late*.

The railway officials who came to enquire into the accident, on receiving the particulars, remarked, "It was wonderful you were not killed. We can easily make a new gate, but we cannot make a new man." No, dear reader, man is helpless

when life is gone. "As the tree falleth so it lieth." How that engine, hidden by the dust of the destruction it caused, reminds one of the way in which Satan hides himself behind the destruction he is causing in men's souls, blinding their eyes with all kinds of worldly amusements.

God gave His only Son as a ransom for all. Could He do more? And His Son was nailed to Calvary's cross, paid all the debt, and satisfied God's just claims. Now the Lord Jesus, Who gave His life for you, pleads with you to come to Him, that He may shew you still more of the love and grace in the heart that could die such a bitter death for you. He says, Come now. "Now is the accepted time." To-morrow may be for ever *too late, too late!*



BORN OF THE SPIRIT, AND THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT.

THINK of the Lord's word, not to Nicodemus only but to you: "Ye must be born again."¹ It is not exactly the gospel, but an essential truth for all sinners at any time, if they seek to enter the kingdom of God. It is a prime and absolute necessity.

The Holy Spirit operates to this end by the word, which is symbolised by water for cleansing

the defiled, as all are naturally. Hence the Lord said before, "Except a man be born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."¹ He applies the word that reveals Christ to the soul, which produces self-judgement as well as looking to the Saviour. The soul bows to God in repentance and faith, however feebly yet truly.

It is a quickening operation, though there is not peace nor liberty. When the word of truth is heard, the gospel of salvation, one rests on redemption, Christ's work. This is a far deeper thing than the joy with which the heart hails the Saviour. For that joy may fluctuate and be clouded, till one turns from feelings, resolves, efforts, from converted self in every form, to find all the blessing in Christ and in Him only. Then it is not only new birth by the Spirit, but the Spirit seals the believer. "Because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father."²

It is of great moment that souls should recognise the twofold truth, the birth of the Spirit, and the gift of the Spirit. The Lord distinguished them, the one in John iii., the other in John vii. 39, as well as in xiv., etc. So we find, on the day of Pentecost, Peter saying, "Repent, and be baptised, each of you, on the name of Jesus Christ; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." They

1 John iii. 5

2 Gal iv. 6

could not repent without being born of the Spirit; and, being baptised on the Lord's name, they were to receive the gift of the Spirit.

The Samaritan disciples attest the same distinction in Acts viii.; and the same truth is equally plain in Acts x. and xix. The Spirit wrought vitally in souls to believe; and when they believed the gospel (with whatever interval), they received the gift of the Spirit. This last is the characteristic of Christianity: not to be born of Him only, as every Old Testament saint was; but when they believed in Christ's work, they received the Spirit also, and were sealed. "And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty,"¹ as none had till then. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead on account of sin, but the Spirit is life on account of righteousness."² The Spirit thus given is power for communion and practice; but Christ was already in them as life. Power without life does not secure from falling away,³ nor from judgement and perdition.⁴



"THERE is a divine delicacy in the ways of God. He does not clog His gospel with conditions, nor is the joy of forgiveness dashed by formal stipulations as to future conduct. He would have you be, not a hired servant but a son—a son whose interest and honour are bound up with His own."

1 2 Cor. iii. 17

2 Rom. viii. 10

3 Heb. vi. 4-6

4 Matt. vii.

LOVE'S QUEST.¹

Down to the shades of darkness,
 Down to earth's blackest night,
 Down to sin's gloomy prison,
 Down from the realms of light
 Came Jesus Christ the Saviour,
 To ransom and redeem
 The slaves of sin and Satan :
 How bright His graces gleam !

He passed long nights in praying,
 Passed through this blighted world,
 He passed through deepest sorrow,
 Love's banner thus unfurled :
 To death, this wondrous Saviour
 Was for our sakes resigned ;
 Reproach His dear heart breaking,
 Who came the lost to find.

Up from the grave He's risen,
 Up from the tomb of death,
 Up to the Father's glory,
 For so the scripture saith.
 He conquered death by dying ;
 He Satan's power laid low ;
 Yea, He, the risen Saviour,
 Has vanquished every foe.

In glory now behold Him,
 The Saviour God, Who died,
 He calls on you to trust Him,
 And in His love confide.
 Oh, why refuse salvation ?
 Why be for ever lost,
 When Jesus died to save you ?
 Oh, count, dear soul, the cost.

¹ " For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
 Luke xix. 10.

SALVATION.¹

Two servants of the Lord (one now with Himself, the other still in His service), nearly fifty years ago, visited the interesting village in Lincolnshire which is so bound up with the history of John Wesley. Staying awhile at the home of one of these young men (who were both engaged in business in London), they were desirous to do something, during their holiday, to spread the tidings of salvation in the neighbourhood.

Following Paul's example, they preached the gospel of the grace of God in the Market Place on the Saturday evening, and walking "down street" early on the Lord's day morning, they passed an open door. Words of prayer struck upon their ears, and they paused to heed. They found that three aged labouring men were entreating God's blessing upon themselves, His people, and His work, for that day. One particular petition struck these two younger men, and venturing into the cottage as the prayers closed, they entered into conversation.

"We heard your petition," said one. "You prayed: 'Lord, save us! Save us with an everlasting salvation! Save us that we never can be lost!' We want to shew you that this is even now all true of you, having already believed on

¹ "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls,"
1 Pet. i. 9

the Lord Jesus Christ." After opening out the scriptures to them, they invited them to the afternoon and evening preaching at the old market cross, to hear more of the fulness of the gospel told forth.

These dear old men—true-hearted believers, no doubt—were calling upon the Lord to save them, when, according to His word, He had already done so. He Who reads the heart knew what the utterance of their inmost soul was, and had made good to them His own truth: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." "The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him."

They further prayed for an *everlasting* salvation, (such was their fervency of spirit) through lack of knowledge; for what else than "everlasting" is the salvation which is offered, and which sinners are being entreated to obtain? "He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life." The truth which the Lord unfolded to Nicodemus shewed that man's great need was the new birth, and he who by faith is born of water and of the Spirit into the kingdom of God, has everlasting life through His name. Eternal life is his, and the knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom He hath sent.

But these three men had the conviction that they might ultimately be lost, although so endued

with the spirit of salvation, prayer, and petition. The continuance of divine favour and of a perfect redemption, they deemed to depend upon themselves. But naught gives peace and rest to the soul like the conviction that the believer "shall not come into judgement," for he has life in Christ Jesus, Who is on the throne of God. We *were* dead in trespasses and in sins, but are now, by faith, quickened and raised together with Christ, seated in Him in the heavenlies.

Such is the position of the believer as seen of God. What joy to know it as a present fact, by the Holy Spirit! I pray not to be saved nor to be delivered from condemnation; but, resting on God's word, I give Him the praise for all the present fulness of salvation, made good to one's soul by faith. Salvation is Christ's hold upon me, and not my hold upon Him. Responsibility of christian walk of course follows, and properly becomes the Christian as the fruit of the Spirit, because of the possession of life, and not to obtain or retain it. But being justified by faith we have peace with God; we likewise joy in God, and rejoice in hope of His glory.¹ "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus."

Thus was the truth of the gospel proclaimed in the hearing of those gathered about the Epworth

old market cross, the three-fold petition of the old labourer being made the basis for the unfolding of the fulness of the grace of God, and the perfection of the work of Christ.

And the appeal to the reader is to take the word of God as it applies to himself, shewing him his individual need and God's provision on the ground of the death of Christ. If the atonement made is sufficient for God, will it not satisfy you? Then accept it by faith, unto your everlasting welfare. "These things have I written unto you, that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life."¹

THE LAW NO SAVIOUR.

MEN'S hearts were not fully put to the test before the Lord Jesus came. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father."² It was all fully brought out then; and what man's heart is was plainly proved.

When man saw God, he hated Him. Although of old God was present in the midst of Israel, He

1 1 John v. 13

2 John xv. 22—24

was not openly revealed. He was hid within the veil, within which the high priest, shrouded in a cloud of incense, alone approached His holy throne. Neither did man's heart come up there to see the holiness of it, nor did God come down fully to man. It was not the full revelation of God. Consequently He says, "If I had not come, they had not had sin:" not that they had not sinned; but that the Lord would not hold them finally guilty until He had manifested Himself in Him of Whom He had spoken to Israel.

But when God was made manifest, man hated Him. God had before revealed a great deal, but not Himself. He revealed much in the figures of the law, which also foreshadowed and veiled better things; and we find the use man made of it. I am not here speaking of the law, as trying man's conscience; though, in passing, we may notice that too as bringing in—not sin, for that was there already—but transgression.

To turn for a moment to the use man made of the law, in contrast with God's purpose in it. God used it, as we have seen, that the offence might abound—that sin might appear exceeding sinful. Man set about to make himself righteous by the very thing by which God was proving him a sinner, and sin exceeding sinful. This you too are doing, if you are seeking to satisfy

God's demand of righteousness by your own ways. Man seeks to save himself by the righteousness of the law ; but God's use was not that, for He never thought of saving by any but Jesus.

When a child is forbidden by its parents, by an express law, and breaks that law, it not only makes manifest the evil disposition that is in its heart, but there is then positive disobedience and the consciousness of sin in that which the child does. It might have followed its inclination in many cases before, without consciousness of sin ; but not so now—the consciousness is affected and defiled. Even so by the law we are under condemnation and death.

To return to the figures and shadows of better things. Men took these very ceremonies and sacrifices, which were typical of that one sacrifice which sin had made necessary, and by them, their conscience nothing satisfied, tried to eke out their own righteousness ; and they follow the same course now. We know that there were a great many sacrifices for sin under the law ; for God has tried this way, that we might know its incapacity of bringing us to Him. To employ similar means is mere superstition, and denial of Christ.

Men first set about to be righteous by commands which they cannot fulfil ; and then they seek to add ceremonies to eke a righteousness of their

own. This is the sum of the religion of so many—making an attempt to keep the law, and adding ceremonial observances thereto, and then attaching the name of Christianity to it, while all God's truth is shut out.

Further, after all, the conscience never can be satisfied; because there will be the dread of that day when God shall make manifest the secrets of the heart. The soul is not on the road to have a conscience at peace with God. Travelling on this road the man will go on from one thing to another. He may add ceremony to ceremony, and tradition to tradition, but he has only got farther from God—he has only got more between God and his conscience, and no forgiveness after all. The conscience gets satisfied for a moment or two by man's dealing with it in this way; but there is no peace with God.

When sin is brought into the presence of God's holiness, the conscience, if not despairing, gets hardened. See what a state those Jews were in who could go and buy Christ's blood for thirty pieces of silver, and yet have scruples of conscience as to where the price of blood should be put—refusing to put it into the treasury, because it was the price of blood! Anything will suit man, provided it is not his conscience in the presence of God. Where He is detecting the state of heart, and making known complete forgiveness,

so that it can be in His presence without sin, it is another thing. Nothing is more simple than this, glorious as is the grace that has wrought, indeed, it is too simple for those who are not taught of God.

But, simple as it is, a man's conscience is thus in the presence of God; and anything suits man rather than that. Though God is infinitely high, (and He is very simple to man's wants and to man's conscience), the washing the hands is not that which God accepts but that which comes from the heart.

Here we have something more simple than all the intricacies of ceremony and tradition. God's light deals with realities; and God purposes, by the powerful light of His Spirit, to bring before the conscience of man all the different evils of his heart. When God's light shines in, that evil of which the conscience before took not notice—a vain thought or the like, that passed and was forgotten—is now made manifest. That which comes out of the heart defiles the man.

SAVED AT SEA.

GEORGE P— was a sailor, and had sailed many thousands of miles. Like many other seamen, he was an ungodly, reckless fellow, blind

to the things of eternity ; a willing tool in Satan's hands, ever ready to do his behest. He revelled in the pleasures of sin, and was passionately fond of the various amusements which are so freely provided for the poor deluded pleasure-seeker.

When ashore at Cardiff he went, as usual, to the theatre. During the play he was pricked to the heart by a sense of his sinful condition, and was caused to think of the judgement to come. And as he reviewed his past life, his conscience was aroused. Dismay and terror filled his breast as he thought, with the deepest concern, of his soul's eternal welfare. There, in the theatre, the awful fact dawned upon him that he was on the highway to ruin ; and he trembled with fear lest he should be called suddenly to meet God in his sins, and be for ever lost.

The soul-exercise and the deep impression made on his heart never left him ; and shortly afterwards, when in the same town again, he was accosted by a stranger, who gave him a pressing invitation to hear the gospel. He went, and he heard the blessed tidings that God in perfect righteousness was offering a full pardon to all who sought it in His appointed way.

At the close of the service, at which he had been a most attentive listener, he was pressed in the course of personal conversation to seek the pardon of his sins that night. After some

hesitation, "I can't see my way clear now," was his reply. Then turning to his brother, who had accompanied him, he said, "Phil, if we go on in our sins we shall both go to hell." He then left the hall with another sin upon his conscience, the terrible one of rejecting the Son of God.

One bright morning in May, when upon the forecastle of his vessel, which was then sailing between Cardiff and Lundy Island, God once more aroused him to a still deeper sense of need. He was not then with the throng of giddy pleasure seekers, nor in the place where he had heard of the only way of peace, but he was alone with God. He was caused to loathe himself. Feelings of utter dissatisfaction with himself crept upon him; "O wretched man, that I am!" his sin-laden heart acknowledged. "Woe is me! for I am undone," he truly felt. And as the ship sailed over the sea under heaven's broad canopy, he looked by faith to Calvary, and beheld the Lamb of God dying for him.

There and then he trusted Christ as his Saviour, and as the light shone into his gloomy, dissatisfied heart, it dispelled the dense darkness, and the peace of God flooded his inmost soul. As he beheld God's Lamb, he knew that He, the Just, bore his sins, and that he had found redemption through His blood; and from his crime-hardened heart the burden of his many foul sins rolled away.

They were cast behind God's back, into the ocean of His forgetfulness, nevermore to be remembered against him.

Thus sailor George looked to Jesus Christ and lived. And on the authority of the word of the eternal God, which states "That whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life," he knew he was saved.

You, dear unsaved one, may have been troubled on account of your many sins, and many times you have heard of the loving Saviour, and that,

"Forth from eternal light He came,
God's boundless love to shew,
The wonders of His matchless love
To rebels here below."

Yet you are still unsaved, not having believed to the salvation of your soul, and not knowing by faith, the cleansing of the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Look to the Saviour now. Trust Him now for salvation. Rest now in the work which He accomplished on Calvary's cross; and then you will be able, as sailor George and thousands of others, to affirm truthfully and with holy assurance, "He was wounded for *my* transgressions, he was bruised for *my* iniquities; the chastisement of *my* peace was upon him; and *with his stripes I am healed.*"

“A BRAND PLUCKED FROM THE BURNING.”

SOME little time ago, hearing of a poor man dying of consumption, I went to see him. After some enquiries as to health and circumstances, I turned the conversation to the more important matter of the welfare of his immortal soul. The anxious look on his haggard face said as plainly as words that the joy of salvation through faith in Christ was unknown to him, and that his future was quite dark. But he would say little, and after trying on this and on subsequent occasions to shew him God's way of salvation for lost sinners, I asked a fellow Christian to call and see him.

To him the sick man was more communicative, and asserted his disbelief in the inspiration of the Bible; but on being shewn how impossible it was for man ever to have written such a perfect book, he admitted that this was true, and said that *when he got better* he should go to church and lead a different life. This confession opened the way for the reading of Romans iii. 10—23, and Ephesians ii. 8, 9; the former scripture shewing the sinful helpless condition of man by nature, and the latter that if man is to be saved

at all, it must be "by grace," and not of works. No amount of church-going, nor the turning over of new leaves can ever atone for past sins.

The wonderful third chapter of John's Gospel was also read; the last verse of which specially struck the invalid, "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," and he became alarmed at the thought of God's wrath abiding on *him*.

At the next interview he said, "Ah, you don't know the character you've been speaking to! I've wasted my life and ruined my health; for I've been a terrible drunkard, a gambler, a blasphemer, and more than all, an infidel! I've read infidel books in order to argue with religious people. In short, nothing has been too bad for me to do."

To the sick man's great astonishment, his visitor said heartily, "I am very glad to hear your confession, for it was for such as you that the Lord Jesus died. He Himself says, 'I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.'" But the poor man stumbled at the simplicity of the way, and was troubled because he could not do something to merit God's favour. He was shewn that the helplessness of the robber on the cross was but a match for his, and that, as the simple faith of the robber found favour in God's sight, so would *his*, if he would but believe God.

The sick man asked many questions on 1 John v. 1—12 (for his doubts as to the inspiration of the Bible had now vanished). He could not believe that God could save him so easily. He was, however, silenced on that point by that precious verse, "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."¹

The dying man, however, passed through great trouble at this time on account of his past life, and, realising that his days were numbered he became more and more anxious to be saved. Light gradually dawned on his soul; and he trusted in Christ and His finished work for the salvation of his soul.

I was told one evening I should see a great change in him, when I visited him again, and so I did. Instead of looking anxious and depressed, his face beamed with joy, as he told of what God had wrought for him.

His only anxiety now was for his wife, who hated the name of "religion," and abused him when he tried to tell her of the One Who saves sinners. But she could not help seeing this change, beside the unusual gentleness of his bearing with her.

His last days were full of joy and peace; and

the Bible was his constant companion, from which he greedily drank in every word of comfort he could derive. Four or five months after my first visit he passed peacefully away, to be "for ever with the Lord," Who had died to save him ; truly "a brand plucked from the burning."

M.H.

JOSHUA THE HIGH PRIEST.¹

"**A**ND he shewed me Joshua the high priest, standing before the angel of Jehovah, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And Jehovah said unto Satan, Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan ; even Jehovah that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee ; is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

Here, Joshua represents Jerusalem—the Jewish people. But they are guilty and polluted. He "was clothed with filthy garments," a true type of every sinner's condition before God. "There is no difference, for all sinned and do come short of the glory of God." His "filthy garments," like the rags of the far country, bear witness to his guilt and pollution.

But as he is, he stands before God. And now what will He do with him? What can He do with such a guilty one! Will He cast him out?

Will He say, "Oh, he is blacker than I thought he was; how can I make *him* whiter than the snow?" Oh, no! blessed be His name! He will cast out his sins, but not himself. None who so came ever was cast out, and none ever shall. He has given His word that "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." On no account—on no consideration will He "cast out." It is His will to save.

But Satan is "standing at his right hand to resist him." Mark the place he takes—"his right hand." He seeks to resist his deliverance; if he could he would have thrown him back into the fire, out of which God in His mercy had plucked him. But Jehovah speaks for the poor, trembling sinner. "Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" He throws His shield around Him. Who can touch Him? He has been plucked as a brand out of the fire by the mighty arm of God's salvation and all the powers of hell are as nothing. They cannot reach him now. God is everything to him. He spreads His wings of protection over him and he is safe for ever.

Oh, what a refuge for the soul! And it is open to all; "whosoever will, let him come." May every unsaved sinner who reads this paper, flee at once. Stay not, I pray thee, until thou hast finished it. Thy need is urgent—thy danger is great—Satan is at thy right hand watching to

deceive thy soul and hold thee in his fearful grasp. Flee, oh, flee at once for thy life! The door stands open wide night and day, and the voice of Jesus still says, "Come unto me I will give you rest."

And now Jehovah takes Joshua's case entirely into His own hands, and answers for him in every matter. Joshua opens not his mouth. What could he say? He was guilty, and as such he was cast upon the grace of God. Divine mercy was his only resource. And now God acts toward him according to what He is in Himself. He meets all his need in the riches of His grace.

"And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him." His sins which were many are all forgiven. Not one is left. They are put away according to the demands of holiness, and the perfect work of the cross. God cannot look upon sin; it is unbearable to His nature; but He can put it away, blessed be His name, and this is the first thing He does for the soul that is before Him. "Take away the filthy garments from him."

What can Satan now say? He is silenced for ever. And now, sin gone, the soul saved, the God of mercy speaks directly to the sinner himself. "And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee." What tender compassion, what solid ground of peace in those

words, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee." Think Whose words they are, oh, troubled soul. He can ne'er deceive. It is God Who says it, and that is enough.

Such are His ways of grace to every soul that believes in Jesus. "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."¹

And now that the filthy garments are gone, Joshua is clothed with the raiment of God's providing. The best robe is put upon him. "I will clothe thee with change of raiment." God not only *speaks* for Joshua, but He *acts* for him. Joshua now stands before Jehovah not in "filthy garments," but in divine righteousness. It is in the heart of God thus to bless, but He cannot clothe a guilty one with the robe of righteousness. His way is first to cleanse and then to clothe. Therefore our sins are washed away in the blood of Jesus, and we are clothed with Christ Who is the righteousness of God.²

Extracted.



GRACE not only makes a man more a man, but it also makes him more than a man—more lowly in disposition, more lovely in conversation.

¹ Rom. x. 12, 13

² 2 Cor. v. 21; Rom. iii. 19—26

THE SINNER AFRAID OF GOD.

A NRENEWED man stands in dread of the holiness of God. He cannot contemplate God's glory with delight, but in that glory he must stand if ever he is saved. He may be changed, and he must be changed if ever he meet it with joy; but that glory changes not. The sun is just as bright when earth obstructs our view of it, as when we behold it. Clouds may intervene and hide its glory, but when the clouds are taken away, there is the sun just the same, just as bright, as warm, as glorious as ever, and the moment the veil is taken away, we see it as such. Where is the soul that can stand in the presence of the glory of God and contemplate that glory in his sullied and natural mind? "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?"

A child, in order to see the natural light, must previously be brought into life; and so must we, for God cannot change. Were it possible for God to give up one atom of His glory, or one particle of His holiness, the effect would be that there would be no place where sin would not enter. Who can tell what the consequence would be if God could suffer the least diminution of His glory?

Where is the spot that would then be sacred? Where would then be the place of unfading glory?

But God's glory cannot be lessened or diminished, and what secures it is the unchangeable nature of God Himself. It is this, and the consciousness of it, that brings uneasiness and alarm into the soul unchanged by grace; for it is conscious of its unfitness for that glory, that this glory is far removed from what he loves, and that therefore we must feel convinced that God is not for us. If it be really true that God's glory cannot change, who then can be saved?

The believer sees it is an unchangeable glory, and this delights him. The unbeliever is conscious it must be so, and he is angry. "If God be thus," he thinks, "why should I have anything to do with Him?" He struggles against the truth which condemns him. He has no objection to receive God's earthly favours and blessings, sending rain on the just and unjust; but, provided he could have what he likes on earth, and the enjoyment of it, he would not care ever to see God, or His glory either.

It is not, it cannot be, pleasant to the natural mind to contemplate the judgement. No man likes to be judged; it is not natural to man; he does not like to have sounded in his ears that: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement." This is a fact, and yet man is

always putting it off. Putting what off? God's presence. He does not want to see God; and is not this practically testifying that he is not at peace with God, that there is something which keeps him still desiring to be kept from God?

Extracted.

JESUS THE BREAD OF LIFE.

JOHN VI. 30—40.

IN these verses the rejected Messiah presents Himself as the object of faith to hungry souls, and leading others to hunger after Him. The manna, of which the Jews were now proud, however slighting it of old, was not the Bread of life; Jesus was. The manna, though a blessed sign from God, was food that perishes. The Father gives the true Bread out of heaven, and gives it, not to Jews only, but to the world. What grace! for nothing is so opposed to the Father as the world.¹ When they said, "Lord, ever give us this bread." His reply was yet more pointed: "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

Reader, have you eaten of the Bread of God come down out of heaven? If not, you have not life; you are still dead in your sins. Baptism has

¹ John xvii. 25; 1 John ii. 15, 16

its place and meaning as a sign ; but neither it nor any other such institution can give life. Jesus, as He avers, is the Bread of life. That you are still of the world, and a friend of the world, is a sad fact ; for friendship with it is enmity with God.¹ But such is God's grace that Jesus came down to give life to the world. It was not now a question of Messiah's kingdom, but of life for sinners. Own His word Who could not lie, bow to the word which declares you God's enemy, and to that which proffers you in Christ so great a boon as a life which cannot die, a life which came down from, and will return to, heaven. The terms are simple and sure. "I am the bread of life : he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Jesus satisfies, and none but Jesus. So it was, if one came then to Him ; so it is, if one believes on Him now.

Do you hesitate, linger, and turn aside? How many they were who then had seen Him and did not believe ! How many now have the yet greater privilege of the Holy Spirit's written record of Him and do not believe ! Is it so with you as you read His own words? So even before then the Lord warned His hearers, "Ye *will* not come to me that ye might have life."² Men feel the pinch of bodily hunger, which is at worst for a little. How blind to their soul's need for eternity as well as now !

1 James iv. 4

2 John v. 40

Despised as He was by men and rejected by the Jews, the Lord comforts Himself in God His Father. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Consider this entire submissiveness to His Father's will, and this gracious assurance that, if you come to Him, He will in no wise reject you. Do not, in the face of both, let your guilty past or your shameful present keep you from Him. If no creature in heaven or earth that knew all would have you, you are just the one for Jesus, and He is just the Saviour for you. Granted that you are too bad for any other; (but none other could avail you); Jesus with open arms welcomes you. "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost."¹ Can you after all be worse than "lost"? He is the unfailing Saviour of the lost one that believes on Him.

How He deigns to plead with you! "Because I came down out of heaven, not that I should do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me. And this is the will of Him that sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up in the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone that seeth the Son and believeth on Him should have life eternal; and I will raise him up at the last day." Think of the Son so truly Man that He exercises no

choice as to any that come! There He is the sent One, the perfect Servant, to receive whosoever may come. And as it is His will Who sent Him that He should lose nothing of all that He gave Him, but raise it up in the last day, so it is the Father's will, that *everyone* that sees the Son and believes on Him should have life eternal (for this is the great individual need) and have Christ to raise him at that day.

Oh then, my reader, trifle no more, put off no longer. You have sought self and followed this world far too long. Look to the Lord and Saviour: He will break Satan's chains that bind you. To each that believes on Him He gives life eternal now, and promises a resurrection of life at His coming, at the last day. Confess Him with your mouth and with your heart believe on Him risen; and you shall be saved.¹ He cannot fail: all the failure has been in you. As surely as you believe on Him, He bore your sins in His own body on the tree; and God, sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the law's righteous demand should be fulfilled in you that walk not according to flesh but according to Spirit.²

W.K.

WHATSOEVER is not above the top of nature is below the bottom of grace.

1 Rom. x. 9

2 Rom. viii, 3, 4

THE ABIDING VALUE OF GOD'S WORD.

THE thought of the abiding value of the scripture should be peculiarly helpful to the child of God in the present day. It means so much to him in this world of change. Men frequently profess an anxiety to discover what really is the truth, yet very often they fail in their quest. In many cases the failure results from refusing to give Christ (Who is the Truth) His true place, and therefore from disowning the presence and work of the Holy Ghost. On the other hand, one often hears the most positive testimony to the reality of the Spirit's work, Who ever delights to "guide into all truth."¹ Two recent cases are specially before me now.

"I HAVE THE WORD."

In the first case, I found an aged woman living in a lonely cottage, and therefore unable to reach any place where the truth was publicly preached. I soon discovered that I was speaking to one born of God. The words of a Sunday School teacher had been blessed to her as a child. Hence one could thoroughly enjoy a conversation with her on our common portion. Although regretting her isolation, she remarked, "I have the word."

How very much this means to a subject heart! How good is God to such souls, giving them again

and again to realise the preciousness of Christ. Men may think such words result from ignorance, scarcely to be tolerated in the present day; but who can estimate their value in God's sight?

“IT'S ALLUS FRESH.”

The speaker was a poor crippled man, unable to move many yards from his cottage. Surely he could give no opinion on a “religious question!” He was not likely to know anything of criticisms — “higher” or lower! Yet a short conversation disclosed the fact that he was another child of God. He spoke of the time when he paid no attention to the truth, but now he recognised in it the Father's voice to His child. In common with many others, the fourteenth of the Gospel by John was found to be his favourite chapter. In fact he remarked of it, “It's allus fresh, even if one reads it every day.”

One may doubt the wisdom of having a “favourite” chapter; yet who will question that God had thus often spoken to His lonely child? Theology must leave man a dead sinner, but the word is ever fresh to the quickened soul, becoming a constant source of joy and praise.

H.W.



You have no less because others have much, nor have they much because you have little. Another's wealth is no more the cause of your want, than Leah's fruitfulness was the cause of Rachel's barrenness.

STRONG DELUSION, OR STRONG CONSOLATION ?

STRONG DELUSION.

A TERRIBLY solemn day is fast approaching for this world, when all who are in their sins will believe a lie, for the sad reason that in God's day of grace they would not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. The church of God will soon be gathered home with Christ in glory, for even now the Spirit and the Bride say Come, and ere yet another morning, the Bridegroom's voice may be heard in the air, "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." But when the Spirit and the Bride have left this scene, what about the unsaved of Christendom? Scripture answers, "God shall send them strong delusion that they shall believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Reader, how does this affect you? How, as you scan these lines, do you personally stand with God? Should the Lord descend from heaven to-night and find you still lost and in your sins, your future may be thus described; forgotten by man, forsaken by God, and for ever in hell!

Scripture is silent as to the exact moment, after the church is gone, when the "man of sin" will be revealed, but the "son of perdition" is coming,

even he "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." Can anything be more appalling than this? This "man of sin," under the controlling power of the devil, will blasphemously dare to sit as God in God's temple; and his coming, which is the direct result of "the mystery of iniquity" (even now at work in this world), will be marked by "the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders." Oh! think of this, ye unregenerate souls, and ye gospel-hardened sinners, on whose dull ears the constant wooings of divine love and mercy fall, alas! so often unheeded!

Careless, Christless, Godless, and hopeless, you are running the awful risk of being found among those who will "worship the beast" in that dark and dreadful day, when he shall "open his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven."¹ Mercy's day will then have passed away for ever, and you who now despise and count as nought the precious blood of Christ, and who perhaps have heard but not obeyed the gospel times without number, will then come under this strong delusion, so that, being deceived, you will believe a lie!

The present refusal of God's grace must, sooner or later, end in judgement; therefore be warned in time, ye unrepentant souls, lest "the day of the Lord overtake you as a thief in the night," and, amidst strong delusion, you perish in your unrighteousness! One thing is certain, that if alive on the earth when that dreadful day comes, you will be deceived first and condemned afterwards.

STRONG CONSOLATION.

OH! what an infinite mercy it is that this is still the day of grace, and that we have to do with a God Who cannot lie, and Whose word is as stable as His throne! Yet, alas! a sleeping Christless world prefers anything and everything to God's word. Men's thoughts and men's opinions are eagerly sought after and blindly followed to-day, while God's eternal truth is either quietly ignored and forgotten, or else openly defied and trodden under foot. Yet, amidst it all, comes the loving voice of Jesus from the throne of the majesty on high, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else."

Calvary is past, redemption accomplished, and glory entered by the mighty Captain of our salvation; and by two immutable things (God's word and oath) in which it is impossible for Him to lie, strong consolation is now offered to all who "have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." This hope, which is nothing less

than a living Christ, yea, our great Fore-runner, entered for us within the veil, is the "anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast;" and hence, however rough the storm may be, the believer can enjoy this strong consolation which nothing can disturb or move, since it rests on the firm foundation of God's unchanging word and oath. Is there an anxious, trembling soul that reads these lines and dreads the coming wrath, then be it with you as it was with the terror-stricken man-slayer in the days of old, who fled for refuge to the city God had provided for all such. Desperate and hopeless indeed would have been his case, had there been no escape from the revenger of blood; but oh! what strong consolation energised his faltering steps, as, running for his life, he passed through the city gates and knew that he was safe from the pursuer until the death of the high priest, when he was free to return in safety to the land of his possession.¹ Now, our High Priest can never die; and hence poor trembling soul, God offers thee this strong consolation in the One Who has entered in within the veil, and Who is in Himself, "the anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast," for all who trust His cleansing blood, and rest upon His word. But if thou refuseth this strong consolation, thou may'st, ere long, be one of those who shall come under strong delusion, and believe a lie! S.T.

LOVE DISPLAYED !

No man of greater love can boast,
Than for his friend to die ;
Thou for Thine enemies wast slain,
What love with Thine can vie ?

"For a good man some would even dare to die ; but God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."
Romans v. 7, 8.

How slow men are to accept the truth of the activity of God's love towards the sinner! Not that God can condone sin in any measure ; but He displays His love because of His great desire to deliver man from the consequences of the sad moral condition into which he has fallen, both by nature and practice. Who will deny man's need, but he who has deliberately given up God, the truth, and all revelation? And who God's love—that has been fully shewn out to whoever cares to see it? As to man's need, there was nothing he could of himself do to meet it. All help must come from outside, for the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

"Even so *must* the Son of man be lifted up." Nothing could save the poor dying Israelites from death—the result of the fiery serpent's bite, but the eye of faith uplifted to the provided remedy—the serpent of brass : neither was there anything but a crucified Saviour that could meet, and more than meet the full measure of man's

guilty need. "Even so *must* the Son of man be lifted up!"

And the love of God was not unequal to the provision of such a remedy; Jesus told the fulness of this love when He came from heaven to make known heavenly things. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." What a mercy! What a provision of grace! What a proof of His love to ruined, rebellious man, dead in trespasses and in sins! Surely this ought to be a sufficient exhibition of what God's heart is to such guilty ones, that He should thus spare His beloved Son. It was His greatest possible act, and included all else we get. While man's condition morally before God was such that nothing but the uplifting unto death of His only Son would suffice to deliver him by faith, God was ready and willing that Jesus should become the victim. "God will provide himself a lamb," said Abraham to Isaac—and he laid his own son upon the altar. Jesus was the One of Whom Isaiah prospectively spoke as concerning Israel: "Jehovah hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all;" language which by faith, the believer can now apply as the basis of a righteous gospel message.

But if God in love gave His Son thus, was the Son Himself a ready sacrifice for sin, and a willing

substitute for sinners? Yea, He loved me and gave Himself for me, says the apostle of the Gentiles. He loved *me* and gave Himself for me: it is the privilege of every individual believer to know. The apostle beautifully reasons in Romans v. that when we could do nothing Christ died for the ungodly, and this He did when we were sinners, yea, enemies. And yet there is reconciliation for us to God on the ground of Christ's death, and full salvation to the believer because of His resurrection life. Thus may we rejoice in hope of God's glory.

In all this display of divine love, there was shewn that which cannot humanly be understood, for who can fathom all that was in God's heart that He should so commend His love to us, or measure the fulness of Christ's pity, that "while yet sinners" He should die for us? Was there anything in us to attract Him to earth? Surely not: everything down here would and did cause the deepest sorrow to His heart, as He came into contact with the result of sin on every hand. He was perfect in all His ways; His delight was ever to do His Father's will; the will of Him Who could look down and say, "This is my beloved Son, in whom is all my delight. Hear him!" And yet, while for a good man some would even dare to die, He died for His murderous enemies, ungodly sinners, in the due time when they were

proved without strength. And this includes yourself dear reader. Ah! for us He bore the just and full judgement of God: "All thy billows have passed over me," that blessed One could say.

It is recorded that the tyrant Dionysius condemned the Pythagorean Pinthias to death, but that on his friend Damon offering himself as surety, he was allowed to visit his family and to settle his worldly affairs. Everybody was deeply concerned as to the outcome of such an action, especially as Pinthias had not returned when the day of execution dawned. Crowds assembled about the scaffold, and Damon the generous-hearted surety, was brought forth to die in his condemned friend's stead; when suddenly Pinthias arrives according to his word, and the innocent was spared. The whole city of Syracuse was much moved and sought the culprit's pardon, which Dionysius readily granted, being full of admiration for the faithfulness of the condemned man, and the devotion of his friend Damon. So that even the heart of the powerful tyrant could be drawn to the extent of entreating their friendship.

Thus does history illustrate by contrast the gospel of God. Faithfulness, devotion and love, are to be found even in fallen human nature. "No man hath greater love than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend;" but what love

can compare with His Who offered Himself a surety, a willing substitute, not to be slain for a congenial friend, but for His enemies? And if such a display of man's devotion could touch the tyrant's heart to forgiveness, how much more should the exhibition of divine mercy and devoted love find a response in your heart to the promise of eternal life made by Him Who is now at God's right hand, "the chiefest among the thousands, and the altogether lovely"? Out of God's pure love arose the great eternal thought and act of man's redemption. "A big heart has been laid yonder," said one, as we one day turned away from the cemetery; but the biggest, warmest heart in the universe is God's, Who has overflowed in richest blessing and in the fullest display of mercy and of grace in the gospel.

To the reader, the appeal is made to accept this offer of love and of life while there is yet opportunity; spurn not the pardon that awaits thee, but respond to the loving entreaty made to thee and to all. "As though God did beseech, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

H.W.P.



HE enjoys much who is thankful for a little. A grateful mind is a great mind.

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS.

MANY expressions (in common use amongst Christians) would be harmless enough, if men were more simple, teachable and upright: but Satan is continually employing all the deceivableness of unrighteousness, in order to impose upon men with the semblance of truth. He is ever aiming to mix poison with our food; and according to the prevailing sentiments of the more religious sort of persons, he accommodates his devices, making some damnable heresy palatable and unsuspected, by grafting it on, or infusing it into, the doctrine that most currently passes with apparently serious people: just as an artful destroyer of vermin mixes his poison with the very food of which they are severally most fond. Such plans of deception, such methods of keeping asleep in sin, as succeed to the uttermost where the precious truths of the gospel are not known, are of little avail where those truths are generally known and considered as essential to true religion. But shall the enemy, then, here give up his designs, and make no further attempts to deceive? Has he nothing in the human heart congenial to devices of another kind? If men can no longer be lulled asleep in carnal security, either without any religion, or by superstition, forms of worship, or pharisaical self-righteousness, does he:

give it up as a lost case? By no means. He has many ways of effecting his work of deception yet remaining. But, alas! numbers, both of teachers and writers, seem ignorant of his devices. As a friend of mine expresses it, "They barricade the front door, and keep guard there incessantly, but leave the back doors and windows unguarded and unclosed!" They have discovered that the human heart is prone to self-righteous pride, but seem not aware that it is equally prone to the love of sinful pleasures and worldly objects; and that the Pharisee and the Antinomian lodge more peaceably in the same dwelling, than we are apt to suppose.

Extracted.

"LITTLE THINGS."

OUR lives are made up of "little things," are they not? Little moments, little duties, little trials. The great and startling things only happen now and then, but the way in which the moments are used, the trials borne, and the duties done, makes a life little or great, in God's sight.

When David, the shepherd lad, was taunted by his brothers about "the few sheep" he had left in the wilderness,¹ he was acting in obedience to his father's command by taking food to his brethren in the camp. And in the performance of this little

service, he was brought into the circumstances which led to his becoming the champion of Israel. He had more than once risked his life for those "few sheep" in the wilderness, when they were attacked by wild beasts. And God honoured his faithfulness by taking him from the sheep-fold and raising him to the throne of Israel.

When the throngs of worshippers were passing through the courts of the temple in Jerusalem, the rich dropped their gold into the treasury of God. But the Lord (Who knows little from great) picked out a poor widow who was throwing in two mites, and so glorified her act of loving self-denial by His commendation, that for some nineteen hundred years it has been the comfort of His people who have large hearts but light purses.

To give a cup of cold water in the Lord's name seems a very little service, does it not? It is not the *gift* however, but the motive of the giver which the Lord says will be rewarded.

God will have truth in the "inward parts," for nothing escapes His searching eyes. Neither long prayers, nor large almsgivings, nor loud profession without love and reality in the heart, can stand in His sight. Hence the little ones and "little things," though appearing small to human eyes, are noticed and valued by Him, without Whom a sparrow cannot fall to the ground.

In the ninth chapter of Acts we read of a

woman called Dorcas. Where did she live? At Joppa (the modern Jaffa). Who was she? We do not know. What was she? A disciple. Was she rich? We are not told. What was her occupation? Mostly making garments for the poor. Truly a humble employment; yet when that lonely woman died (for we are not told of any relations), the apostle Peter travelled from Lydda to raise her from the dead, and restore her to her sorrowing friends and neighbours. The world might wonder what there was to bring an apostle to perform a miracle for an obscure woman, known probably only to a little circle in Joppa. But she was one of God's jewels. Her little niche in life had been so well filled, her moments spent in such loving deeds, that she could not be done without. And her name has come down to us, and is a household word. She "being dead, yet speaketh."

Would you not like to know that every little detail of your life was of value in God's sight? I am sure you would. Then you must be the sons of God¹ through faith in Christ Jesus. God is Creator, and all are His creatures, but *not* children, till born of water and the Spirit. Take care that the little moments which are speeding God's children to home and happiness, are not hurrying you away from Christ and heaven. s.

A FEW LESSONS DRAWN FROM CHINESE PROVERBS.

I.

IN seeking to make known the gospel to the heathen, I have found some of their own proverbs very useful for attracting and holding their attention. The greater part of the women of China, though by no means lacking in natural intelligence, are entirely without education, and have never been trained to think. Consequently, when a foreigner begins to talk to them, they are apt to imagine that it must of necessity be a foreign language they hear, and hence they often do not even try to listen.

But suddenly, as they sit or stand around the foreign lady, examining her dress and person, and perhaps vaguely wondering what she is talking about, a few well-known words fall on their ears—a proverb which they have heard and quoted from childhood. They prick up their ears. “Why! she is speaking our language!” they exclaim in astonishment; and when, having by this means won their attention, she repeats the proverb a second time and then begins to apply it, they listen, and find that they *can* understand her words after all.

Thus the proverb, which contains a true thought, though of course with but an earthly meaning, opens the way for divine truth which can illumine their darkness, and give life to their dead souls.

Thus did the apostle Paul win the attention of the educated and intellectual heathen, who gathered around him at Athens: he quoted one of their own poets, with whose writings they were doubtless well acquainted; but he carried them far beyond the germ of truth contained in the words quoted.¹ In this way (and not in the spirit of compromise now so much in vogue), he was "made all things to all men, that he might by all means save some."

It would be of no use to quote their own poets to Chinese women, who as a rule have learned nothing about them, but a proverb reaches them just where they are, and meets with a hearty response; and where could we get higher authority for the use of proverbs in illustrating a gospel address than from the example of our blessed Lord Himself?²

The Chinese possess a wealth of proverbial literature, many of their adages closely resembling our own, others only to be understood upon acquaintance with their country and customs. Many are so trenchant and so well illustrate higher truths, that it may be profitable to consider

a few of them. The first which I will quote was a great favourite of mine in speaking to the dear women who were accustomed to flock into the room in which we received them, and tried in our simple way to tell them of the Saviour Who loved them and died for them.

“YOU CAN’T GET WHITE CLOTH OUT OF A
DYE-POT.”

What a world of truth is contained in that brief sentence—truth of which those who are in the habit of uttering it have very little idea! Yes, when a cloth has been dipped in a pot of, say, black or red dye, it certainly does not come out white! Job knew that when he said, “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.”¹ And when the prophet Jeremiah speaking by the Holy Spirit said, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?”² he certainly did not expect such a heart to produce anything white and pure—anything fit for the eye of a holy God. But there we reach the pivot upon which the argument turns; and until *that* point is settled it is useless for us to proceed any further.

Do *you*, dear reader, own your heart to be as evil as God says it is?

Those Chinese women used to come in to see

us on their way to an idol-temple, with large yellow bags of incense hanging on their arms, and rosaries in their hands, hoping by means of incense-burning and prayer-chanting, to "heap up merit," and get their sins forgiven. What did that prove? Either they did not believe in the utter badness of their own hearts, or that they thought, despite the warning of their own proverb, that they *could* bring white cloth out of the dye-pot. And indeed it was not likely that they would have more than a faint idea of the corruption of the natural heart, for their consciences had never been confronted with the heart-searching word of God, and they knew nothing of divine and human perfection, as once manifested in a man—the God-man—in the midst of a sinful world. But what of *you*, dear reader, who have read your Bible and seen portrayed therein the excellencies of the Christ of God?

These incense-burners were the religious people of China: what about the religious people of England? How many—oh, how many!—are hoping by church or chapel-going, by prayer and by almsgiving, to merit the forgiveness of their sins! If the eyes of any such should fall upon this paper, I do beseech you to pause for a moment and solemnly, as under the very eye of God, to ask yourself this question: "Do I believe what God says about my heart?" God says that

your heart is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Do you believe that, or will you dare to charge God with telling a lie? For remember, there is no middle ground: either those words are true or they are false. Will you venture to set up your own word against God's?

Yet again. You talk (and so do the heathen) about "doing good;" but *God* says, "There is none that doeth good; no, not one."

How *can* your deeds be good, when they spring from a wicked heart? Fair enough they may look in the eyes of your fellow-men (and it is no doubt something to be thankful for, as far as *this* life goes, if you have been preserved from the grosser sins which bring misery both on the sinner and on those around him); but what looks clean enough in the twilight is seen to be foul indeed when exposed to the bright light of day, and what appears white when compared with anything darker than itself, is well-nigh black seen by the side of the freshly fallen snow. And how will your best deeds appear, as contrasted with the spotless purity of the "great white throne?" What will your nature look like when confronted with the perfect holiness of the One Who shall sit as Judge upon that throne?

We cannot see all the blackness of our own hearts, because being "deceitful above all things," they trick us into imagining them to be good; but

God, Who sees and knows them thoroughly, has pronounced His verdict upon them. I have bowed to that verdict: *have you?* If so, you have surely given up all idea of such a heart producing anything that can merit God's favour, and when you have reached that point, as Job had when he said, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth," then you are just in the place where God can meet you, and pour out upon you the boundless riches of His grace, as being the very one for whom Christ died.

"God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."¹

"By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."²

And then, when by faith that great salvation has become yours, God's Holy Spirit will produce in you the good works which will never spring from your own poor sinful heart.³

C.H.P.

JESUS ATTESTED.

MATTHEW I.

BORN of the virgin Mary, when espoused to Joseph who represented the Solomon branch of David's house, Jesus accomplished the

wondrous prophecy of Isaiah vii. 14. He is the true and only Immanuel, God-with-us. It was grace infinite and an immense truth. He was the image of the invisible God. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men, the true light as thus come into the world. It is the nature of light to make every thing manifest; and Jesus casts light on every man.

But this alone could not put away sin, nor could a sinner be thus only reconciled to God. Reconciliation is in the body of His flesh through death. He made peace through the blood of His cross. Therefore was He to be called Jesus; for He, and only He, should save His people from their sins by His atoning death. He was Jah become man to die for their sins, Jehovah their Saviour.

The prophets in general, and none more than Isaiah speaks of Jehovah blotting out Israel's iniquities, and not remembering their sins. Here we have His birth Who was to effect this salvation. He was not only Messiah but also Jehovah, the true God. Only He could save from sins, and He become man, to suffer for sins; for thus only could it be done righteously, yet in grace. God fully revealed, is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three persons and one God. So He tells us, and we believe: how otherwise could any know? But now we know it from Himself, become a man among men, even Jesus.

What an infinite truth to believe! and how

simply yet fully it explains the foundation of all blessing for guilty man, and for all creation also in due time. Yet not in His incarnation only could it be but in His atoning death!

As is the blessing now to all that believe, so is the sin and the curse for such as despise the infinite and holy and self-sacrificing and all-accomplishing love of God. Beware that you heed not the great liar and murderer, the sleepless enemy of God and man. He does his utmost to deceive you, lest you should turn to God and believe on His Son. Oh, do not reject the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ the Lord, that you may escape the wrath to come, and live to magnify our great God and Saviour Jesus. W.K.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

Num. xxi. 1-9

ISRAEL had sinned, "and the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, and much people of Israel died." Sin is an evil thing at all times, but it becomes doubly so under certain circumstances. Such was the case here. They were a redeemed people. They had been delivered from Egypt with all its hard bondage, brought safely through the Red Sea, and into the wilderness, where they had experienced the kind loving care of God for long years.

Had they been obedient, they would long ere

this have found a rest in Canaan, but they were a rebellious people, and again and again provoked the Lord by their murmurings. The seventy-eighth Psalm is a striking comment on their ways. In the scene before us, they had but recently been delivered from their enemies after making a solemn vow to God, and now as "they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom, the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt, to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread." This was the basest ingratitude after all their deliverances, and met with summary judgement; which had the effect of humbling the people, and led them to say, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people."

That prayer was heard, and deliverance came, but in God's own way. He might at once with a word have healed them, but they were to be taught what man is so slow to learn, that sin is no light thing in God's sight.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole, and it shall

come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it shall live."

The divine method of healing was altogether opposed to everything man would have imagined.

It was by fiery serpents the people had been bitten, and it was by looking at the likeness of the fiery serpent that the healing came. This was the very last thing they would have cared to do, but there was no help for it.

Naaman the leper turned away in a rage, when told by Elisha to go and wash in Jordan seven times. But both he and those whom we are considering had to learn the lesson, that life can only come through death. What the Jordan was to Naaman, so was the serpent of brass to the children of Israel. There was no healing virtue in either. Both were significant of death and judgement, and it was the obedience of faith that secured the blessing.

Let us now turn to the third chapter of John, and we shall get further instruction and profit. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." We, like the children of Israel have sinned, and are in danger of perishing. God in His infinite mercy has provided a way of escape, by sending His only begotten Son, Who went to the cross and offered up Himself as a sacrifice for

sin; and as those who had been bitten by the fiery serpents were bidden to look at the serpent on the pole and live, so are we bidden to look by faith to Jesus that we might have life, eternal life. It is the same wonderful story of life through death, and the sixteenth verse shews us the source of it all. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

H.

**“MY FLESH IS MEAT INDEED, AND MY
BLOOD IS DRINK INDEED.”**

JOHN VI. 51—58.

THE Lord follows up His appeal to the Jews as the Bread of God come down out of heaven that gives life, not to them only but to any benighted heathen, in short to the world. He, the Word and Son incarnate, the Son of man before them, was the true Bread for needy sinful man to eat and live. Anyone then who saw the Son and believed on Him should have life eternal, and He would raise him up at the last day.

This is the truth of God. The believer on the Son of man should not perish but have everlasting life. Yet Incarnation is not all the truth. He was about to die. God had been irreparably dishonoured by sin; man had been utterly lost by it.

No creature could meet either want. Jesus only could glorify God about sin as a sufferer and a sacrifice; Jesus only could save the lost and bring them into blessing from God and communion with Him, such as Adam innocent never had in Paradise. But it could not be without His death, and His death appropriated by the believer, as well as the Bread of life, the Incarnate Son. Hence when the Jews murmured at the Lord's incarnation, He only urged the truth the more in verses 47—50, and in the close of 51 begins to announce a still deeper and more solemn truth, the necessity of His death, and of His flesh given for the life of the world.

There might be, there are, those who boast of the living Saviour but stumble at His atoning death. Their faith is human, not of God. If they felt rightly as to their sins, they would hail yet more Him Who died on the cross, Whom God made sin there, that they might become God's righteousness in Christ. Not their death but His could deliver.

Those who receive this incarnate Son from God do also receive Him going down lower still, into death, yea, death of the cross, and giving us His flesh to eat, and His blood to drink. Indeed the Lord puts this more peremptorily than the Bread. "Verily, verily, Except ye eat [or shall have eaten] the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood,

ye have no life in yourselves. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath life eternal, and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is truly food, and my blood is truly drink. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live on account of the Father, he also that eateth me shall live also on account of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven; not as the fathers ate and died: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever."

The death of Christ thus made ours by faith separates us to God from man and the world, as eating the Bread could not do. It lays the ground for an entirely new sphere which His ascension opens for me, and enables me to enjoy Him as He was here in a way beyond all previous experience.

It is striking also to note that the Lord here begins (verse 53) with our once for all eating His flesh and drinking His blood to appropriate Him in the full Christian way of His death. But He calls also for the habit of thus making Christ our own (verses 54—56). Both are true and important. If my faith has once appropriated Him, it is life confirmed to my soul. But if it is simple and true faith, I shall feed by faith continually on Him thus dead, and thus have that communion which is here expressed by dwelling in Christ and Christ in me: a wondrous privilege which has no counterpart in

the verses which speak of Him incarnate only. A far deeper and more intimate enjoyment of grace accompanies the Lord dead appropriated by the soul.

A further advance appears in verse 57. As Christ is said here to live, not "by" the Father, which gives a questionable sense, but "on account of the Father," which yields a blessed and most edifying truth; so "he that eateth me" (the habit), "even he shall live on account of me." May we who rest on His death in all its efficacy have this abiding fruit of it too, habitual faith, that we may live with no motive but Christ before us, as He did with the Father before Him. W.K.

PERSONAL TESTIMONY.

THE case is simple. A young man is brought out of darkness into light. When in darkness the name of Jesus was only a word like other words to him. Now he is in the light, it is a real, living, loving Person, his own Saviour. One Who in love to him died for him.

He finds that God in His wisdom intended that all His children should be where all have Christ before them as all their own. Just as the sun is set to rule in the heavens in earthly things, so is Christ in heavenly things the centre of all.

The young man felt what it was to be simply a child—to be in a child's place—where he could

gaze upon his Saviour. This seemed overwhelming to him. There could be no mistaking the fact, for the Holy Spirit had endeared Christ so sweetly to his heart. He knew himself to be ignorant, and in many things very foolish. And for this reason he prized the rich love of his Saviour's heart above all else.

When quite a babe in Christ he felt what a little seemed to be made of the Lord Jesus, Whose precious blood had procured so much for us. Soon after his conversion, a lady well-known to him was anxious that he should become a member of the chapel to which she belonged. This led to a conversation which caused the lady to burst into tears, as in his simplicity he sought to know why she wished him to leave the few who in that village were gathered to the precious name of Jesus.

Young as he was, he saw from the word that God had given the blessed Lord Jesus as a rock of abiding blessedness to supply the need of all. To rest beneath the greatness of Jesus' blessed name was very precious to a poor helpless one like himself.

Things of time and sense may and do change, but he gleaned two or three things when very young that never change. First, he saw from God's word that no less a person than the Son of God appeared in flesh to take up his case, and

made atonement to God by His own blood for his sins. Secondly, that when the grace of God took him up, it was to fit him for companionship with Christ in glory. Thirdly, that he belonged to Christ now, and at any moment Christ might come for him, to take him to be with Himself for evermore.

E.T.

CALLED TO GLORY.

THERE is one great truth made known to us by the Spirit; that Christ was sent from the Father, for the purpose, not only of saving sinners, of saving the ungodly, but of bringing them into *His Father's house*, and into the eternal favour of God—into the very blessedness with Himself of the Father's love—joint-heirs with Himself in the glory, and like Him. “We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him.”

The consummation of this will be seen in that day, when we are brought into the blessedness of manifested union with Christ; partakers with Him in the conscious enjoyment of the Father's love, in the glory of Jesus—partakers of the same glory.

“Father, I will,” said Jesus, “that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am;” and “the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.” Everything that Christ has, except

and only His essential Godhead, is His people's ; —all that glory and blessedness is theirs. And very blessedly does the Holy Ghost enable those whom He teaches, to have in present apprehension that *this* glory is then for them.

Extracted.

MRS. J—— ON “GOING TO HEAVEN.”

MRS. J—— was for years a well known figure to most in B——. With her well-stocked basket of Bibles, books and tracts, slung over one arm while the other held, may be, a roll of the year's almanacs, she would make her way along the busiest thoroughfares, and into one and another place of business, not only offering her goods, but speaking—very often to master and servant alike—the solemn truths of the gospel.

Her comings and goings in time began to be pretty much looked for on all sides, and in some cases appreciated. Business men found it a pleasant break in the monotony of everyday occurrence to receive a visit from the cheery, sunshiny old woman, and, while on the one hand they parried her home thrusts, they would rally her about herself, her profession, and the like. In almost every instance however it was Mrs. J——, and not her opponents, who got the best of the argument. And just how much good resulted

from these little encounters, where God's word aptly quoted was the all-powerful weapon wielded by our earnest old sister, only "the Day" will declare.

It was on one such occasion that something of the following nature took place. Two gentlemen stood talking together in the doorway of a store, when Mrs. J—— appeared in sight. One, the master of the establishment, began to remark on the old Christian's peculiarities as he termed them; he being one who had often tried to corner her, but in vain as he then owned.

"I tell you," said he, "there's no matching her."

"Nonsense," said his friend. "I'll put a question to her now as she comes up, that I bet she won't answer."

"You'll be beaten," returned the other; "I advise you not to try."

It was to be put to the proof however, for Mrs. J—— came to a halt at this place and no other. Both accosted her in the friendly fashion that was generally accorded her right and left in the city, and number two shortly made opportunity to submit his masterpiece of a poser.

"I say, Mrs. J——," he began, "I understand you can talk lots about the Bible and all that. Now I want to ask you one thing."

"Say on, sah," replied Mrs. J——, readily choosing scriptural words in answer, after her quaint custom.

“Do you think,” said the gentleman, “that God is going to have an old black woman like you in heaven?”

“No, certainly not,” was the answer given without the least dismay and with great energy: “God won’t have any old black woman in heaven, course not. But, sah, I tell you dis, I’m going to have a new body—a glorified body—like Christ’s. Dat’s what. The Bible says,” quoting chapter and verse, “‘we shall all be changed,’ all who are washed in the precious blood of Christ. And then,” she wound up with her old joyous laugh, “shall we be for ever with the Lord.”

“But, sah,” she went on, “lemme ask you dis here. Does you suppose dat God goin’ to take a rich white man to heaven, *wid all his sins ’pon him?*”

Her questioner was dumb.

“I told you so,” observed the store-keeper.

Our sister was unquestionably victorious, and further improved the occasion by preaching Christ to them both in her simple hearty fashion.

A. B. C.

A WORD AS TO SALVATION.

WITH some it is a question whether it is really possible to have the knowledge of salvation on this side of the grave. Had God not spoken plainly on the matter it would be indeed.

the greatest presumption to speak with certainty. But since He has declared so much about salvation it becomes us to accept, simply, all He has said.

By nature and by practice we were all lost and far off from God. And, moreover, we were beyond recovery, so far as our own efforts were concerned. We were without strength to do anything to please God; and, as sinners, we stood guilty and condemned before Him. To add to this horrible condition, we were held in the power of Satan, unable to escape his hands. What need there was of a mighty, loving Saviour!

How grand to find that God was beforehand in this matter. He Who knows all things knew that His creature, Adam, would yield to temptation and fall (by whose disobedience sin and death came into the world). In His great love He had in store One Who would meet all that His holiness and righteousness against sin demanded, as well as the deep need of the helpless, guilty sinner, and Who would break the power of Satan for all who put their trust in Him. This One was none other than His only begotten Son, Jesus, the Lamb of God, "foreordained before the foundation of the world, but manifested in these last times." In Him is God's salvation—Him Whom He sent to be the Saviour of the world.

As it is God against Whom we all have sinned so it is He only Who knew what would meet His

righteous requirements, and clear us from our guilty stains. He required a sinless, spotless victim to suffer and die. There was but One Who could offer that which Justice claimed. None but Jesus, the Son of God, the Lamb of God, could drink the bitter cup and bear the heavy load. None but He could pay the great price for the sinner's redemption. And none but He could break the power of Satan, whose slaves we all have been. Praise His holy name, He has done all this and more. He has indeed "done all things well." Upon Calvary's cross every claim was met, every foe overcome. There the mighty Conqueror said, "It is finished." There He bowed His head and died. He went into death and the grave, but on the third day rose triumphant over all, and is now on high exalted, a Prince and a Saviour. To Him all knees shall bow, either in grace or in judgment. There is salvation in no other, "for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

Now that all has been done, the flood-gates of God's love to a guilty world thrown open, so to speak, He has commanded the good news of free pardon, the gift of eternal life, to be published in the ears of every creature under heaven, on condition that they truly repent and believe on His Son. One simple look of faith brings the blessing: "Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the

ends of the earth." By one look at the brazen serpent lifted up, the bitten, dying Israelite lived: so whosoever believeth in Jesus, lifted up, shall not perish but have eternal life. The convicted jailor got peace and joy to his soul, from those words, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house."

The manner of salvation is clear; "for the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." "The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." "It has pleased God . . . to save them that believe."

God's grace brings salvation to all. When the poor man lay by the roadside, robbed, wounded, and half dead, the good Samaritan came where he was; so the Lord Jesus came down to us in our lost and ruined condition. He "came into the world to save sinners." "While we were yet sinners, he died for us." God justifies the ungodly when they believe. When we were His enemies His love stopped us and broke our hearts, and bowed our stubborn wills. We in no way merited His love, but our sins deserved His just and unsparing judgement.

THE UNEASY CONSCIENCE.

THERE is much to weary us, much to draw out our anxiety as to present circumstances here; and there is much as regards the natural mind which shrinks at meeting God. The natural conscience of a man, even while he is engaged in the things of this life, often testifies to him that all is not right: he may not always, perhaps not often, feel this silent monitor. Business, pleasure, gratification, may dissipate the thought that there is something coming which he is not prepared for.

But though unwelcome, the thought will obtrude, and weary him and make him uneasy, particularly if he is continually seeking righteousness; he will be very weary to find he has not courage to meet what he knows he cannot avoid. Nay, even he who disclaims all outward regard to what is right, who is on the broad road of sin and ruin delighting himself in abounding iniquity, even in his very hey-day of enjoyment and sport, an uneasy thought will sometime or another be felt which tells him, "This won't do. This is not the end for which I was made. There is something coming."

Perhaps he may not experience this while in the very act of his jovial pleasures; but when alone, a word that has been dropped, either in a discourse or in conversation, or something he has

read, or a passing circumstance, will force him to acknowledge, "Well, after all, that is the truth, whether I believe it or not. This short life must end in a coming judgement, and I am not prepared for it."

This feeling of uneasiness and alarm will obtrude on the mind, whether we view the individual as seeking to justify himself at the approaching day of account, or whether we see him as delighting in the manifested wickedness of his heart. In the one case, he feels his wants, but is looking for strength where it cannot be found, and making no progress, is very uneasy; and in the other the very thought of a God Who hates the things he is doing every hour of the day is a thought fraught with alarm.

Now I suppose there is no person who has heard the gospel preached, who has not at one time or another been made thus uneasy, whether he is seeking what he looks upon as the means of justification from himself, or whether he is seeking for what he esteems most highly,—present enjoyment in sin. This leads him to the consideration of one great possibility: "Well, perhaps after all, God may be against me."

It is this thought that makes the sinner alarmed; and he whose conscience is greatly troubled, who feels his weakness, and finds the difficulty by which he is surrounded, his secret feeling is, "God is not at

peace with me—He is against me.” There is the great truth, the great cause of controversy in the conscience, there is no peace. No matter what are his circumstances, they may vary and change, but will make no change in what makes him thus uneasy: for it is the same calm unchanging God he has to meet, and he is conscious that God is not at peace with him, and he cannot say, “I know, come what will, God is for me.” It is this that makes the natural conscience tremble and feel uneasy.

There are many under similar experience, even by the teaching of God’s Spirit, and are deeply conscious of their not being at peace with God, and continue thus in suffering till God reveals Himself. But I am not now speaking of them, but of those whose natural conscience leads them to know that God is *not* for them. The scripture tells us, and the conscience when once enlightened sees that God met all this in a manner peculiar to Himself—that He met all that a man’s conscience can make out against himself, and He met it in such a way as to make a man conscious of possessing peace in the Lord Jesus Christ; and it is really wonderful—wonderful beyond our utmost limits of comprehension—that amidst all our misery, degradation, sinfulness, and weakness, God is found to be for us.

CHILDREN'S CORNER.

WHEN *Gospel Gleanings* came out last year several thought that a corner should be kept entirely for the young, and so there has been a separate article monthly for our juvenile readers.

It has struck me lately however, that all these articles have been *gospel* addresses; and though "the old old story of Jesus and His love" can never be repeated too often, still among all our young readers I sincerely hope there are many who have accepted the gospel invitation, and having given their hearts to the Lord, are looking out for advice and help for the way; so I thought it would be nice to have a little talk this time about being *followers* of the Lord Jesus.

"My sheep hear my voice and they follow me," the Lord says,¹ and in following you become an imitator, so St. Paul tells us to be imitators of God as dear children. Perhaps the cry goes up from your heart, "Lord, I want to follow and please Thee;" if so, you may be sure He will hear the cry and answer it.

You know that to walk against a crowd is hard work, and so is swimming against a current, but this is just the position of every Christian, old or young—always going against the world and its ways. "Love not the world, neither the things

that are in the world.”¹ This is a plain command, is it not?

Now you are still too young to be striving for the money, power, or position of the world which are snares to older Christians, but there are, if possible, worse and certainly more numerous snares and pitfalls prepared by Satan for the young, and only by keeping your eye fixed on Christ will you be enabled to escape and conquer.

I think one of the greatest snares for the young is the desire to be popular: and this leads them into the company of those who are outwardly quite respectable, but who sneer at God's word and what they call narrow-mindedness. Now you may be still at school, or in a shop or factory, and have to mix with all kinds of boys and girls, and this cannot be altered; but whom do you make your companions? With whom do you settle to spend your holidays or hours off work? God's word says, “How can two walk together except they be agreed?”² I believe there is nothing more likely to hurt your own soul than this companionship, where you would feel it out of place to speak of the Lord, and besides, you may be a snare and stumbling-block to someone else, who has heard you are a Christian and is perhaps watching you closely.

There is still another subtle snare of Satan for

the young, viz., books. A book may be ever so amusing, or cleverly written, but I would warn you earnestly not to read a line of it, if you know that God's word is made light of or jeered at in it. You are too young to argue the matter out, and Satan will rejoice if he can disturb your soul and upset your christian walk, by some cleverly written book. Better be considered ignorant and behind the times than destroy your peace of soul, and bring dishonour on the Lord Who died for you. Let His word and will be ever before you as your guide, and consider whether what you read honours or dishonours Him.

I write earnestly about this matter of books for I know one life that was ruined by it, and a testimony that was bright for God, darkened for years.

Ask the Lord, dear young fellow-believers, to keep your feet in the narrow path close to Himself, and to make you an "overcomer," one to whom all those beautiful things are promised in the second and third chapters of Revelation; and if spared to old age, you will be glad that by His grace you heard His voice in the bright days of youth, and that you gave Him the best of your life as just a little thank offering for what He has done for you.

LESSONS FROM CHINESE PROVERBS.

II.

HE HAS GONE INTO THE BLACK DYE-POT.

OUR second proverb, like the first, has reference to a dye-pot.

“He has gone into the black dye-pot,” is what the Chinese say of one who is incorrigibly wicked. Their meaning is that, whilst other colours may be changed by re-dyeing, a garment or piece of cloth that has once been dyed *black* will always remain black; no amount of steeping in any other colour will affect it. In the same way, the man in question has become so bad that there is no remedy: he is past mending.

Is there one of my readers who has come to the same conclusion about himself or herself? Have all your efforts at reformation proved fruitless? Do you feel that the words of the prophet are indeed true in your case: “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil.”¹ Does conscience tell you that you are past mending, *lost*, and can do nothing to save your soul?

If so, there is hope for you, dear friend. Hope! nay, a blessed certainty of cleansing and salvation,

if you will but avail yourself of it. You may despair of self—and it is well if you do. Others may despair of you, but there is One Who is able and willing to take your case in hand.

Poor drunkard, with no power to resist the terrible craving which is dragging you down to a drunkard's hell—lover of pleasure or of gold, whose heart is daily becoming harder and more degraded through yielding to the enticing voice of sin—murderer, under sentence of death, even you are not too far gone for the tender and compassionate Saviour to welcome you to His bosom, if you will but turn to him in simple faith.

“What! would He receive a vile sinner like me?”

Listen to His own words : “Him that cometh to me, I will *in no wise* cast out.”¹ “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was *lost*.”² And listen to the testimony of the apostle Paul—once the persecutor Saul: “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”³

According to his own words, Paul had been in “the black dye-pot,” and still more deeply dyed than you or I (though we may feel as though that *could not* be), but what did he become after the grace of God had stooped to pluck him thence?

1 John vi. 37

2 Luke xix. 10

3 1 Tim. i. 15

One of the holiest and most devoted servants of Christ who ever lived—perhaps the very holiest: “The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.”¹ And God is ready to shew the exceeding abundance of His grace to, and in *you*, dear friend, whoever and whatever you may be. “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Yes, one drop of that precious blood is enough to remove the stain of countless sins, and to make your black soul “whiter than snow.”

And that is not all, for the grace of God which saves us is able also to keep us clean, and lead us in the way of holiness, as it did the “chief of sinners,” whose words we have just read.

Many years ago a servant of Christ was preaching the gospel in one of the streets of Exeter, and, led no doubt by the Holy Spirit, he uttered the words: “*The vilest sinner in Exeter is the most welcome to God.*”

A poor wretched woman, passing at that moment, was arrested by the words.

“I am certainly the vilest sinner in Exeter,” she said to herself; “is it possible that I am the most welcome to God?”

She stopped and listened to the gospel; despair gave place to hope, hope to joyful certainty, and from that day forward, the poor slave of sin and

Satan was a child of God, washed in the blood of the Lamb, and on the road to glory.

Dear reader, only come and prove Him. Prove the pardoning love and cleansing power of the Saviour Who is stretching out His arms to you and saying, "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

C.H.P.



THE WOMEN OF MATTHEW'S GENEALOGY.

MATTHEW I. 3, 5, 6.

THE father had an importance beyond the mother in a Jewish genealogy, though he might only be such legally, as was the fact with Joseph, son of Jacob and husband of Mary. Yet he was of all moment as being the lineal descendant of Solomon.

But a far deeper and wider principle is apparent in the unusual introduction of four women, of whom none but the Holy Spirit would ever have thought in such a connection. Honoured women were not wanting from the beginning, like Sarah and Rebecca; and an extraordinarily favoured virgin closed the line. But why pleased it Him to bring in Tamar, and Rahab, and Ruth, and the wife of Uriah? Why these only? There were

the gravest reasons to a righteous Jew's mind for saying not one word about any of them. They were all offensive to his feelings and his judgement, though in different ways. Others, blameless and venerated, were passed over in silence: why select those who had one blot or another, and especially in giving the ancestry of the Messiah?

It was to mark, even in the brief summary which evinces God's design, that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways higher than man's, and His thoughts than Israel's thoughts. The state of man, of the Jews, was such that the Messiah would surely be rejected. He was Messiah after God's heart, not theirs. Absolutely devoted to God's will and glory, zealous, righteous, yet meek and lowly in heart, He rebuked their faithlessness and self-seeking, their corruption and violence, their covetousness and ambition, their hypocrisy and unreality. Prophecy and miracle and holiness surrounded His head with a triple halo, truer and richer than painters have conceived; yet the truth He was and lived and preached roused the swelling hatred that led Him to death, ay, death of the cross; which was the Jew's great sin, but gave occasion to God's grace in redemption through His blood, now proclaimed in the gospel to the vilest sinner who repents and believes in the Saviour.

How strikingly the inspiring Spirit incidentally prepares for this grace in singling out such as the Jews regarded as scandals! Has this no divine call to you, reader, if you do not already believe on Him? Without question, such goodness on God's part ought to lead you to repentance. Your sins may differ; but you are unfit for God's glory as you are; and where then must be your portion, being born of him who was cast out of paradise? Undoubtedly it were a hard though a just punishment of your sins. But God does not leave you without the assurance of a Saviour Who bore sins and was made sin by God Himself on the cross, that He might be just and justify him that believes on Jesus, him that is of His faith. By grace Jesus is made righteousness to faith; as the sinner has only sins, and no righteousness for God.

Do not think you are too wicked for His grace. See how God blazons before all His own Son come of Thamar, the incestuous mother of Phares and Zara. Bow before such wondrous compassion, as the express mention of such a sinner implies, no matter how Jewish pride might try to hide the truth, no matter how it might resent such mercy.

See again where Rahab, the harlot Rahab, stands. Yes, forgiveness is open to such an one, for her faith was real; and the Saviour disdains not one that looks to Him. "Him that cometh unto me I will *in no wise* cast out." "Believest

thou this?" You may not doubt a thousand things that the Bible says; but do you believe on Jesus? He only avails for you, a lost sinner. Believest thou this? Who truly believes but the sin-convicted sinner?

Many may fail to see the grace shewn in the mention of Ruth. For she surely was a gracious person and of a character as gracious as unspotted. Still she was of Moab, none of whom according to the law could enter into Jehovah's assembly to the tenth generation. Yet grace forbade not her marriage to a pious and mighty Israelite, and made her a foremother of the Lord.

The last of the four is a heinous case like the first; and all the more because the great David was the chief partner in her guilt who was Uriah's wife. Who has not read the dismal tale, so grievous and humiliating to every saint's heart? so dishonouring and hateful to God? Yet here His grace so presents it as to shew that no such shameful sinner need despair, through Him Who disdained not to let all the sin and shame be known as well as forgiven.

O then, sinner, hear and live. He Who was thus descended gave Himself for such as you. None else could be saved; for all really sinned, and all are dead in sins. Jesus gave His life a ransom; and God accepts it for everyone that believes on Him.

A ROYAL RECOGNITION.

THE powers that be are ordained of God, and He has allowed that kingly rule should obtain among the nations. It is the Christian's place to be subject to these, and not to follow after those who speak evil of dignities. This is in accordance with scripture; which also clearly shews what the Lord Jesus is yet to be, both as Messiah to His own people the Jews, and as ruler over the nations—His kingly power exercised, and owned by all in true allegiance.

The minds of British subjects are everywhere occupied with the crowning of their king, his worthy and official recognition, anointed head over his own empire. His nobles and people are enthusiastic in responding to the call to shew loyalty to the one to whom all this homage is properly due. There may be objectors here and there, and some who stand aloof; but the result will not be affected. King Edward VII. will be crowned as such before the assembled dignitaries, and the fact of this royal recognition proclaimed to an admiring and assenting world.

God had a select people in Israel whom He delivered from Egyptian bondage, and brought into the land He had promised to their patriarchal fathers. But they were not content to retain Him over them Who thus wrought so mightily on

their behalf: they wanted a king as other nations had. Man likes an object to look upon, hence he becomes a "hero-worshipper." God allowed their faithless desire to be gratified; but while He through His prophet separated David to that end, they chose for themselves a man as king for his fine presence and military prowess. But Saul sought not after God, and ultimately he who was God's anointed came to the throne after a period of rejection, as an outlaw and wanderer whose life was sought. Man's leader fighting against the chosen of God! So it ever has been in the world's history since Cain slew his brother Abel; and it will be so to the last act upon earth, when fire from heaven overthrows the adversaries warring against the Christ of God. David, however (who in his rejection typified Him the world now rejects, having crucified and slain Him) was watched over by God; and when Saul fell by the sword on Mount Gilboa, the shepherd-king was duly recognised and given his royal place. Singled out by the prophet according to Jehovah's direction, he became "the Lord's anointed," commissioned to rule over His own people. Thrice was David anointed; (1) by Samuel, before his father and brothers;¹ (2) as king over the house of Judah;² and (3) when "all the elders of Israel . . . in Hebron before the Lord . . . anointed David king over Israel."³ A truly

1 1 Sam. xvi. 1-13

2 2 Sam. ii. 4

3 2 Sam. v. 1-3

royal recognition indeed! "Fear God and honour the king."

After this Jehovah could bless and use His people, though ultimately they failed in the exercise of their power, and the regal authority of the royal house of David passed to certain Gentile rulers, until in the fulness of time it shall be recovered by Christ Himself as "great David's greater Son," the One alone able to use it for the glory of God and the blessing of His people. "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun."¹

But all this is written here for the heart and conscience of the reader, to recall the need to yield allegiance to Christ now, ere He comes in judgment upon the world. He laid the basis of the enemy's overthrow and His own future exaltation, as well as the salvation of the individual sinner now, by His atoning death upon the cross; thereby He annulled the opposing power and opened the way in contrite faith, to favour and life in Himself. Just as David with the five chosen smooth stones laid Israel's insulting opponent low, and with his own weapon took off Goliath's head and carried it into the city, so Christ by death and resurrection led captivity captive. "He fought the fight alone," and His victory became that of His believing people. Thus, by the acceptance of the

truth of the gospel, you may be saved from your sins, made a partaker in Him now of all spiritual blessings, and in that day with Him in His royal power and recognition. Brought nigh by His precious blood, reconciled unto Himself, made one with Him as being of His Church—His body and His bride.

But this favour and blessing cannot be to him who withholds the heart from Him now. The refusal of such royal recognition (while it may be passed over in the anointing and crowning of an earthly king as Edward VII.) means opposition to Christ of the character He describes as "He that is not for me is against me," and "He that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Many in His day will vainly endeavour to shew that they were not open enemies of His. But, alas! they were of the great army of professors who proved not true allegiance, nor anointed Him as king in their hearts, while still the rejected of Adullam's cave. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Are you of His kingdom by the new birth,¹ a soldier of Christ, loyal to Himself as the rightful Heir? Only thus may you escape the judgement and participate with all who are Christ's at His coming in the glories of that joyous day when "all the kingdoms of the world are the kingdom of the Son."

There was exaltation for Joseph in Egypt after he had been in the pit and in prison. Made to be ruler over all the land, to him every homage was given; while through him alone when dread famine spread everywhere was there life and blessing to be obtained, whether by his brethren of Israel or the heathen Gentile. God sees that the despised Joseph should be raised to the highest dignity and recognised by all. So with the Lord Jesus. Because of His humiliation unto death, "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

Christ's kingdom is founded in righteousness, and grace can now reign because of it; but while God's righteousness is still being manifested *unto* all, it is *upon* them only who believe. May this lowly faith be yours, dear reader, in the acceptance of what Christ has done for the guilty sinner, that He henceforth may reign in your hitherto rebellious heart. Turn to Him as the faithful One, "after God's own heart"—soon to have His rightful place on His own throne. He values royal recognition now while still absent; true allegiance from hearts like Jonathan's—who loved David "as his own soul;" even as the latter appreciated and rewarded those who were "of one heart to make

David king" while yet hunted as a partridge upon the mountains. King Edward VII., as rightful heir, has waited in expectation of his crowning-day; so Christ anticipates the great day of His coming and glorious manifestation, the blessings and glories of which He will share with those who have shared with Him the patience of the blessed hope. If such include the reader, how bright is his eternal prospect even as peace with, and joy in, God by the Holy Ghost, may be his happy realised portion now.

"Isles of the deep, rejoice! rejoice!
 Ye ransom'd nations, sing
 The praises of your Lord and God,
 The triumphs of your King."

H.W.P.

THE EASTERN MAGI, AND THE BABE.

MATTHEW II.

A WICKED prophet of the East was hired to curse Israel in early days, but compelled by God to bless them. In his last word to Balak he prophesied of that judgement which awaits all the nations at Messiah's hand in the latter days, but spoke of Him as "a star that should come forth out of Jacob." This never quite faded out of men's remembrance; especially as a later prophet of God in the east, when Babylon had fallen, predicted of Messiah, the Prince, and gave

the time for His coming, so as to arouse general attention at this very time and in the east particularly, as we know from heathen and haughty Romans of that date.

God too was pleased to hang out a sign in the heavens for people given to look there more than others. For the magi from the east who came to Jerusalem ask, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we saw his star in the east, and are come to pay him homage." No wonder that the Idumean who ruled them was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. The so-called holy city was no better than he, and even more guilty. God was showing mercy even then to the Gentile, and rebuking proud Jerusalem.

But His word is His best witness, and the chief priests and scribes when consulted had no difficulty in answering, where the Christ was to be born. Micah had predicted this and far more¹; and the king sent them accordingly to Bethlehem, the family-seat of David. And the star that led them to Jerusalem re-appeared, and went before them, evidently a meteor as we say, till it came and stood over where the Babe was. "And when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And they came into the house, and saw the babe with Mary his mother; and they fell down and paid him homage; and opening

their treasury they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh."

What a witness of the living God's interest in the nations! What a warning to Jerusalem! Why were not the priests and scribes there to welcome the great King? If Israel did not hear, the eastern strangers did, and were warned, so as themselves to escape without gratifying the royal murderer who vented his wrath on the male children from two years old and under. This clears up the fact Luke tells of the return to Nazareth after the birth.¹ It was at least a year after, when they, going up for the feast, returned to Bethlehem, so full of interest necessarily to their pious and grateful hearts. This gave sufficient time for the long journey of the magi, and accounts for Herod's wide margin to ensure death, which otherwise would have been even for him cruel beyond reason. But it shews how theologians vie with artists in antedating the scene at Bethlehem and the flight into Egypt.

But the affecting and instructive fact here is, that the magi did not worship the mother any more than the legal father. This might have seemed natural; but they were simple, and their hearts were fixed by a power above nature on the Babe. To Him, Babe though He was, they presented their gifts, not to them. Oh what a

rebuke to fallen, superstitious, idolatrous Christendom! What a withering rebuke to that western yet world church that sits on the seven hills as her centre, a queen that flatters herself that she shall have no sorrow, whereas her doom approaches, her irretrievable downfall! for strong is the Lord God that judged her.

Nor is it only the great Roman Harlot which sets up other mediators, as the Jews of old did other gods. It is the rage of Christendom now to deny the unity of the person of Christ, to deny that God and man are one person with two natures in Christ. This unbelief has lately broken out, where it was long unknown and the least approach to it most hateful. But now it seems entrenched, tolerated by those who reject it as a lie against the truth, but leavening the mass. From its early rise it uttered blasphemy against the Babe of Bethlehem, as if it were impossible to conceive *He* could then be Eternal Life manifested. But this *He* was, life before *He* became man, as 1 John i. 2 proves; but its manifestation awaited *His* becoming man. And it never was absent for a second from *His* Incarnation, and never will be. But for man the all-important fact was while *He* was here in the most familiar love, yet withal in the majesty of God morally, full of grace and truth. So *He* was seen and heard; and this to chosen and inspired witness, that we might have the same:

life eternal, and thereby have the same fellowship that they had with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. Thus is our joy made full both now and evermore.

W.K.

LOVE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS.

CHRIST came down from heaven in love, and went back to God's right hand in righteousness; and herein lies the precious and everlasting token of the full and free salvation which God is now offering to a lost and guilty world, in virtue of all that Christ is, and all that Christ has done. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."¹

Oh, what a perfect expression of divine love was this, consummated as it was in drops of blood at the cross, where Jesus died! Who would be a stranger to such love? Death, the result of sin, is stamped on everything "under the sun;" and man, whose understanding is by nature darkened, and who through sin is alienated from the life of God, would have remained for ever blinded by the

devil had not the Lord of glory come into this scene to remove, by His own death, all that stood between a holy God and His guilty creatures. Divine love could never be satisfied until every barrier had been righteously removed which would otherwise have hindered the return of His banished ones; and the cross was the one and only way whereby God could be "just, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

God is love; but in order to enjoy His presence Who is light as well as love, all that was contrary to the light had to be removed; and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, was the one and only righteous basis on which such love could flow out freely to a poor lost world.

Divine love does not display itself at the expense of divine righteousness, for God's righteousness is His consistency with Himself. God's throne is established in righteousness; and the One Who sits thereon loves righteousness, and hates iniquity: thus, in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, and Christ himself has become the "end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The Holy Ghost, Who has come down from an ascended Christ, convicts now of sin all those who do not believe on the Lord Jesus, because in rejecting the One Who has been made an offering for sin, not only is divine love slighted and

despised, but divine righteousness in judging sin is also ignored. The resurrection of Christ is the ever-abiding proof that Christ has gone back to His Father in righteousness; and His being crowned and glorified in heaven is the precious token to every believer of God's complete satisfaction in the finished work of Jesus, the holy result being that a risen Christ is now not only the believer's life and peace, but his righteousness as well.

Thus the heart of God can now flow out fully and freely to even the vilest, yea, the chief of sinners, as was most surely proved when the dying robber, and Saul of Tarsus were both alike brought from darkness to light, and from Satan to God. It was surely divine love that broke that robber's heart; and as surely was it the light that streamed down from the face of Christ in glory, which revealed to Saul a righteousness far exceeding everything that even the law could demand from one who could in truth say that he was "a Pharisee of the Pharisees."

Thus the altar of Calvary, where propitiation was made for sin, testifies of a love that can never die, whilst the throne of God is the abiding witness that every claim of righteousness has been divinely, and for ever, satisfied.

"Payment God will not twice demand,
First from my bleeding Surety's hand
And then again from mine."

Nay, rather, as another hymn so sweetly says,

“Though the restless foe accuses,
Sins recounting like a flood,
Ev’ry charge our God refuses,
Christ has answered with His blood.”

Abel’s lamb; the sprinkled lintel in the land of Egypt; the great day of atonement; and the scarlet line bound to Rahab’s window, one and all alike testify of the value of the blood that cleanseth from all sin, and which is the holy token to our souls that love and righteousness, like faith and repentance, are twin-sisters that can never be separated. Tell me then, dear reader, are you still a stranger to this love and righteousness; or have you fled for refuge to Him in Whom alone they can be found, and Whose loving voice is now speaking to you from the Father’s throne, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”? “Hear, and your soul shall live.”

S.T.

LIFE IN A LOOK.

WHEN the LORD was leading His people of old from Egypt to Canaan, their journey lay through a waste, howling wilderness, where there was nothing to supply their needs. But He Who had delivered them from Egypt’s bondage was also able to sustain them, though in a

wilderness. The distance from Egypt to Canaan was not so great, and could have been reached in a comparatively short time; but because of their *unbelief* they were made to wander there forty years.

All this time they were fed with bread from heaven, and they drank water from the smitten rock. Again and again, they murmured against the LORD and provoked Him to wrath. Often He chastened them, but when they *repented* He forgave them and healed them. Once He sent fiery serpents amongst them, and they bit them, and many people of Israel died. This led them to humble themselves, to own their sin, and to seek for mercy. Whereupon, the LORD commanded His servant Moses to make a serpent of brass, put it on a pole, and to lift it up in the sight of all the people. Any person that was bitten and *looked* at the serpent of brass would be healed. And so it came to pass.

When the Lord Jesus was here, He used this incident as an illustration of God's great remedy to meet the deep need of poor ruined, dying, sinners. Like the bitten Israelites, we too were all tainted and defiled by sin, with death, as the consequence, stamped upon every brow. We were exposed, not only to death of the body, but to the second death, the lake of fire. God has but *one* remedy now, as in the days of old. "As

Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life.”¹

Reader, if never before, take at once the look of faith to Calvary's cross, and see there, “A sinless victim dying on the tree, the death deserved by such as you and me.”

W.C.

SAVED IN SPITE OF SATAN.

ADAM sinned and left God, because he thought more of what Satan offered him; he thought the devil a better friend to him than God, but he has since found out to his cost that the devil was a liar; that he never had the power of giving him what he promised; and by catching at the devil's baits he has received his hook, finding that “the wages of sin is death.”

This is what man has done. But, oh! the blessedness of the consciousness that, in spite all we can do, or Satan devise, the blessing is ours, the glory is ours! We come to see the truth that has risen out of this great truth. The fact turns out quite a different way, when the Holy Spirit is bringing home to our souls that all the time God is for us. Oh, what blessing, what wondrous

blessing, is thus brought home to the poor, aching, harassed, anxious soul, when it is given to see that God Whom it despised, that Jesus Whom it crucified, that the Spirit Whom it resisted, are for it! Oh, what gladness to receive daily proofs that it is one upon which God is looking in love, in pity, and that He is for it! As the Lord, speaking of the children of Israel, says, "I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people and I am come down to deliver them." Oh, what wondrous extent of love! Nor height nor depth can reach or fathom it.

We are frail men, and Satan exercises his subtlety on us; he knows what to lure us with, and therefore he puts suitable pleasures in our way, and within our reach; he throws his bait most skilfully; he knows the bait that is most seasonable, and he presents it just in the time and under the circumstances most likely to take effect. He knows what our natures are like, what they are going after; and so he presents the very thing which, if continued in, must lead to destruction.

All this is terrible, but under all this there is comfort. The everlasting comfort, is we are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, that we have seen and found One Who is able to bear us through all this, and set us free from the power and dominion of Satan, making us children of the living God, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.

“THIS IS FOR ENGLAND.”

A GROUP of young persons might have been seen standing at the corner of a street one summer evening, adjoining a wall covered with brilliant posters, one a theatrical advertisement depicting a battle scene and having at the foot the motto, “This is for England.” It was a fine piece of work in its way, representing a gallant British soldier fighting his way through the enemies’ ranks, as in one hand he grasped the “Union Jack” together with his horse’s reins, while with the other he wielded his sword with deadly effect. This arrested the attention of one of the group (they were holding an open air service), and it occurred to him to be a good illustration with which to begin to speak, which he did, much on the lines following :

“Now if we were to look at such things entirely divested of sentiment, we might ask, ‘Why should that soldier hamper his movements on the battle-field for the sake of an inanimate piece of material?’ But the heart of every Englishman would revolt at such a callous consideration. The banner he holds is the endearing emblem of an Empire, which is the protection and hope of myriads of people. A still better answer to such a base suggestion would be the cheers we can, in fancy, hear ring

from that playhouse, as such a scene is rendered before a British audience."

We must not, however, forget that it was a very different thing for the hero on the battle field. There the hatred of a foreign foe was more apparent than the ringing cheers of comrades; and it was because the speaker's thoughts were running on these lines that the especial appropriateness of the illustration was felt.

The "Ensign" to which the little company were gathered was the name of Jesus—as much and more hated than is the British flag among its enemies. Here, too, the false whisper might be heard, "Why hamper your chances for worldly consideration and respectability by such a display?" The great apostle of the Gentiles has, however, answered it: "We are made a spectacle unto the world, to angels and to men; we are fools for Christ's sake."¹

Not for a moment would we detract from courage such as we have alluded to; the courage of the action is grand, but the courage of patience is far above it, and can we not emulate that displayed by the apostle Paul, which could patiently and pleadingly alike, unfurl the despised banner before the frowning splendour of a Roman judgement hall, the sneer of a philosopher, or the jealousy of a priesthood?

There is undoubtedly good warrant for the display of such sentiments of devotion even in the teeth of such odds, and Paul expounds it in the famous declaration, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith" (on the principle of faith to a faith that responds).²

E.O.

"COME unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is perfect grace; no restriction; no setting the Jew in the foremost seat of honour. But "Come unto me, all ye that labour." Jew or Gentile, it matters not; do you labour? Are you miserable; can you find no comfort? "Come unto me all ye that labour and I will give you rest." It is without condition or qualification.

Extracted.

THE SWING AND THE LOOK.

I WANT to tell you how God graciously used two little girls (each between four and five years old) to bring me to Jesus.

When a boy of fourteen I lived in the village of K——.

One day on my way to school, I saw a little girl

swinging on a field gate. Her mother, a poor widow, was working in the field, and the little one (a very delicate child) played while she worked. When I saw her she was sitting on the bottom ledge of the gate, swinging to and fro and singing with a sweet voice. She was so occupied with the hymn she sang that she did not notice me lingering to hear her as I passed. The words were,

When for eternal worlds I steer,
The seas are calm, the skies are clear,
And faith in lively exercise
The distant hills of Canaan spies.
My soul with joy spreads out its wings,
A louder, lovelier song it sings,
Vain world, adieu.

This scene melted my heart to tears as I passed on to school, thinking of that glorious home she so longed to reach. Only a short time after this I heard she had bid adieu to this vain world, and had gone to that home of which she so sweetly sang.

Her mother came to the Saviour, and soon followed her little one to be for ever with the Lord. It is many years ago now, and in all the worldly amusements I entered, the Holy Spirit followed and never let me forget the swing on the gate, and a tear would rise as I thought of that little one now in the glory. Still I delayed coming to Jesus and God graciously called me again. This time it was my own little girl and one dearly

loved. She too sang sweetly. She was taken ill with scarlet fever. Oh! the distress of mind I passed through as I watched her patient sufferings for weeks.

One night my wife lay down to rest and as I was watching alone, God brought me face to face with death. In the middle of the night-watch my little one looked at me, then said, "Lift me up." I took her in my arms, and I can never forget how helpless I was when she told me she was "so faint." Then she commenced singing so low and sweet, Safe in the arms of Jesus, and the last words I heard were,

Hark! 'tis the voice of angels
Borne in a song to me,
Over the fields of glory,
Over the jasper sea.

Then she gave me one long piercing look, and looking upwards, she passed safe into the loving arms of her Saviour.

Dear reader, it was the swing and song that melted my heart to tears, but it was the song and the look that broke my stubborn will, and brought me to the feet of Jesus. Now I am journeying to Him Who laid down His life for you and me. Will you go too? He followed me in love all those years, and He is following you. Again I ask you, Will you go? Jesus says, Come. The Spirit and the Bride say, Come.

THE "BEST ROBE," OR "FILTHY RAGS."

I HAVE heard my mother say that when she was a child there lived an old man near her, who used to go daily into an outhouse alone, and there pray to God. She listened to him secretly, and one part of his confession to God she always remembered. He may have been an unlearned and ignorant man, but he had learned one very important lesson. The words remembered as used habitually by him were those of scripture; "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Whether the dear old man had the joy of knowing that he was clothed in the righteousness of God I cannot say.

How true it is that in our natural state our very best deeds are but as filthy rags in God's sight. All who are thinking that by their own good deeds and righteousness they will get a dress fit for God's presence, are very sadly mistaken. Adam and Eve, when fallen, made aprons of fig leaves sewed together to cover themselves, but they would not do for God. He provided coats of skin for them. This showed that there must have been

death and the shedding of blood before they were clothed in befitting garments. It is a beautiful picture of what God has done for us, that we, whose very best covering was but as filthy rags, might be clad in a spotless robe, fit to meet His holy eye, as we stand in His presence.

None of us had any real righteousness of our own, "for there is none righteous, no, not one." In His sight we all stood naked, guilty, condemned sinners. But He loved us, and devised means whereby we might not be expelled from Him. He gave His only Son, Who upon Calvary's cross suffered and died, and His precious blood was shed. God's righteousness demanded such a sacrifice to make atonement for sin. None but Jesus the Son of God *could* offer that which justice claimed. This He did, and God accepted Him and His work, to His own glory, and He is now "just and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

Those who are clad in filthy rags and defiled by sin may now be clothed in the righteousness of God. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." God counted him righteous when he believed His word. It is the same with those who "believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification." This spotless robe is offered to all; but it is only "*upon* all them that believe." Christ

Himself is unto us righteousness, and all who believe are "the righteousness of God in him."

Reader, can you truthfully say, I have learned that I am a poor defiled sinner, with no righteousness of my own, and unfit for God's holy presence? But also I have by His grace accepted His great gift, the Son of His love, and am cleansed from my sins by His precious blood; and in Himself I have a robe of righteousness, a garment which enables me to stand for ever in His holy presence. For it is His own rich provision, not only to meet my deep need, but to meet the demands of His own holiness, and to call forth the joy of His own great heart of love.

W.C.

"LORD, TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?"

JOHN VI. 68.

LORD, Thou art on the throne of God, a man yet God Thyself; to whom can a guilty sinner as I am go, save to Thee? For Thou assurest me that Thou art the way, the truth, and the life; and I want all these and more; and none cometh unto the Father except through Thee.

I confess that all my life hitherto has been careless and self-pleasing, doing my own will, indifferent to God's will where it crossed mine,

ungodly yet claiming to be more or less religious, with a bad conscience which forced on me the dread of death and judgement. If judged according to my works as His word declares, what must my end be? Am I not then, spite of privileges far greater than a Jew's, an enemy of God, and, like him, veiling myself under ordinances to hide from my soul the awful truth that I am lost? I have no life Godward, and all the worse, because I have never by faith made redemption in Him my own, never been truly brought to God through Christ's once for all suffering for my sins.

All has been vague and groping in the dark between my soul and God, never owning my utter ruin as I am, nor His sovereign grace in Christ giving life eternal and divine righteousness before Him. How awful my state under the gospel not really received as a lost sinner repentant and believing! The greater His grace, the fuller the light already shining, the more inexcusable my unbelief in not coming to God through Christ, in Whom God has both spoken His last word to man, and wrought His best work of atonement and the new creation—in Him dead, risen, and ascended to God's eternal glory.

Yet have I not been living, or rather dying, my weak and vain days of the flesh, in hopes and fears, and thoughts of my own or of other men, instead of receiving God's testimony that He gives

the believer life eternal, and this in His Son, and only there? What "hope" otherwise can there be to a lost soul? What folly to indulge my "thoughts" when God reveals His word? Yet why "fear," if I cast myself as I am, guilty and lost, on the Son of man Who came to save that which was lost? Did He not declare in this very chapter,¹ "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out?" Was it not written to embolden even me, and every other doubting soul to hesitate no more, to believe with heart and confess with mouth unto salvation? Is it not the great reality of grace for a poor sinner that bows to God? "He that hath the Son hath life." But how solemn is the other side even now to weigh! "He that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Think what it must mean for all eternity! "the second death, the lake of fire." Lord, Thou hast words of life eternal, that we believing now may have that life, and come not into judgement which Thou didst bear for us who *have* passed out of death into life.

W.K.

SUFFERING, AND ITS CURE.

SIN is alas! the cause of all the misery and suffering we see around us to-day, no less than when the blessed feet of the lowly Nazarene

trod this ruined earth, nineteen centuries ago. For twelve long, weary years, had the life's-blood of a certain woman, who then came into living contact with Christ, been slowly ebbing away, though every human means had been tried in order to alleviate her sufferings. Miserable and wretched, she "had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, yet was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse." Disappointment and bankruptcy caused her cup of sorrow to flow over, and ever increasing weakness seemed to be but the sure fore-runner of death and the grave. Every doctor had been tried and had failed, yet the only One Who could give relief had not been resorted to. Such was this woman's state when the great Physician drew near.

The news of His approach quickly reached her ears; and, conscious of her deep and desperate need, she at once acted on what she heard, which is ever the way of faith. Reality, earnestness, and swift decision marked her eager footsteps as she pressed through the anxious crowd, determined at all cost to reach one object, even the person of the Christ of God.

Yes, directly she heard of Jesus, gladly and eagerly did she come to Him, spite of every hindrance, being fully assured in her heart that to touch but His clothes was to be made whole.

Nor was the hand of faith stretched out in vain; for no sooner had she touched Him than "the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague." Virtue came forth from the Holy One of God, and healed her on the spot. "Who touched me?" were the words that fell from the Saviour's lips, as that poor frail hand came into living contact with the glorious person of the Father's well-beloved Son!

When all around denied, though not the woman, the great Physician again declared, "Somebody hath touched me, for I perceive that virtue hath gone out of me." Yes, God's Holy One knew perfectly well the true touch of faith, and, looking round, beheld her who had done this thing. It is true she was fearing and trembling, yet she knew now the reality of the blessing she had received, for thus the record runs, "she declared unto him before all the people, for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately."

A sweet and speedy confession as to what divine grace and power had wrought in her body was but the natural outcome from the lips of one who had been so signally blest. Yes, mark it well, dear reader, and, as one who has doubtless often felt the deep and heavy burden of sin, see to it that thou actest with as swift decision in reference

to thy soul, as did that woman in regard to her body, and thou too shalt surely experience, as she did, an immediate and divine blessing from the Lord.

First she heard, then she came, then she touched; and knowing she was healed by the virtue which flowed from Christ's body, she of course felt it, and, as the natural result, gladly confessed what He had done. Yes, all was out now; for do we not read that "she told him all the truth," which immediately drew from His gracious lips the precious words, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague?" Thus did the great Physician at once bring her into direct relationship with Himself, and at the same time comfort her heart with the sweet assurance of His own love, as well as fill her soul with sweet abiding peace.

No longer now a weary sufferer, she returned to her home with the thrill of a new life coursing through her veins, and the Saviour's loving words, "Be of good comfort," ringing in her ears and heart.

Was ever love like this? Never, surely, surpassed save at that cross where this same Jesus willingly passed through waves of sorrow to put away our guilt, and "suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,"

was but the deep expression of a love that knows no change, and that can never die.

Shouldst thou still, dear reader, be sad at heart even as this woman, then I pray thee do as she did, and thou too shalt prove the same precious love and saving grace of God's beloved Son.

"Art thou weary, art thou languid?

Art thou sore distrest?

'Come to me,' saith One, 'and coming,
Be at rest.'

'Hath He marks to lead me to Him,
If He be my guide?'

In His feet and hands are wound-prints,
And His side.

'If I ask Him to receive me,
Will He say me nay?'

Not till earth, and not till heaven
Pass away."

"Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

S.T.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

ONE Lord's day I was walking through the Vale of Health, Hampstead, when I saw six or seven young men in a boat on the large pond. They were drinking, smoking, singing songs, etc., doing what this world calls enjoying

themselves. But alas! their mirth was suddenly stopped by the bottom of the boat striking on the top of an old post (the remains of an old fence hid by the water many years), causing the boat to fill with water. All their strength applied to the oars failed to move it. The cry was raised, What is to be done? Hundreds gathered round the pond. Though not more than thirty feet from the side no one can get to them, and there is no other boat near. Ropes are thrown to them and made secure to the boat; willing hands pull with all their strength, but alas! only add to the dangerous situation, for the strain put on the boat caused the bottom to give way and the old post to come clean through. All hope of getting the boat off is now abandoned, and although three ropes are stretched from the sinking boat to the land, they never think of taking hold of the ropes and bearing themselves up through the water to the side—the only safe way of escape. Yet all are crying, What is to be done? they will be lost. The occupants of the boat are in the greatest distress, and man utterly helpless to assist them. At this time a gentleman swam to the boat, told them to jump into the water one at a time, and he would take them to the side. But alas! two jumped in at once, and while he got one to the side the other sank within a few feet of it, and so passed into eternity; and yet I saw his hand

stretched out of the water within a few inches of the rope, but he failed to grasp it, and was lost. Passed into death in a moment to meet the just Judge—how solemn? This young man was lost through Satan's delusion in the form of the hidden post, and listening to man's way of escape. Yet the rope, the safe way, could be seen by all. These ropes remind me of the work of the Lord Jesus.

Think, dear reader, what it cost Him to make salvation's rope secure to Calvary's cross. Look at His journey through Gethsemane, where He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood. See Him passing through that three-fold trial in Jerusalem. See that thronging crowd crying out, Away with Him! Away with Him! as He bears His heavy cross up Calvary's hill. Yes, He passed through death's dark raging floods to make the rope of salvation secure for you. He holds the other end in the glory. He invites you to lay hold of it now—now! Don't let Satan deceive you, nor be like this young man, so near salvation's rope, yet be lost. Remember, death is a reality; eternity is a reality. You cannot escape them! Satan offers you the pleasures of sin; Jesus offers you eternal life in His name. Which will you have? Decide now! Now! To-morrow may be too late.

**“YE WILL NOT COME TO ME THAT YE
MIGHT HAVE LIFE.”**

JOHN V. 40.

How scathing is this testimony of Christ to man's alienation from God and dislike of His grace! It is not only that he is ungodly and unholy, or that he loves sin and hates righteousness. Even when God sent His Only-begotten Son in perfect love, man rejected and abhorred Him. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not reckoning to them their offences.” Yet the end of His persevering goodness to bless them as they were was a deeper aversion than ever to any one. They hated both Him and His Father Whom He declared. They hated Him without a cause.¹

Man whom Jehovah turned out of paradise for his rebellion then turned God out of the world when shewing His love to the lost.

So here Christ tells the Jews, “Ye will not come to me that ye might have life.” Which of them would not have given all he had to live on his natural life? Not one would come to Christ that he might have life eternal; for of this only did He speak.² Yet had the Lord warned that a resurrection of judgement, and hence of certain and

¹ John xv. 18—25

² John v. 21, etc.

everlasting perdition, awaits all, who, having refused Christ and life in Christ, have only done evil, and must be cast into the unquenchable fire.

But the truth only adds to the rancour which resents and disdains His grace; and, instead of being won or warned, man sets up to judge God and His word. He will not have Christ on any terms, and strives, if he cannot justify himself, to decry the justice of God. Yet the least reflection suffices to prove that on such a ground not a soul could be saved; for all sinned, and do come short of God's glory. Conceive any sinner let into heaven as he is: would he not at once beg to be let out? Not one person nor thing there that he likes, only those that he loathes; and what is he in the eyes of God and of all else there? Heaven would thus be more intolerable to a sinner than hell.

Life, eternal life, alone lives to God, and can alone live with God; and this is in Christ the Son for the believer to have, and nowhere else. "He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." But being sinners, we are not truly brought to God but by sheer sense of our sins and ruin before His righteous judgement. By grace receiving God's testimony to Christ, we seal His truth, and taste His goodness. For the same Christ gives me life and bore my sins; but now being risen, He would have me know that I am dead and risen with Him.

But no thanks to him that believes. He had no wish, no heart, no conscience for it, but for grace. "Ye receive not our witness," says the Lord; and His fore-runner, "no man receiveth his testimony." The faith founded on miracles was of nature, not of God, and worthless. Bowing to God as poor sinners, we believe on the Saviour, are born of God, His children, sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Thus one comes to Him, drawn by the Father. Left to ourselves, we did not come, nor ever would; for the carnal mind is enmity against God. Ours was the evil; His alone all the grace. If one is willing, it is of His grace.

W.K.

DELIVERANCE AT THE RED SEA.

WHEN Israel went forth, the rage of Satan knew no bounds. Pharaoh made ready all the chariots of Egypt, and his horsemen and his army, and pursued after them. Never had Israel been so sad as they were on the eve of their new deliverance. But now that sin in their case was settled, it was a question solely between God and the enemy. "And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew you to-day, for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye

shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore. And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses."

It is well to distinguish between the judgement of the first-born and that of the Red Sea. The one was the first-fruits of the other, and ought to have deterred Pharaoh from his rash pursuit. But the blood which kept the people from the judgement of God, meant something far deeper and far more serious than even the Red Sea, though judgement was executed there too. What happened at the Red Sea was, it is true, the manifestation of the illustrious power of God, Who destroyed, with the breath of His mouth, the enemy that stood in rebellion against Him. It was final and destructive judgement which effected the deliverance of His people by His power. But the blood of the paschal lamb signified the moral judgement of God, and the full and entire satisfaction of all that was in His being.

God, such as He was, in His justice, His holiness, and His truth, could not touch those who were sheltered by that blood. Was there sin? His love toward His people had found the means of satisfying the requirements of His justice; and at the sight of that blood, which answered everything that was perfect in His being, He passed over it consistently with His justice, and even His truth. Nevertheless, God, even in passing over, is seen as Judge. Hence, likewise, so long as the soul is on this ground, its peace is uncertain, its way in Egypt, even though the while truly converted; because God has still the character of Judge to it, and the power of the enemy is still there.

At the Red Sea God acts in power, according to the purposes of His love. Consequently the enemy, who was closely pursuing the people, is destroyed without resource. This is what will happen to the people at the last day, already, in reality—to the eye of God, sheltered through the blood. As to the moral type, the Red Sea is evidently the death and resurrection of Jesus, and of His people in Him; God acting in it, in order to bring them out of death, where He had brought them in Christ, and consequently beyond the possibility of being reached by the enemy. We are made partakers of it already through faith. Sheltered from the judgement of God by the:

blood, we are delivered by His power that acts for us from the power of Satan, the prince of this world. The blood keeping us from the judgement of God was the beginning; the power which raised us up with Christ made us free from the whole power of Satan who followed us, and from all his attacks and accusations.

The world who will follow that way is swallowed up in the waters. This is a solemn warning; for the world who call themselves Christians do take the ground of a judgement to come, and the need of righteousness; but not according to God. The Christian goes through it with Christ, knowing himself otherwise lost and hopeless—the worldling in his own strength, and is swallowed up. Israel saw the Red Sea in its strength and thought escape was impossible. So an awakened conscience dreads death and judgement. But Christ has died and borne judgement for us, and we are secured and delivered by that which in itself we dreaded. The worldling, seeing this, adopts the truth in his own strength, as if there were no danger, and is lost in his false confidence. To the believer, what was the subject of his fear—death and judgement—is his joy now that he knows the results, in God's hand, of the death of Christ. "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." Honey is taken out of the lion's carcass. The resurrection of Christ

is the standing witness that the Christian's judgement is past, and that the world's judgement is coming.¹ Christ is risen, and therefore we are justified in Him; so is the world to be judged by Him.

Extracted.

GOD ON OUR SIDE.

“**W**HAT shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?” By faith a man sees God settling the question between them, suiting Himself to his peculiar circumstances, and proving Himself to be more favourable towards him, than to the angels in heaven who never sinned. When a man is brought to see God for him, there is a breaking down of all that before opposed itself to God, pride, the poor pride of man, is brought down, when once he is brought to the conscious acknowledgement, “God is for us.” The soul then sees how completely everything is for him, if God is thus for us. The comfort of the soul consists in this, that God is for it, and that it is for God. Then it begins to be conscious of other wants of which before it knew nothing; it wants to know more of God, it wants to see Him as He is, it wants the glory. It is a comfort to know that is what it wants.

The soul is led to ask now, Why should God be for us? Have we been for God? Have we rendered God any service? Have we acted by His mind? We have not. Why then should we plead, God is for us? It is for nothing in ourselves, for we have slighted His promises, despised His grace, lightly esteemed the more than ten thousand mercies of His daily favour. We have been like the prodigal son, who wasted his very common blessings in riotous living. In all our circumstances we have forgotten Him, in our intercourse with the world we have been acting without Him, loving our ungodly companions rather than Him.

O the wonder, if after all this, we should find God was for us! Look at the state man is really in, as regards the trust he puts in man rather than God. If his neighbour should ask him to do anything, though his conscience may tell him God hates what his neighbour wants him to do, still, rather than disoblige his companion, he will sin against God. It would distress him more to refuse him, either in going to ungodly places of amusement, or gratification or indulging in known sin.

Sin was the cause of the rejection of Christ, and therefore every sin has this stamped upon it—the rejection of the Son of God. Our own conscience tells us that sin is against God and there are few

so hardy as to confess that they were for God by the commission of it; and yet, we may say, there is scarcely one among us who is not conscious of this sin, of (rather than refusing our friend or companion) doing what we know is against God. Seeing such to be the case, we see no reason why God should be for us. His judgements have been disregarded, His mercies despised, His name lightly esteemed, little or no notice taken of any temporal favour, except to abuse it; and must not this bring to our conscience the upbraiding thought, Why should we expect God to be for us?

What has the world done for God? What has it done with its natural blessings? Sinned them away. With the law of God? Broken it. With the love of Christ and His coming? Rejected Him. With the testimony of the Holy Spirit to the work of Christ? Refused it—takes no pleasure in anything belonging to God, sees no glory, no loveliness, no beauty in Him, which just proves this one thing, that there is no real reason from us on earth why God should be for us, but, as far as we are concerned, every reason why He should be against us.

In this state of entire alienation from God, neither seeing nor desiring to see His glory and loveliness, there can be no love in the soul, as long as that soul is living without God, and it has manifestly no interest in the things of God. Being

in this position, there is one terrible evil necessarily evident, that if we are living without God, and not following Him, we must be followers of him who is the enemy of God and of our souls; who is the great deceiver of mankind, and, though he never shews himself, drags his victim down to ruin, and then mocks at his calamity.

This is Satan, that arch-deceiver, who was a liar and a murderer from the beginning; who casts out his bait to decoy him, shewing him that but carefully hiding the hook, that he may have his unresisting prey in his clutches, and man rushes to take the bait, willingly selling himself to Satan, though he is morally conscious that he is not acting according to the commandments of God. And this is not said of any one particular class of character or order of men, for all are included in it; "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

Extracted.

A COMING JUDGEMENT.

WE always find in the deliverances of God's people that God is also going to punish the world. He bears testimony against it, a universal testimony, without excepting anybody. The law distinguishes men according to their acts, but the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin,

because they have not believed on Him Whom God has sent. Hence the gospel begins with treating the world as already condemned. God has made trial, in every way, of the human heart.

The gospel supposes that this probation is closed, and declares all the world lost. Souls often desire, and therefore need, to prove what their own strength is, and find they have none; even converted souls sometimes try to commend themselves thus to God. But it is to dishonour Jesus, and to deny their own condition as judged of God.

In Egypt God was content with the first-born of each house as a manifestation of His judgement. Pharaoh would not let the people of God go. When God demanded as a right that they should serve Him, the world—Pharaoh its prince—would not yield. Signs and plagues were then wrought to arrest their attention, and enforce the rights of God, but Egypt would not listen. Pharaoh was hard, then hardened, and at last becomes a monument of judgement for the instruction of all men. So it was in the days of Noah, and so it is now that the world once more is warned of the approaching judgements of God. The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and on them that obey not the gospel.

Meanwhile, God demands a complete submission

to His revealed will. He demands that the world should submit to Jesus: all those who will not shall be forced to do so when judgement comes, and then to their own confusion and endless sorrow. God presents His Son in humiliation, in order to save the world; but without submission to Jesus all is useless, because this is what God requires and values. To believe in the Son is eternal life, is salvation; to reject the Son of God is judgement.

God will have a surrender of the heart to Jesus, as Saviour and Lord, a surrender to His own grace in Him. Thus is the heart and everything else changed, and all question as to good works is set aside. All here turns upon receiving or rejecting Jesus. God passes over everything. Zaccheus may speak of what he has been in the habit of doing, but that is not the point now: "This day is salvation come to this house." If Jesus is welcomed, there is life; if Jesus is refused, there must be vengeance by-and-by for those who do not submit. How happy for the poor convicted sinner that he has not to search in himself for something to present to God! If the heart is open, Christ is the grace and glory and perfection that is needed, and the moral effects soon and surely follow.

Still, the word of God presents the certainty of judgement. Satan has possession practically of

the world, but God retains his rights. The unconverted are deceived by the enemy, and are in his power. Satan does all he can to make the world believe that they are free and happy, that they are, or may be, righteous and good enough. But God has His rights. The world will not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and hopes to escape judgement. Satan, too, takes advantage of all that God would employ to awaken and bless the soul. Thus, with the unconverted in Christendom, natural conscience is ashamed of that which the heathen do even in their religion. But this is used of Satan to persuade men that they can present themselves before God, and worship Him in private or public, because there is nothing in these lands so gross as among Pagans. But God holds to His rights, and nothing is well if Jesus be not received in faith.

In Jesus all that is perfect in God and man is presented to the conscience. The holiness of God is there, not condemning, but in perfect grace; but God will have an entire submission to Jesus. Nobody that comes is cast out. He is God in all His goodness to attract hearts, He is man in all His lowliness to exercise no will, no choice, but to receive every one that comes to Him, for such is the will of Him that sent Him; but God desires submission to Jesus. If Jesus is rejected, this is the conclusive proof that the heart

will not have God in any way that He takes in presenting Himself to man. It is the evidence of man's heart, of his pride, his hardness, and his levity. Nothing like these can stand in the presence of God, and Jesus manifested His presence in love.

Pride is ashamed of the cross. Vanity cannot go on before Jesus, despised and rejected of man. God searches the heart in this way, and man does not like it. He is bound to own himself a sinner, to submit his conscience, and give up his will; but he will not. It is the joy of Jesus to seek the wanderer; but to return in his rags, to shew his wretchedness, is most distasteful to man's nature: grace alone can make him do so. His pride therefore hates grace more even than law. The heart cannot endure to be laid completely bare; but if man is to be blessed, God must search the heart, and He saves the soul for ever. God acts according to what He is, not according to our thoughts. If man will not believe in Jesus, God will manifest what He is by judgement.

Extracted.

THE FOOLISH VIRGINS.

“**A**T midnight the cry came;” the heavenly virgins arose. Though conscious of much weakness in themselves, they rise at the cry of

their Beloved ; for there is that which answers to the cry. The foolish virgins trimmed their lamps, but their lamps failed to burn ! And is there no remedy for them ? None ! According to the Saviour's awful declaration : " He that is unjust, let him be unjust still ; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still."

◆

"AND THEN?"

DEAR YOUNG READERS,

Some time or another I am sure you have heard or read of the beautiful city of Florence, in Italy. It was the seat of learning, and so the home of poets, painters, sculptors and, at times, of preachers. We know of one called Savonarola, who, though a monk in the church of Rome, raised his voice against the sin and evil-doing in the beautiful city, and paid for his zeal with his life. But God's truth always stands, and no doubt he was used to set men thinking that this world is not all to live for.

In one of the colleges there was a godly professor who had found out that there is a world beyond this. Consequently he took the deepest interest in the students who came under his care, not as to their studies only, but their eternal welfare. He felt when they left their student life behind them, they would be surrounded by fresh

temptations on all hands, and having been brought to the Lord himself, he yearned that those he had to teach might know Him too. He had one pupil whom he loved very much, and when the time came for him to leave the college, which he was doing with well earned honours, being very clever, the old professor took the opportunity of having a serious talk with him.

"Well, my son," he said, "now that your student days are over and you are going out into the world, may I ask what you intend to be?"

"Oh," he replied, "I am going to travel first, to study men instead of books."

"And then?" asked the old man.

"Oh, then I shall come back and start as a professor."

Again the question came, "And then?"

"Oh, I hope to make a great name for myself."

"And then?"

"Reach the top of my profession, and amass a fortune."

"And then?"

"Why I suppose, like others, I shall marry."

"And then?"

"Well, I hope to have sons and daughters to bring up."

"And then?"

"Well, I shall give up toiling and enjoy my life."

"And then?"

"I hope to see my children's children."

"And then?"

"Why, live to a ripe old age."

"And then?"

"Well, I suppose like everybody else, I must die."

"And then?"

But there was no reply, for the arrow had pierced all his armour; and those two little words opened his eyes to see that instead of having *everything* he had *nothing*, but was poor, and blind, and naked, and that only Jesus could give him sight, make him rich, and clothe him.

Have you made plans for yourselves, dear ones? If so, will you each ask yourselves the dear old professor's question, on to the last, "And then?" There can be only one of two answers—"For ever with the Lord," or outer darkness.

Come to Jesus, weary sinner,
 Come to Jesus and be free,
 He has shed His blood to save you,
 Died upon the cursèd tree.
 Now He's waiting, now He's waiting,
 Will you not His word obey?
 Hear His precious proclamation,
 "I'm the life, the truth, the way."

Come to Jesus, dying sinner,
 Freely, Jesus life will give.
 He has died, He rose to save you—
 Rose that you might with Him live
 Time is hastening, time is hastening,
 And your life will soon be o'er,
 Life abundant Jesus offers,
 Life with Him for evermore.

LESSONS FROM CHINESE PROVERBS.

III.

THE Chinese have two proverbs which re-echo with remarkable fidelity the inspired warnings, "Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth,"¹ and "Ye know not what shall be on the morrow."² They run thus :

"MORNING DOES NOT SECURE EVENING."

"WHEN WE TAKE OFF OUR SHOES AT NIGHT, WE
DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO MORROW
WILL COME OR NO."

In every age and clime experience has taught, and is continually teaching, the uncertainty of the tenure of human life : man embodies his experience in pithy sayings, and shakes his head wisely when sudden death overtakes his fellows, but what about *himself*?

Alas! the warning is too often unheeded. He builds his house on the slope of a volcano (which he fondly deems to be extinct), or on the crumbling brink of a precipice: the volcano has shewn no signs of activity for scores of years, and so of course it

1 Prov. xxvii. 1

2 James iv. 14

never will; the cliff, despite its unstable appearance, has stood fairly firm from the days of his grandfather, and so of course it always *will* stand firm! A fig for those croakers! Why can't they let a man enjoy life while he has the chance?

But suddenly subterraneous thunderings are heard, a lurid glare lights up the darkness of night, streams of lava pour down the mountain side, and ashes and burning cinders rain down as if from the skies.

"Whither—oh! whither—shall I flee?" Heart-rending shrieks fill the air, trembling limbs seek in vain to bear their owners to a place of safety. Too late—too late! There is no escape now—no hope—no refuge!

The man who soothed himself to sleep with the opiate of "Peace and safety," "all things continue as they were," now lies a charred corpse within the ruins of his home.

It is not for us to judge those who were overwhelmed by the fearful catastrophe in the West Indies of last May—not for us to say that those who thus perished were sinners above all others. Our Lord has Himself pointed out the evil of such rash surmisings, but surely visitations like these should be to us as the very voice of the Almighty, and should cause us to ask ourselves earnestly as in the presence of God, "How would it be with *my* soul, if *I* were thus suddenly called away?" From

the lips of Him Who "spake as never man spake," came those words of solemn warning to the self-complacent critic: "I tell you, nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."¹

Three or four years ago a large number of cottages stood on the bank of the great Chinese river, Yang-tze, forming a suburb of the city of Hankow. The bank consisted of loose crumbling soil, but the houses had stood up to that time, and the inmates seemed to have taken their *past* security as a pledge of *future* security. But one day down came the bank with a sudden rush, carrying the houses with it; a multitude of helpless men, women, and children were struggling in the deep swirling waters, and in a few seconds most of them (some thousands, if I remember rightly) were in eternity.

Ah! truly, "Morning does not secure evening."

But perhaps you say, "*I have not built my house on the bank of a river, or the slope of a volcano, so these proverbs do not apply to me. When I rise in the morning I have every reason to expect a peaceful evening, and when I take off my shoes at night, I may confidently look forward to awaking in health and strength the next morning.*" And so you think that you at any rate, are entitled to say, "Peace and safety!"

Oh, beware! Not merely a Chinese proverb,

but the unerring word of the living God warns you, "Boast not thyself of to morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth," and mark, those words were addressed not merely to persons dwelling in positions of special danger, but to all—to *you*. You may be hurried away by some unsuspected disease or sudden accident into an eternity of far more awful woe than that caused by a landslip or by the eruption of a volcano; or the Lord Jesus Christ may come, and take all His redeemed ones home to Himself for ever; and you, if you are not one of His own by faith in His precious blood, will be left behind for judgement, and the door of heaven closed upon you for ever.

Oh, do escape to Him *now*, while He is stretching out His arms to receive you: He Who died upon the cross to atone for your sins, is now yearning over you with ineffable love, and beseeching you to come to Him and be saved from the coming storm of judgement.

I entreat you, do not be among those who say in their folly and bravado, "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves," (and remember, dear reader, that one of the most daring of lies is the assertion of your own goodness, since it directly

contradicts the word of the God Who cannot lie¹). To such self-confident boasters God's answer is: "The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place."² But the contrite soul who seeks refuge where alone it is to be found, is comforted by the assurance that there is a Saviour for him—a Saviour Who is "a sure foundation."³

C.H.P.

BLOOD ON THE DOORPOSTS AND LINTEL.

EGYPT was to be smitten. But first we have the security of such as submit to God, confiding in the sprinkled blood of the Lamb. Israel was well aware of the judgement about to be executed upon the land of Egypt. It should always be thus with renewed souls. They ought to consider the ways of God when He will judge the world in righteousness.

When God reveals the judgement, He reveals also the means of escaping it. The soul who has the fear of God keeps close to His word, and the question is raised between God and Israel, Could Israel stand if God came in judgement? The Egyptians were sinners, and would surely be judged; but if God came down to judge, what

1 Rom. iii. 9—12

2 Is. xxviii. 15—17

3 Is. xxviii. 16

were the children of Israel? Where were their sins?

God directs Moses that they should take of the blood of the slain lamb, and strike it on the two side-posts and on the upper door-posts of their houses. "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." To the mind of man it was folly, but the simplicity of faith honours the word of God, and acts upon it. The destroying angel of Jehovah passed through the land, and if there had been Israelites ever so honest, but without the blood on their door-posts, he must enter and slay. For God was under this sign judging sin, and sin levels all distinctions; and where the blood was not, there sin was in all its hatefulness to a holy God—sin unatoned for and unjudged.

So now it is—Christ and salvation, or no Christ and no salvation. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. There is the utmost certainty for those within the blood-sprinkled doors. It is the Lord Who executes the judgement by His angel. It is impossible for Him to be deceived, and impossible for man to escape: but He says, "when

I see the blood I will pass over you." There need not be a doubt, whatever the judgement.

It is not said, when you see the blood, but "when I see" it. The soul of an awakened person often rests, not on its own righteousness, but on the way in which it sees the blood. Now, precious as it is to have the heart impressed with it, this is not the ground of peace. Peace is founded on God's seeing it. He cannot fail to estimate it at its full and perfect value as putting away sin. It is He that abhors and has been offended by sin; He sees the value of the blood as putting it away. It may be said, But must I not have faith in its value? This is faith in its value, seeing that God looks at it as putting away sin. Your value for it looks at it as a question of the measure of your feelings. Faith looks at God's thoughts.

God, then, sees the blood: on that we rest to escape judgement, not upon our own view either of sin or of the blood of the Lamb. God Himself estimates the blood of His own Son, as He it is Who fully hates our sin: we feel both most when we enter into this, and rest on it in faith. Faith lays hold of His judgement of sin, and feels the need of His value for the blood of Christ.

This is the first great question—a question between a holy God and a sinful people. God appears as Judge. The expiatory blood of

redemption bars to Him the way as Judge, and it secures the people infallibly, God does not enter within; hence the value of the blood to secure from judgement.

The people, having eaten in haste with the bitter herbs of repentance, begin their journey; but they do so in Egypt; yet now God can be with them. The more we know Christ, and enjoy His purity, the more gravely shall we feel our sins. It was then that the Israelites ate the lamb, but they ate it in security. It would have been sin to have thought that God could fail in His word or His deliverance: and it is sin now to doubt that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin. Israel may be in Egypt, but they are no longer slaves there. Their loins are girded that night, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in hand. Such, too, is our position in the world. Israel begin their journey with the question of sin settled. They had been secured and they knew it, even in the midst of God's judgement of sin. When the revelation of God enters the heart, one cannot find peace till the revelation of His grace is as clear to us as that of His dealing with sin. The Christian finds his judgement fallen on Christ Himself; he begins with submitting to the righteousness of God, Who condemns our nature and acts root and branch, but shews us the condemnation borne by the Lord Jesus.

Have you submitted to Jesus? God demands it. He asks for no other offering nor sacrifice; He presents Jesus, and shews you what you are. The worst sinner in the world may be received in grace by Jesus. "Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation."

Extracted.

NEGLECT.

THERE was an iron staircase to the roof, and they might have escaped that way; and there was an iron staircase leading to the floor below, and they might have got safely away in that direction: one boy indeed did save himself by running down those stairs. There was also a crane at the back, with a strong iron chain from roof to basement of the premises, and they might have rescued themselves by means of that chain—two men did go down that way to safety, but the poor young girls were too utterly terrified to use any means of safety, though so fearfully in earnest in their agonizing wish to escape the awful flame and the suffocating smoke.

Two men escaped! Yes, and did not turn back at all to tell the others how they too might get away. Not a shout did they raise, not a finger did they lift to direct or help those poor little

girlies to escape from their fiery death. Not worthy the name of men! No, truly they were not. But are you any better than they?—you who, knowing of the wrath to come and the endless hell thereafter, and knowing too of God's way of salvation, keep this gracious knowlege to yourselves ; and, raising no warning cry and lifting no helping hand, leave your young fellow-creatures to perish unwarned and unassisted by you who have fled for refuge and have found salvation through committing yourselves to Christ the Lord. Lo, it standeth written : “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life ;” and again, “How shall we escape, if we *neglect* so great salvation?”

G.S.M.

QUALA'S PREACHING.

THE following is a specimen of the way in which Quala would address them. To an idolater he would say, “Can the image save those who worship it? Think! How can it possibly save them? How many trees have sprung up which the image has created? How many clumps of bamboo are there that the image has made? How many men has it formed? Where

are the animals, or even insects, that it has brought into existence? It has done nothing. Nor is the image self-existent: it was made by man. Rather than worship the image, ought we not to worship the man who made it, for his superior power? But the maker was a thief.

“Do you doubt it? Consider! earth, wood, stone, gold, silver, lead, and copper are, because God created them. He who makes an image, takes God’s earth, God’s wood, God’s rocks, God’s gold, God’s silver, God’s lead, God’s copper. Does he ask for it? No! he takes it without leave, says he will form an image and worship it; thus making himself a son of folly. Were we to disobey our parents and treat their commands with contempt, following our own will in everything, would they not be angry? Now, He Who is greater than father, greater than mother, the only true God, Who cannot die, or cease to exist, commands: ‘Make no image, worship no image, worship me.’

“Against this God have we all sinned, in all our thoughts, in all our deeds. There is no part of us free from transgression. The hand has transgressed, the foot has transgressed, the eye has transgressed, the ear has transgressed, the mouth has transgressed, the mind has transgressed, the heart has transgressed. Our transgressions are greater than the hills, loftier than the mountains.

It is not fitting that we should ascend to the presence of God. It is fitting we should descend to the lowest depths of hell, and the great grace of God alone still keeps us here.

“These heavens so wide, this earth so great, everything in the many waters and numerous lands, God created. He formed man innocent, exempt from old age, sickness and death; but he disobeyed God, obeying Satan; and thus brought misery on himself and all creation. Still God did not give us up. He had compassion upon us, and sent His only Son to save the slaves of Satan, who had no rest in his service. To deliver us from the hands of Satan, and to give us rest, He bought us with His own blood. He had no compassion on His own great life, but He had compassion on men who were going down to hell. He died on the cross for us, on account of our sins, and thus threw open the gate at the foot of the road, so that man is made again acquainted with God. Surely the children of earth ought to worship God, ought to perform His work, ought to observe His word, ought to follow His path, ought to obey His will; but man makes himself obstinate and his ears crooked. He worships not, he serves not, he obeys not His word, follows not His path, submits not to His will. But he does fulfil the language of the elders, who said, ‘Children and grand-children, words good and white are scarce-

ly received. Rottenness has many associates, sweetness few.'”

Quala, referred to above, was a young convert to Christ, who, besides having a very ardent love for Christ, had also very considerable ability in convincing his fellow country men. He belonged to one of the Karen tribes who inhabit the foot of the hills in Western Burmah.

Extracted.

**“TO-DAY SHALT THOU BE WITH ME
IN PARADISE.”**

LUKE XXIII. 43.

OF all the wondrous words of our Lord to a soul on earth, what more so to souls than His reply to the converted robber on the cross? The prayer itself made to Him is notable. It was much that he, taught of God, asked of the Lord. “Remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom.” The words, the ways, the grace of the Lord Jesus, fell on ears no longer deaf. No Jew, however depraved, but had heard of Messiah, the long expected and coming King. Beside him was a Man hated without a cause; yet returning nothing but love for the evident spite of all around, Jews and Gentiles, high and low, priests and people, scribes and soldiers. Even the robbers,

and himself one of them, had turned from exceeding anguish to rail on Him.

He was a holy Man. He enjoyed communion with God in a manner and degree unknown to any. The first utterance that broke from His lips when crucified proved Him to be above all experience of men or saints. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." What nearness to God in crying, "Father!" What intercession for His blood-thirsty enemies to say, "Forgive them!" What infinite goodness, at such a moment and in such suffering, to be silent about Himself, and to plead on their behalf; "for they know not what they do!"

Who could He be? Even the righteous John the Baptist, of whom all had heard, bore himself quite differently. Daniel, Jeremiah, Isaiah were excellent; as were Elisha and Elijah, and many before and after them; but none could be compared with the crucified Man at his side. It was assured to his soul, by all that fell from Him, that "this man did nothing amiss." Did not a prophet speak of one coming in the clouds of heaven like a Son of man, and a kingdom that should not pass away given Him? Could it be any other than their promised Messiah? And what meant the inscription over Him in varied letters, "This is the King of the Jews?" Yes, it must be so: none other than the King of the Jews.

His soul fell under the truth; God's grace in giving Christ, and his own utter sinfulness made the blacker in the light of patience, love, and holiness beyond all measure in Jesus. The continued insults of his impenitent fellow drew forth the confession of his own faith, and the warning of faithful love. But to the Lord he said, "Remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom." It was a bold word, yet a tender feeling, for which faith alone could account. In that day when He will remember thousands of saints that lived and died in faith, the Abels, the Enochs, the Noahs, the Abrahams and Isaacs and Jacobs, the Moses, Aarons and Phinehases, the Samuels and Jonathans and Davids, and all the blessed of every age, how truly guided by the Spirit to prefer such a request in the conviction of His perfect grace, blotting out all thought of his sins! If self had in the slightest degree entered his mind, never could *he* have said to *Jesus*, Remember me in that day of coming power and glory.

But he did say it in the confidence of his faith in Him. And it is written for you, dear reader, that you, looking only to Him, may be assured that the same grace is open to you. If you are a great sinner (may God deepen your conviction before Him!) He is a greater Saviour. "There is no difference of Jew and Greek; for the same Lord of all is rich toward all who call upon him. For

every one whosoever that calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”¹

No doubt this is more than the kingdom. It is Christianity. You have not for it to wait for the coming kingdom. It is *now* to every believer. God is honoured, and Christ, and His cross, by your simple, hearty, grateful acceptance of salvation, not yet of the body, but of your soul. And how the Lord in His reply puts all in the bright light of God with His sign-manual of all importance: “Verily I say to thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”

Where are the dreams of the miscalled Fathers of a dark chamber for the saints till resurrection? Where the mediæval lies about purgatory? Where the baser modern fiction of souls sleeping, if not dead, till the kingdom come? Such the grace of God in Christ, such the cleansing power of His blood, that the just converted robber follows Christ that very day (only a few hours remained) into paradise—yea more, to be with Christ there. Anything short of this blessedness impairs the faith, perverts the gospel, and is presumptuous unbelief against God and His Son. The cross of Christ henceforth effects no less for every believer. As the paradise of Adam was the loveliest spot on earth when all was good, so is the paradise of God in heaven for the last Adam and all that now enter

the intermediate state. See 2 Cor. xii. 2—4, and Rev. ii. 7; which last scripture proves that it is the same paradise when our bodies are glorified.

W.K.

BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD.

THE atoning work is done,
 The sacrifice is made,
 The sword has been unsheathed,
 The ransom price is paid.
 O sinner, see the dying Lamb,
 God over all, the great I Am.

He came to die the death
 Of cruel agony,
 He stooped to sin's domain,
 To set the captive free.
 O sinner, see the dying Lamb,
 God over all, the great I Am.

He broke the bands of death,
 He's now ascended high;
 "Tis finished," were the words
 Of His triumphant cry.
 O sinner, see the risen Lamb,
 God over all, the great I Am.

Ye ransomed, raise your voice,
 To praise the Conqueror slain,
 And spread from shore to shore,
 The glory of His fame.
 The glory of the risen Lamb,
 God over all, the great I Am.

A.G.

ALONE.

WHEN telling out God's glad tidings at S—— one Lord's day evening, I noticed a woman in great distress. Her face in tears indicated deep anguish of soul. So much was this so that she left the hall to compose herself, and then returned.

At the close of the meeting I went to her and as I directed her to Jesus, she looked at me with a face full of hopeless despair, and said, "Oh, sir, you do not know. I am alone in the world—alone, without a friend to advise me. And when you said, If the sheep refused to follow the shepherd, he would take the little lambs in his arms and carry them, knowing each sheep would follow its lamb; and that Jesus the good Shepherd, in the same way, sometimes took our dear ones to be with Himself in the glory, that He might draw the parents after them. This shews me where I am. It breaks my heart to see myself alone, standing between two eternities alone, and I do not know what to do. As I look upwards to heaven, I know my mother is there, and my husband is there; but oh! where are my six children? I know the life they lived, and the death they died. I have no hope for them."

Then in tears and anguish she cried, "Oh, sir,

tell me whether I can go to Jesus the good Shepherd and be happy, and leave my dear children in eternal woe?"

It was painful to witness her grief. I again pointed her to the Lord, telling her to trust Him with all her troubles, as He alone could clear away all the mists and calm her troubled soul, giving joy in the place of sorrow, and light in the place of darkness.

Dear reader, look at this poor woman as she attempts to fight the enemy alone. See what a bold bid Satan makes for her soul, as she stands between eternal glory and eternal woe. She looks upwards and sees those loved ones welcoming her to that glorious home of peace and love. She looks down into that dark abyss, but there is no welcome for her there. Yet Satan, undaunted, uses his subtle devices to drag her down. Can you wonder at her tears and anguish, as she continues her lonely fight? Yet she is not alone, for just as her strength fails, and her resolution all but gone, Jesus the good Shepherd, (Who has been watching her struggles) steps in, and with His blessed hands (that still bear the marks of the nails) lifts her clean out of the power of the enemy.

As she turns her gaze on Him, she finds she is not alone, but that the Lord has taken up the fight for her, and is already soothing her grief and drying

her tears, and leading her on victoriously to His glorious home above.

And He will do the same for you if you will look to Him. Trust Him, no matter how great your trials and troubles, or grief and sorrows are, He Who died that bitter death on Calvary's cross for you, now says, "Come unto me and I will give you rest," and "Him that cometh I will in no wise cast out." Surely you can trust His word. He says, "Heaven and earth may pass away, but my word shall never pass away."

The woman here mentioned is now happy in the Lord.

G.W.

LAW AND GRACE.

WHEN the Spirit of God awakens a soul, fear takes possession of the heart, and well it may. A prisoner pronounced guilty by human laws is alarmed, how much more then must it be so when a sinner finds himself guilty in the presence of a holy God. At such a time the language of the heart is, "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head, therefore my heart faileth me." Ignorant of the gospel, the soul places itself under law, thinking

to make amends for the past; but only to find itself helpless. So far from helping a man the law does the very opposite, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." And again, "As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." It is of the utmost importance that this should be clearly understood, otherwise the soul can never know nor appreciate the grace of God.

But it may be asked, Why was the law given? To which we reply in the language of scripture, "The law entered that the offence might abound."¹ And again, "It was added because of transgressions."²

How utterly futile it is then for a sinner to place himself under law, thinking thereby to obtain life by attempting to keep it. God's method of salvation is altogether in another way. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Man has forfeited life, and is cast upon the undeserved mercy of God. Blessed be His name, He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

1 Rom. v. 20

2 Gal. iii. 19

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”
 “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us; and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

This is grace that should call forth the deepest gratitude of our hearts. Had it been possible for man to have kept intact God’s law there would have been no need of a Saviour; but alas, we know that this is an impossible thing for fallen man to do. If left to himself man must perish.

But, “God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” This is blessed news for those who know themselves lost—and such is the case, whether men know it or not—“all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” “There is none that doeth good, no, not one.”

“Not the labour of my hands
 Could fulfil the law’s demands;
 Could my zeal no respite know,
 Could my tears for ever flow,
 Nought for sin could e’er atone,
 But Thy blood, and Thine alone.”

T.H.



THE heart of the prodigal son was as bad when he crossed his father’s threshold, as when, later, in the far country, he squandered his father’s living with harlots.

UNDER OR ABOVE THE SUN?

ON what, dear reader, are you resting your hopes for time and for eternity?

If on anything under the sun, you will, sooner or later, find them to be dead hopes, since God Himself declareth, through him who was both the richest and the wisest of men, that "all is vanity and vexation of spirit, and there is no profit under the sun."

If, on the contrary, your hopes are centred on a living Christ, Who sits crowned and glorified above the sun, yea, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named," then indeed are they living hopes, and can never fade or pass away, since they rest on the eternal foundation of death and resurrection. Thank God the changing things of time and sense can never rob the believer of his treasure in the heavens, nor dim the changeless glory of that lowly Nazarene, Who has passed through the gates of death, and, having vanquished it for ever, now sits as the triumphant Conqueror upon His Father's throne. How marked is the contrast between these two places, under, or above the sun. Under the sun Satan reigns, for scripture tells us he is "the god of this world," whereas above the sun the blessed Christ of God rules in the armies of

heaven, and all power is given unto Him, as the ascended Man.

Refused, and cast out of the very world His hands had made, God's Holy One has been rejected by Jew and Gentile alike; and the usurper has taken His place, "even the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Willing captives, alas, of Satan, are these children of disobedience; and sin and death are the chains that he has forged for their cruel bondage. "All men's schemes and ambitions, of whatever kind, are therefore doomed to failure and disappointment, for the universe itself will soon be wrapt in flame, and "the elements shall melt with fervent heat." Nothing but death and judgement lie before the unsaved, whether young or old, rich or poor; and the cross of Christ is the one and only way of escape for the guilty children of Adam. Countless millions have vainly thirsted for satisfaction in the fleeting pleasures that are found under the sun, only to discover that disappointment and the pains of death are the outcome of them all.

All man's fondest hopes are destined to perish if sought for under the sun; but a risen and glorified Christ above the sun is God's abiding resource for every exercised conscience and every troubled heart.

The cross where Jesus died marks God's present

judgement of everything under the sun; but the throne where Jesus sits is the everlasting proof of His infinite satisfaction in the work of Him Who came "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Above the sun are to be found pleasures for evermore for every child of faith; yea, life, righteousness, peace, joy, and endless satisfaction for all who have fled to Christ for refuge.

Yes, it is the believer's privilege to bask in the eternal sunshine of His love Who "hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Turn then your back, dear reader, if still unsaved, on your sins, yourself, and this poor doomed world; and, trusting Jesus now—as you are and where you are, read your title to eternal glory in the blood of His cross. If you die in your sins, judgement and hell will be your certain portion; but if, as you read these lines, you look up with the eye of faith to a risen and glorified Christ in the heavens, you will pass from death unto life, and find your heart's eternal rest above the sun. Look and live!

"All earth's pleasures fade and wither,
Christ alone abides.
And the ocean of God's favour
Knows no changing tide."

S.T.

"SABBATH being ended, they brought unto Him all the sick, Jesus, ever ready to serve (precious Lord!), healed them all."

WILL YOU HEAR IT?

SOME years ago, I used to see a poor old woman who could not read, but having been converted she was very anxious to know the scriptures, and she used to get people to read to her.

I had been going through the book of Exodus, and she used to listen most attentively and asked many questions. One day she said, "If you please, ma'am, you have been reading a lot about them poor things coming out of Egypt, but it is always the *children* of Israel. Were there no *ould* people among them?"

No doubt you will feel inclined to smile at such ignorance; but I am quite sure there are many things which have puzzled *you* just as much. And perhaps you have been too proud or too shy to ask an explanation of them. One of these stumbling-blocks (meaning anything that stands in your way as a hindrance), is the two words, "Second advent."

The first advent you can understand, and you know it means the coming of Jesus our Lord to this world, to live, suffer, and die for us. But the second advent—what does it mean? I am sure you have often seen placards announcing lectures on the "second coming" (which is the same as

advent), and you may have wondered if it was a new idea and perhaps not in the Bible. This however is a mistake, for when the Lord was comforting His sorrowing disciples, after telling them of His approaching death, He said, "I will come again."¹ So you see, Jesus announced His return Himself, which settles the question beyond dispute that there is a second advent.

Now I am sure the first question which you would ask if you were sitting near me now would be, "When is He coming?" Well, God has not told us the *time*, only the fact; and it is this which makes the second advent such a solemn thing. The second question would be, "What is He coming for?" Now to that question there is a clear and joyful answer from God's word. He is first coming for His own, all who have trusted in His precious blood, had their sins blotted out, and are still on the earth.

But someone may ask, What then will become of those who have died trusting in Jesus during these nineteen centuries since He was crucified. I will answer this question in the words of St. Paul. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first."²

So Jesus is coming, we do not know how soon;

1 John xiv. 3

2 1 Thess. iv. 16

it may be to-day. All those who have died trusting in His precious blood, the saints and martyrs of old, and the poor humble beggars from alleys and slums will be there. The sea will give up dead saints from its depths, and the deserts and caves, the dust of His redeemed ones put to rest centuries ago. The dead in Christ shall rise *first*. Now comes the solemn word for you and me. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air."

If He should come to-night, would you be among them? St. Paul says "we," meaning Christ's own. Are you His? If not, when the trump sounds you will not hear it, for you have shut your ears to His loving voice, and the archangel's call will not be for you. Your father, mother, brother, sister, or friend, if the Lord's, may be taken from the same house, aye, the same room, and you be left. Only those who have trusted Jesus will hear the archangel's voice and the trump of God. All the rest will be left behind on earth for judgement.

S.

IN Jesus there was undefilable purity, and love, and power. At His touch the leprosy fled away, leaving the leper "clean and *near Him*."

HIS LAST CALL.

A GOSPEL service had been held some years ago at a hall in the Channel Islands, after which a number of christian friends, desiring that others should know the gracious Saviour and hear

“The joyful news of sins forgiven,
Of hell subdued, of peace with heaven,”

wended their way to the sea shore to hold an open-air service.

When near the spot selected, one of the number turned aside to ask a man who was lounging about to come and hear the oft-told story of God's boundless love. But alas! he was a hardened sinner, and twice refused the loving, earnest invitation; supplementing his second refusal with the awful words, “I would rather go to hell than to hear the gospel.”

Did he forecast his own judgement? Did he unthinkingly make his lasting choice between heaven and hell? Be that as it may, the solemn fact remains that the same evening, at ten o'clock, the blasphemous trifler with the glad tidings of a gracious God was seized with illness, and before the belfry clock chimed the midnight hour, death's icy hand was laid upon his heart, and life's brittle thread was snapped.

Has the gospel story no charm to your ear? If

so, it is evident that you are an unforgiven sinner. God delights in the gospel. The saved sinner rejoices in the gospel. Satan, man's arch-enemy, hates it, because it frees his servants from his tyranny. It is Satan who seeks to hide the blessedness of the gospel, to charm so that its divine notes fall upon sin-deafened ears, to harden so that the heart is unmoved by God's unparalleled love, and to hinder so that man may not savingly hear His proclamations of peace.

God's boundless grace brings salvation. The gospel is His power to that end. But mark! not to those who despise it, not to those who neglect it, not to those who merely hear it, but "To everyone that believeth." Are you among that number? If so, you will be with that countless multitude who will shine to the praise of His grace in the ages to come: if not, you may die in your sins and be eternally lost.

In the coming judgement day it will avail you nothing but only add to your condemnation, that you heard the truths of the gospel, that Christ came to seek the lost, that He died for the guilty, and that now He is a Prince and a Saviour at God's right hand, presented in the gospel as the object of faith. Oh, as you value your soul,

"Heed the record God has given,
Heed His word and be brought nigh,
Heed the glorious gospel message,
Heed it now or you will die."

Hear it, believe it, and trust the Saviour of Whom it so fully testifies. Then you will be "justified freely by his grace; knowing that he [Christ] was delivered for *your* offences, and raised again for your justification."

A.G.

"IDLE TALES."

How passing strange, how terribly solemn, and yet how sadly true, that the most important event which has ever yet happened on this earth should have been looked upon as only an idle tale. Yet such, alas! was the effect produced, even on Christ's apostles, when the women who returned from the sepulchre announced the glorious tidings that the Lord was no longer in the grave, but was risen from the dead. "It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles; and their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not."¹

Yet how stupendous were the results of that single-handed victory! Satan, sin, death, and hell, all were triumphed over by the mighty Prince of Life and Peace; and even angel's lips had declared, "He is not here, for he is risen, as

he said ;” yet was this glad announcement treated merely as an idle tale. Reader, what is that risen Christ to thee? Is the awful fact of your lost condition but an idle tale? Nay, nay ; remember that thou art no exception to the whole of Adam’s race, and it is no idle tale, that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” The Judge of all the earth hath spoken, and the whole world stands “guilty before God.” Thou, too, art guilty, and this is no idle tale, but an appalling fact, which thy life’s history does but fully prove.

Sin, alas ! brings death and judgement in its train ; and surely these are no idle tales. The eternal punishment of the wicked, and the ceaseless horrors of the lake of fire, are no mere idle tales ; but to every unbeliever will prove tremendous realities !

Men may scoff at God, and deny His word, as thousands do to-day ; yet none the less the fact remains that, as sure as night follows day, so surely does resurrection follow death, and this is no idle tale ! In which resurrection (shouldst thou die) wilt thou then have thy part? Scripture speaks of two—the first, which may take place at any moment, when all the righteous dead shall come forth from their graves in response to the returning Bridegroom’s call ; and the second, a thousand years later, which Christ’s own lips declare is “the resurrection of judgement.” Be

not deceived, neither of these two resurrections, any more than Christ's own, wilt thou find to be an idle tale; hence thine everlasting blessing, or eternal woe, depends upon thy present treatment of that holy Saviour Who agonised and died for sin on Calvary's cross! Neither the Father's house, which is the future home of the redeemed; nor the great white throne, before which all the wicked dead shall surely stand, are idle tales!

Think then, oh, think, dear unsaved reader, of what the opening of those books of judgement will be to thee! Thy sins read out in the ears of men and angels; the secrets of thy life laid bare before the universe, and thou thyself condemned to everlasting punishment as either a Christ-rejecter, or a Christ-neglecter! No idle tale will that judgement-throne prove to thy guilty soul, when thou meetest then, as Judge, the very One Whom thou now refusest to accept as Saviour, and Whose precious blood, if thou wouldst but trust it now, could cleanse thee from every stain of sin! Oh, treat not the shedding of that precious blood as an idle tale, lest, all too late, thou shouldst discover to thine everlasting sorrow, that "God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Two things are thus secured by Christ's resurrection; eternal peace, security, and blessing for the believer, but eternal wrath, and the lake of fire for the un-

believer. Neither heaven nor hell are idle tales ; to which, then, dear reader, art thou now hastening? S.T.

THE SINFUL WOMAN SAVED.

LUKE VII. 35—50.

To Luke more than to any other was given by the Holy Spirit to set forth God's grace to the lost. Only he tells us the parable of the Prodigal and of the good Samaritan ; only he the story of the chief tax-gatherer Zacchæus, and of the robber converted on the cross.

O reader, if you know not your sins forgiven, hear what the Lord speaks to your soul through this poor sinner. How true and strong the faith which drew her into that house !

There she stood weeping at His feet behind, and began to wet His feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, and covered His feet with kisses, and anointed them with the myrrh. The Lord without turning round knew it all, and the deep work of the Spirit in her heart, as He knows your heart, and mine, and every other. The Pharisee saw it, but betrayed the blindness of his soul in judging Jesus as no prophet : else such a liberty had been at once repelled. She judged herself at the feet of Jesus, yet behind. To whom could she a guilty de-

graded woman go? What could a Levite do for her? What would a priest but execrate her?

But He that caused blind to see, lame to walk, deaf to hear, yea, and dead to rise,—was He not just the One for her yet more desperate need? Not even the contemptuous hatred of the Pharisee could keep her away. Her bearing (now for the first time in her life) her profound sense of sin and no less profound sense of His grace, told without a word her genuine conversion. What produced it? Jesus only: the perfect light of Jesus that made her evil insupportable; the perfect love of Jesus that drew her to His feet, wet with her tears, wiped with her tresses, anointed with her myrrh, all bespeaking her faith and love right loudly, and in her case more becomingly than any words could.

But the Pharisee had the most striking evidence that Jesus was in the highest degree a prophet, *the* Prophet. Even his misjudging heart was laid bare. For the two debtors were the answer to his unuttered unbelief. Nay, he was compelled to own that the one who has most forgiven loves most; which the Lord thereon applies to the sinful but grateful soul whom he despised.

“For which cause I say to thee, Her many sins are forgiven.” It was, on his own showing, not the reason why her sins were forgiven. For this was the saving grace of God that appeared in

Jesus. But the Pharisee had rightly judged that the most love follows the greater sense of the forgiveness; and his own absence of love proved how far he was from forgiveness.

Then he said to the woman, "Thy sins are forgiven." Without this His love, God's love, had not been satisfied. He would have her know that her many sins were blotted out, and know it direct to her own soul. This was a far greater end of His coming than all His miracles. For this He was going to die; for it was God's will He was here to do; and even before it was done, He would have her know it, and the Pharisee hear it, if not even now believing, to his own condemnation. Clearly repentance toward God he had not, any more than faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Alas! it is the common unbelief. For the guests that were with them at table began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? Yes, He was God, as well as Prophet; and as He wielded divine power, so He manifested divine grace. Yet the errand of love it was that brought Him to a wicked world and lost man. "And thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people [and she was one of them] from their sins," the friend of tax-gatherers and sinners, if in pride of unbelief they refused not to bow, as she did.

"And He said to the woman, Thy faith hath

saved thee: go in peace." It was her portion there and then. May it be yours, dear reader. Follow her example by grace; be warned by Simon the Pharisee, who heard the words, but heard not the Lord Jesus.

W.K.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

SUCH was the title of a small book handed by a christian gentleman recently to a lady, who, while sitting on the parade at one of our English watering places, had been reading a volume of "devotions," which she took no pains to hide. As she graciously accepted the booklet the donor remarked, "It is a great thing to have the righteousness of *God* for ourselves, since we possess none whatever of our own."

"Yes, indeed, sir," she replied.

"May I ask how you can obtain the righteousness of *God*?" he queried.

Thinking a moment, she answered, "Well, I suppose by leading a good and virtuous life, and praying to be guided aright."

Before relating the close of the conversation, I should like to pause and ask my readers if they endorse the lady's reply? How do *you*, my friend, think to obtain the righteousness of *God*? Or have you an idea that your own being sufficient, you

have no need to submit to His? Of yours, of mine, God has declared, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;"¹ and "There is none righteous, no, not one."² Acknowledging the truth of these statements, and owning your need of a righteousness in which to appear before a holy God, can you still seek to establish one of your own?

Such was the condition of the lady spoken of above, knowing her need of a righteousness—and one too suited to the eye of a God "Who cannot behold iniquity," yet thinking her own good and virtuous life, coupled with her prayers, would procure it! Let me repeat the solemn words which fell on her ear: "*You will never get it that way.*"

"Oh, you mean I must get it by Christ."

"By Christ, and by Christ alone," was the answer,—God's answer, my friend, from the lips of His servant. Listen! "Now righteousness of God without the law is manifested even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe."³ Will that not satisfy you? It will: it must satisfy God, for it is His own providing, His own thought, and He will never find fault with His own work.

But it is solely by "faith of Jesus Christ;" in no other, and by no other, that God can count you anything else than a lost and guilty sinner; but

1 Is. lxiv. 6.

2 Rom. iii. 10.

3 Rom. iii. 21, 22.

such His thoughts of His beloved Son, such His estimate of His accomplished work, that, trusting Him, you may, you shall, be counted righteous,—absolutely, perfectly. Oh! how can this be? Turn to the cross of Calvary, and there behold that sinless One dying a sacrifice for sin in the sinner's room. Behold the precious blood flowing from His pierced side, and hear God's estimate of it: "The blood that maketh atonement for the soul."¹ All the claims of justice met by that wonderful sacrifice, and in proof a risen Saviour seated at the right hand of the throne of God even now! And through Him a God-given righteousness is offered unto all—no matter how vile or guilty; a righteousness for the worst, a righteousness for the best of men, "for there is no difference;" all alike need it, and it is available for all.

But is it *yours*? It is "upon all them that believe." Have you set to your seal that God is true? Are you a believer in Jesus? If so, you are entitled to say with one who, when asked on the verge of eternity if he were ready to go, replied, "I have the righteousness of God for my title; I have the blood of Christ for my sins; and I have the communion of the Holy Ghost to accompany me: what more can I want?"

T.

PAUSE AND THINK.

W
 HEN earth's idle dreams are ended,
 And its pleasures passed away,
 Tell me, wilt thou live for ever
 In the realms of perfect day?

Shall thy precious soul be number'd
 With the ransomed hosts above?
 Wilt thou help to swell the praises
 Of the God of Light and Love?

Shall the song that knows no ending
 Of the blood-bought ones be thine?
 Wilt thou then in all the beauty
 Of the heavenly Bridegroom shine?

Or shall outer darkness wrap thee
 In the realms of endless woe?
 And, amidst hell's ceaseless torments,
 Wilt thou to perdition go?

Reader, there is but one answer
 To this question thou canst give.
 If believing on the Saviour,
 Thou shalt with that Saviour live.

All who prove the cleansing virtues
 Of the blood which cancels sin,
 Shall thro' heaven's pearly gateways,
 Soon with Jesus enter in.

But, if living still, or dying,
 Far from God, and Satan's slave,
 Nought but judgement lies before thee,
 Jesus only thee can save.

Trusting Christ, sin's chains are broken;
 'Twas for thee that Jesus died;
 Let Himself be then thy portion,
 Nought with Him thy heart divide.

HE WAS WILLING, BUT NOT ABLE.

RECENTLY passing through a churchyard, my attention was drawn to a gravestone newly erected. It was in memory of a lad of ten years who was drowned, and of a young man of eighteen who was also drowned while trying to save him. They were fishing, with others in a stream, when the little fellow in passing a companion at a narrow place was in some way overbalanced, and fell into the deep water below. The young man, seeing what had happened, plunged in after him. In doing so, it is supposed that he struck his head on the hard rock at the side, so that both of them sank and were drowned.

Who could but admire such an unselfish sacrifice while attempting to save another? He was *willing* to save, but he proved to be *not able*.

The little lad in his drowning condition was a picture of men in their lost and helpless condition—as the scripture says, “ready to perish.” How well for those who realise their true condition, and trust Him Who came from the highest glory down to Calvary’s depth of woe: Who went down beneath the dark waters of death and judgement to save those who otherwise must have eternally perished.

The *willingness* of the Lord to save, who can doubt? When here on earth, was there ever a

needy soul who came to Him but was turned away unblest? His own words are, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." How He wept over guilty Jerusalem, because they refused to be blest by Him! "How often *would I* have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but *ye would not.*" "*Ye will not* come unto me that ye might have life."

Nearly two thousand years have run their course since this world cast Him out and slew Him. That crowning sin of man is not forgotten by God, and its judgement is sure. But He lingers still in mercy, for He "delighteth in mercy." *Judgement* is His "strange" work: it will be no pleasure to Him to execute it upon the unrepentant neglecter or rejecter of His great love, mercy, and grace; but His holiness will demand it. His present "longsuffering is salvation." He is "*not willing* that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." The Son "came to seek and to save that which was lost." He "came into the world to save sinners."

As to His being *able to save*, there can be no question. He, Who endured the cross with all its bitterness and heavy load, *finished* the great work

He came to do, for God's glory and man's blessing. He bruised Satan's head and overthrew him. He went down into the grave and rose again the third day, the mighty Conqueror. He is now on high a Prince and a Saviour. "*He is able to save* them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." No one is able to pluck even the weakest from His hands. None who trust Him will be ashamed, for He is able to perform all He has promised.

Reader, what say you to these things? If not already rescued from your perishing condition, you at this moment stand in deep need of Him. You know He is both *willing* and *able* to save you. Will you not own your guiltiness before Him, and accept the free and eternal pardon offered you? "Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."

W.C.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

DEAR _____,

Your card reminds me of my neglect in allowing your last letter to remain unanswered so long. The fact is I felt considerably discouraged at your still protesting that you had "instinct" only as your guide; and at your persistent rejection of the only true light, viz., God's own revelation of Himself in His word. But I am rebuked, because He at least has longer

patience, and is still graciously waiting to let the light shine in, if you will only have it. There is surely no advantage in remaining in the dark; and I do not admit that ignorance is bliss. If He had not given us a revelation, we should be in the dark without remedy; but as He *has* done so, it is only wilful folly to refuse it.

I assure you that in all that I have said, I seek only your real blessing, for I know that there is nothing worth having apart from this, either for time or eternity. You admit that all your thoughts and aims are bounded by this present life; and you add, "let the rest go!" "The rest!" What is that? Eternity! and you need be in no doubt or difficulty about it, if you will only take heed to the word of God, which He has mercifully put into your hands, for there, and there only, all is made perfectly clear.

There I learn that man derived his life from God Himself. "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," and this is the origin of the immortality of the soul. Then I learn that when his obedience was tested, he utterly failed, and became a sinner, and the father of a fallen race. As sinners we are subject to the righteous judgment of God, for sin cannot stand in His holy presence, and (our immortality being already a fact) we should have been banished for ever, and His wrath would have been upon us eternally.

But now His infinite love and mercy step in, and He, the one sinned against, devises means whereby His banished may be restored, righteously forgiven and accepted; and may be at home in the joy of His presence for ever. He judged sin in the person of His beloved Son, "Who knew no sin," yet was "made sin for us," and willingly bore the penalty in our stead, dying "the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God;" and we, in our guilt, and helplessness, are bidden only to confess our sins, and, taking our true place as sinners before God, to accept, to repent, to believe, to trust in, the One "who loved us and gave himself for us."

"He died for our sins, according to the scriptures and was buried; he rose again according to the scriptures," and is now at the right hand of God, a living Saviour, "able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by him." Why not bow to such grace; and thank God for such a salvation, and take the joy of it now, instead of groping in the dark, to plunge into eternity with the added guilt of having refused such infinite mercy?

There is no alternative; as surely as I am writing these words, so surely do I believe that you will *prove* their truth, either now, or when it is for ever too late. If it were all a myth, I am no worse off than you; but *if it be true*, what about yourself, and thousands more who use a "God-given mind" to reason against His own blessed word, and to

rob themselves of all the blessing He so freely offers?

Yes, we must be born again: the old sinful nature could never be happy in the presence of God. People talk of hoping to go to heaven, but, apart from this, it is not only true that they cannot, yet if they could, it would be no heaven to them. But everyone who has accepted God's testimony, and has trusted Christ for salvation, is born of God. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." "To as many as received him to them gave he power to become children of God, to them that believe on his name." "Ye are all the sons of God, by faith in Christ Jesus."

So you see the believer is on entirely new ground, and in a new relationship, and has a new nature, enabling him to say, "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ." A guilty conscience causes us to dread His holiness; but when we have believed that "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin," the fear that hath torment is gone for ever. His "perfect love casteth out fear." Now we know God as our Father, and are assured that all that was against us is put away for ever; and not only is this life, with all its care and sorrow, full of the comfort of His love, but death is robbed of its sting, and, if we *should* pass through it, becomes but the usher into heavenly glory. But death is by no means

certain ; the Lord Jesus has promised that He will "come again, and receive us unto himself, that where he is we may be also." This is the bright hope set before us, and it may be fulfilled at any moment ; but *then*, the door would be shut, and though you might hold this letter in your hand, not a word of the divine message of mercy it contains, would be for you any longer. Death (or the Lord's coming for His own) will close the door to all unbelievers, for ever. Oh, why will you stay outside, when God invites you to Himself with outstretched arms of love, and is beseeching you to be reconciled to Him.

Yes, I am, thank God, born again ; but it is not an "easy thing to live the true life," as you suppose, for while at that new birth I received a new nature, I *did not get rid of the old one* ; and hence the constant need for watchfulness and prayer. In this, alas ! I fail again and again, but God has made provision for this also, for "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The One Who died for us, "ever liveth to make intercession for us." "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But this will not be always so ; all who believe are "predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son ;" "We shall be like him for we shall see him as he is." What a prospect ! our very bodies

changed, and fashioned like unto His glorious body, and we, at home, "for ever with the Lord." Oh, do not risk being in the "outer darkness, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

True, indeed, "Christ is not universally followed," as you say; but that is no reason why *you* should be among His rejecters; and there are indeed too many "mere professors," but that is no reason why you or I should be one; and even those who *are* truly His, do not shine as they ought; but that does not alter the truth of God, and is no excuse for anyone refusing His word. Each one is upon his own responsibility, and none of these things will shield him when the day of grace is past, and judgement comes. "God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

Those who speak of the "failure of Christianity" themselves fail utterly to see its true purpose, which is, not to convert the world, but to save a people out of it before the judgement comes. See to it that *you* are among that happy number: it is free to all; it is for "every creature;" and only your own deliberate refusal can shut you out.

God bless you, dear fellow, and grant you to

know the joy of His salvation. K. J. can offer you nothing to compare with this. Oh, do shun every influence which would only drag you down; and keep you in the dark.

Do be in earnest about it. Ask God to shew you whether all this is true, and if you desire it, He will surely do so, for He has said, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." Put Him to the test. Read His word, with a true desire to know His truth, and the true light shall flood your soul with a peace of which, up to this moment, you have had no conception.

There, that is all. I can only tell you the old, old story. I cannot make you receive it; but I *can* pray for you, and do, that God in His infinite mercy may bless and save you, for time and for eternity.

I find I have omitted to say anything about the "love" of which you speak on your post card. There is natural love, which goes out to those who are dear to us naturally; or in whom we find that which is loveable. But a true knowledge of the love of God must be the spring of love which is beyond nature. "God commended his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son;" and now, "the love of God is shed abroad in our

hearts," going out first to Him, then to all believers, then to all the world; and if we have an enemy, we can love him too, and only long that he might know the same Saviour Who is so precious to us. Farewell.

Ever yours very sincerely, G. de M.

FRAGMENTS.

"BELIEVER! what have you to tell to your discouraged brethren of the faithfulness of your God?' Cannot you tell them from your own experience, that Jesus 'is for a foundation stone, a tried stone, a sure foundation?' Cannot you shew them, that, because He has borne the burden of their sins, He is able to 'bear their griefs and carry their sorrows?' that you have tried Him, and that you have found Him so? Oh! be animated—be encouraged to know more of Christ yourself; let your hope in Him be strengthened, that you may cause gladness in the hearts of those that see you; so that 'whether you be afflicted, or whether you be comforted, it may be for their consolation and salvation.'"

"I HOPE you will cease from your over-anxiety about the world, and about growing rich, which will infallibly prevent you from being rich towards

God, and cause you to be like that rich man whom Christ mentions, and calls *a fool*, in the twelfth chapter of Luke. You have had frequent convictions, and have several times been *almost persuaded to be a Christian*: but let me in love ask you, yea, ask your own heart, Have you gone any farther? Are you altogether a Christian? Do you in judgement count all things but dung that you win Christ? Do you in practice seek first the kingdom and His righteousness?"

PRESENT DELIVERANCE.

EVERY true believer in Jesus can say, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."¹

This is the true position of every believer in Jesus, at this present time. No language can be more explicit: "Who *hath* delivered us," "and *hath* translated us" "we *have* redemption, *the forgiveness of sins.*" These are the sure words of God Himself, and, blessed be His name, they rest not on any conditions to be performed by us, but on the imperishable basis of the Redeemer's blood. We have all "through his blood." We are

blessed according to God's own estimate of the value of the blood of "His dear Son."

Consequently there is no uncertainty whatever, as to the believer's position in Christ. And nothing can hinder his enjoyment of that blessed position save the unbelief of his own heart. God's word is plain, positive and absolute.

But art thou a believer in Jesus? Art thou trusting in Him? As one lost and ruined under sin, hast thou fled for refuge to Him? Art thou looking for His return? Art thou ready to meet Him with a joyous welcome? Or, alas! would He find thee, were He to come now, amongst those who in heart are saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us?" If so, flee now from the ranks of the unbelievers. Submit thyself unto Him. Bow to His sceptre of love and grace.

He bids thee come, "Whosoever will, let him come," and him that cometh He will not cast out. "I will in no wise cast out," is what He says. He is the fountain of life, the Lord of glory. Who would refuse to live and reign with Him? Who would prefer the world to Christ—the regions of despair to the mansions of glory? "Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."¹

Extracted.

OBEDIENCE.

“**B**EHOLD to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.”

The self-will and disobedience of Adam brought death and ruin into God's beautiful creation; the obedience and setting aside of self, brought in salvation, and life is in Christ the Son. We all know that self-will and disobedience, even in the things of *this* life, lead to trouble, disgrace, and even death; and that humility and obedience are ever the pathways of safety.

I will give you an instance of self-will and disobedience, with its sad results, and then we will have a little talk about the verse at the head of this paper.

Far away in the jungles of India, a party was made up to go tiger shooting, and among them was a young man who knew nothing of the dangers of this sport.

The day had been unsuccessful, for though a tiger had been wounded, it escaped, and at the end of a long weary day the party were returning home on elephants, when suddenly a gust of wind took off the young man's light pith hat, and carried it along as you have seen a straw hat whirled across the street.

“Oh, I must get down and get that hat back,” he called out.

But a chorus of voices exclaimed, "Don't be mad, and risk your life; a tiger may be lurking in the long cane grass."

"It won't take me a minute," he replied; and no persuasions would stop him.

The wind had carried his hat much further than he thought—close to the long grass; and as he stooped forward to pick it up, the wounded tiger they had lost early in the day, and which had been watching him, sprang out and seized him. His friends were horror-stricken, and though they had their guns loaded, dared not fire, for fear of shooting *him* instead of the tiger.

Everything was done that could be done for his rescue, but by the time the tiger was killed, he, poor fellow, had been mangled to death. His self-will cost him his life.

Now for the text. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Someone may say, "I do not quite understand what that means." It is very easy I know to repeat texts, but to understand them is quite a different matter. Well then, let us suppose your parents had given you strict orders about something you were to do for them; and you deliberately went in opposition to their commands and wishes, doing what *you* thought right, and by-and-by, to smooth things over, brought them a present to make up for the disobedience. Do you think the present

would be acceptable? You know it would not.

This is just what Saul did, and it led to Samuel's rebuke in the text. The Amalekites were the bitter enemies of Israel, and consequently of God, for the Israelites were His chosen people. God commanded Saul to go up against the Amalekites, and not to spare any of them, or anything belonging to them; and yet in the face of this command, Saul deliberately disobeyed God by sparing the life of Agag, the Amalekite king, and the best of the flocks and herds; and when remonstrated with by Samuel, he tried to hide his disobedience by throwing the blame on the people, and worse still, pretended to be very religious, by offering God a sacrifice from the cattle he had been ordered to destroy.

Do you think God could accept such a sacrifice, when the cattle on a thousand hills were His? Surely not. No wonder that God was displeased and took away the kingdom from Saul. Disobedience and self-will always end in ruin, as you will see if you read the end of Saul and his sons in the book of Samuel.

In Hebrews xi. we have a long list of *obedient* persons, and, in contrast with Saul, let us look at Noah. What a test of obedience it must have been to commence building an ark, or boat, which was to *float*, and there was neither river nor sea to float it on. For a long while he was build-

ing the ark; and you may be sure there were plenty of people round him who jeered, and made fun of his wonderful boat; but on he plodded, and when God's time came, the despised *obedient* Noah was saved, and all his house. His obedience had its full reward, and his name is among God's heroes in that chapter.

Far beyond patriarchs, prophets, apostles and martyrs, who have glorified God by their obedience stands out the name of God's dear Son, Jesus our Lord, Who could say, "I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."¹ No one else ever could say that. And, "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow."²

Now, dear reader, have *you* obeyed God's word and bowed to the name of Jesus? If so, salvation is yours, because God has said it. And there is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved. Just as there is condemnation for the disobedient and self-willed who will not come, so for those who obey the gospel, and trust in the precious blood of God's dear Son, there is pardon and peace *here*, and glory by-and-by.

Which are you going to be, obedient, happy children, or disobedient, miserable enemies? s.

1 John v. 30

2 Phil. ii. 8—9

DO YOU KNOW THE LORD ?

THE following incident, which occurred to R— L— S— while journeying through the South of France is of interest.

“A step or two farther I was overtaken by an old man in a brown nightcap, clear-eyed, weather-beaten, with a faint, excited smile. A little girl followed him, driving two sheep and a goat ; but she kept in our wake, while the old man walked beside me and talked about the morning and the valley. It was not much past six ; and for healthy people who have slept enough, this is an hour for expansion and of open and trustful talk.

“*Connaissez-vous le Seigneur ?*” he said, at length.

“I asked him what Seigneur he meant ; but he only repeated the question with more emphasis and a look in his eyes denoting hope and interest.

“‘Ah,’ said I, pointing upwards, ‘I understand you now. Yes, I know Him ; He is the best of acquaintances.’

“The old man said he was delighted. ‘Hold,’ he added, striking his bosom, ‘it makes me happy here!’ There were a few who knew the Lord in these valleys, he went on to tell me ; not many, but a few. ‘Many are called,’ he quoted, ‘but few chosen.’

“The old man repeated his expressions of

pleasure at meeting me. 'We are so few,' he said. 'They call us Moravians here; but down in the department of Gard, where there are also a good number, they are called Darbists after an English pastor.'

"The old man's behaviour touched me deeply at the time, and even now moves me in recollection. He feared to intrude, but he would not willingly forego one moment of my society; and he seemed never weary of shaking me by the hand.

"If ever at length, out of our separate and sad ways, we should all come together into one common house, I have a hope, to which I cling dearly, that my mountain friend will hasten to shake hands with me again."

Reader, I do not ask if you believe there is one God. The devils believe this, and tremble. But I repeat the old man's question, Do you know the Lord? Do you own Jesus as Lord? The same Jesus that men crucified God has raised up and made both Lord and Christ.

No man owns Him as such but by the Holy Spirit. It is contrary to man's spirit to own the crucified Son of man as Lord. But God hath decreed that all shall own Him in the coming day of Christ's glory, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things heavenly, earthly and infernal, and that every tongue shall confess that

Jesus is Lord. Nor will it detract from what is due to God in thus honouring Jesus, but will be to His glory both as God and Father.

But how great the privilege to be amongst the few that own Him Lord now in the day of His rejection. Is this privilege yours, reader? Or is your spirit still proud and haughty, owning not the lordship of Jesus; thinking more of your own rights than of Him Who laid down His rights as God, that He might claim all rights as Man through accomplishing redemption, and moreover share those rights with His own?

I ask you again the old man's question, "Do you know the Lord?"

W.H.P.

TO WHOM WILL YOU GO?

DEAR READER, do you know the living person of God's Son as your Saviour and Lord? This is a day of fashionable doubt and disbelief. Men are removing old landmarks. What was formerly regarded with outward reverence and respect is now the subject of polite sarcasm and cultured sneer. The young are taught that the Bible is a book of exploded theories. In the twentieth century the scriptures are published among what the vanity of the age is pleased to describe as its "classics." The editor of an

American secular paper, antagonistic to Christianity, announces his intention of reprinting the scriptures in his paper on account of its usefulness as a general educational work! What a deceit of the devil!

WHERE ARE YOU AMID THESE QUICKSANDS?

Are you carried away by the evil influences of the times from the knowledge of Christ and faith in His word? Beware, I beseech you, of the base insinuations that abound against the holy Person of the sinner's Saviour and His imperishable word. If you turn from Him, to whom will you go? Will you turn to the philosophers or the poets, all, save the men of faith, groping in the dark because they refuse the true Light—those of whom the apostle said, "if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from any one of us"?

CAN TENNYSON OR RUSKIN SAVE YOU?

The hour of sickness unto death will come to you, however perfectly you study and obey the laws of hygiene. Will a morsel from Plato, or a line from Shakspeare's plays be a sufficient support to your soul as you stand at the portals of eternity? The Lord Jesus said to the crucified robber, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." It was a grand word of consolation to a dying man who

looked to Him in faith at the last moment. And He has spoken in similar words to myriads since that hour. He will so speak to you. Philosophy could say nothing to a man who was being executed as the "due reward of his deeds." The grace of God in Christ Jesus forgave and assured of eternal acceptance and peace.

CHRIST CAN SAVE YOU.

Come to Christ. He lives to save. God has exalted Him by His own right hand. And the Saviour says now, as of old, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

Do not be deceived, beloved reader. The gospel of God reveals a living Person as the Saviour of sinners. Do you know Him? The apostle Paul wrote, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Do not think the gospel is a dream or a theory, a speculation of the philosophers or a conceit of the past. It is God's testimony of the Son He gave *for* sinful man, and *to* every one who believes that record. He gave Him to forgive you your sins, to be with you in your battle of life, to still your storms, to be an ever-present Help, to comfort you in your sorrows, to soothe you in your pain, to guide you through the wilderness,

and to receive you to Himself on high. Again, let me ask you, To whom will you go?

JESUS ANOINTED AND SEALED.

MATTHEW III.

THERE is no greater contrast with Adam and his sons than is here presented. John the herald had borne witness to Him as coming after himself, yet mightier, Whose sandals he was not worthy to bear. *He* shall baptise you “with the Holy Spirit and fire.” None but a divine Person could so act. On Him depended both blessing by grace, and judgement in righteousness.

Yet came He from Galilee to Jordan to be baptised by John. Who can wonder that the Baptist strenuously resisted it, saying, “I have need to be baptised by thee, and comest thou unto me. But Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer [it] now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.” He Who had no sins of His own to confess, the Holy One of God, took His place, to John’s astonishment, with those of Israel who heard the voice that called them to repent, and were baptised, confessing their sins. Superficial as many were that came to John’s baptism, all of Judea and roundabout came who felt their sins and justified God accordingly; and the Lord of glory joined them in that baptism. For if He

became so truly servant as to say to Jehovah, Thou art my Lord : my goodness extendeth not to Thee, He said also to the saints and excellent on the earth, All my delight is in them.¹ What grace beyond all thought of man ! Yet was it righteousness as He said, no less beyond man.

Man might misjudge, as he has grievously. Not for this reason only, but for His own glory God could not then be silent. All others need an object before them. God had His object of complacency in Jesus, Who, when baptised, went up immediately from the water. "And, behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and coming upon him. And, behold, a voice out of the heavens saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

So it had ever been. Jehovah possessed Him in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. He was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When no depths were, when no fountains abounding with water, before the mountains were settled, before the hills was He brought forth ; while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, He was there ; when He set a compass upon the face of the depth ; when

1 Psalm xvi.

he established the clouds above; when He strengthened the fountains of the deep; when He gave to the sea His decree that the waters should not pass His commandment; when He appointed the foundations of the earth, then was Wisdom, the Word, by Him as one brought up with Him, and was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him, rejoicing in the habitable parts of His earth; and His delights were with the sons of men.¹ To them He looked. The Life was the Light of men.

But now He had become flesh; He was man as truly as God. But He was man without sin, the Holy One of God; and the Father's delight was in Him as in the eternity while He was simply God the Son. Here He, even as a child, was ever about His Father's business; He was come to do His will. This act of His (in joining with those who heard John's preaching and were baptised by him, confessing their sins), in obedience and love it was, whatever man might think of it, glorified Him and drew out the sealing of the Spirit Who now anointed Him, and the fuller expression of His Father's satisfaction. He now a man was as much His Father's delight as before. The heavens were open to Him; the Spirit He saw descending like a dove, and He came upon Jesus; and to Him the Father's voice bore witness that in Him was His delight. The Trinity stood revealed, not in

word only, but in deed and truth. This is Christianity in the full object of our faith, three Persons but one God, the only True God. But we could not do without redemption. For we were sinners, and had failed shamelessly under every test of God, worst of all when the Son of God came speaking and working beyond all in light and love, and only the more proving us lost and dead in sins. But God sent His Son that we might live through Him, and that He might die as propitiation for us. Then and thus we believers become sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus; and because we are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.¹

Hence it is that, though we were as full of corruption and violence in our fallen ways and nature, as Jesus was full of grace and truth, the ever obedient Second Man and last Adam, we are now blessed after the same wondrous pattern: He without blood, the ever acceptable Son, God's chosen One in whom His soul delighted; but suffering and dying for us sacrificially, just for unjust, that we might be brought to God. We were not only born of Him and children but have our sins blotted out and sin in the flesh dealt with no less finally in His cross. Thus born of water and Spirit and washed in His blood, we receive the Spirit of adoption. Having believed, we were

¹ Galatians iii. 26; iv. 6

sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, Who is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of His glory. Thus does God stablish us in Christ, and did anoint us, as the same apostle says in 2 Corinthians i. 21, 22. How wondrous the glory of Christ, and not less wondrous the grace toward us! How terrible to live and die in one's sins, neglecting so great salvation!

W.K.

“WHO WILL SHOW US ANY GOOD?”

PSALM iv. 6.

THERE be many hearts that say,
 “Who will show us any good?”

Yet they madly turn away
 From the only One Who could
 Soothe and heal with lasting balm,
 Give the wounded spirit calm.

Once on earth He stood, and cried,—
 Cried aloud, “If any thirst,
 Come to Me, and be supplied,
 Where the living waters burst.”
 Smitten Rock! Thy streams still flow,
 Cure for every human woe.

When the enemy of souls
 Whispers thoughts of dark despair,
 Says that God no more controls,
 Lest they find a refuge there,
 Welcome, to the weary breast,
 Sound the words, “I give you rest,”

Rest that gold has never bought,
 Rest that's found not in the grave,
 Rest that all in vain is sought
 In the convent or the cave.
 Only on a Saviour's breast,
 Can the sinner's soul find rest.

Rest, procured at such a price—
 Jesu's blood, His shame and woes,
 Heaven or earth or hell's device
 Cannot break this deep repose.

E.H.C.

THE GREAT TRANSACTION, AND WHERE IT TOOK PLACE.

ONE of the Lord's servants once visited an old town in Cumberland, that lovely district of lakes and mountains; his object was to tell forth tidings of life and peace, through a crucified and ascended Saviour.

At his host's tea-table he met for the first time, Miss S——, who appeared greatly interested in the general conversation about the Lord's work.

When tea was finished, his host invited him into an adjoining store room to inspect some old books. God's ways are not our ways, and he little thought as he glanced through the time-worn pages of those musty volumes, surrounded by an almost endless variety of relics, oak carvings, antique furniture, and china of every description, that

there a transaction was to take place which would be ratified in heaven, the results of which would be as lasting as eternity.

“You are looking through the old books then?” said a voice behind, and turning he saw Miss S——. “Yes,” he answered, and acting on a sudden but heaven-directed impulse, he thrust his hand into his coat pocket, and taking therefrom some gospel papers, he offered them to her with the words, “Are you saved?”

This simple question was an arrow shot at a venture, but it accomplished its purpose; for as she took the leaflets, the tears glistened in her eyes, and she huskily replied, “No.”

The next question was, “But do you wish to be saved, to know that your sins are forgiven, and that you are a child of God?” A half sigh escaped from her lips as she replied, “I do.”

“May I ask when?” were the next words he addressed to the anxious enquirer. “To-day,” she said, quite heartily.

With a silent prayer to God for guidance, he opened his Bible and read to her the following sweet, soul-assuring verses:—

“He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.” *John v. 24.*

“Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all

things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." *Acts xiii.* 38, 39.

"I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." *John x.* 28.

"And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." *Heb. x.* 17.

As he read aloud these and other scriptures, the Holy Spirit further wrought upon her heart and conscience, and as a thirsty traveller would take a deep draught of cool refreshing water, so she drank in the precious truth, the living water. There and then she believed God's statements; she appropriated the blessing to herself; she trusted the Saviour, and rested upon His great atoning work for her soul's salvation. Consequently her heart was filled with joy and peace, causing her forthwith to confess Christ, and to tell with much assurance what great things the Lord had done for her. Thus was fulfilled the scripture, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

In a subsequent letter to the one who was used of God to point her to the Saviour, she made use of the lines:—

"But I am His, and He is mine,
For ever and for ever."

May we ask in conclusion, Have you had a personal dealing with God about your sins? This

you must have sooner or later. Oh, think seriously of your need as a sinner, and turn now believingly to the sinner's Saviour. He saved the one mentioned above, and He is willing to save you. He came, He died, He arose, and from the glory above He now calls you to Himself. Trust Him now, then you too will be enabled by God's grace to say,

"'Tis done, the great transaction's done,
I am my Lord's and He is mine.
He drew me, and I followed on,
Glad to confess that voice divine."

A.G.

PEACE AND COMFORT FOR THE WILDERNESS.

THERE are two ways in which we may view a believer in Christ Jesus. He has passed from death unto life; from the old Adam state and condition into an entirely new state and condition before God, and is presented to God in Christ Jesus, and therefore being seen by God in Him, and being before God according to the perfection of His work, he is perfectly acceptable to God. There is no condemnation for him: he stands in the favour of God. "As He is, so are we in this world."¹ And being in Christ risen from the dead, he is a heavenly man, having

been raised with Him and made to sit down in heavenly places in Him. Thus, as a "man in Christ," he is already in "Canaan," and it is his blessed privilege to realise by faith in the power of the Spirit, his place and portion above everything down here. His life, his righteousness, his hope, his all, is in heaven—not on earth.

The realisation of this, according to God, enables the believer to look upon the present scene as one in which he tabernacles only for a little while: in which he is left simply that God may be glorified in him and by him. The world becomes to him a wilderness through which he is passing, and this is the other way in which the believer may be viewed. As to his standing in Christ he is already in Canaan, though actually he is in the body and on the earth. It is true the life he possesses is divine and heavenly, and cannot find anything that suits it in the present scene, but he possesses this life at present in an earthen vessel, and amid all the circumstances of this present evil world; and therefore he has, while tarrying below and waiting for God's Son from heaven, what may be called wilderness experience. Now, the wilderness was to Israel the place of trial and testing, where the people were (or ought to have been) learning themselves, and the sufficiency of God for all their varied need. So it still is with God's people. The trials of the wilderness test and try

us, not only enabling us to prove ourselves, but the faithfulness and sufficiency of our God also. There are afflictions peculiar to the righteous which are the result of faithfulness to our Lord Jesus; but there are also other trials and afflictions which are the common lot of both believers and unbelievers, and from which a believer is not now exempt although he can look forward to the time when sorrow shall be no more. These latter afflictions, as well as any others that may come, our gracious God and Father uses for the blessing of His people, and in these God's children get tested and tried; and they are called to prove themselves through grace, superior to circumstances.

The trials of the Lord's people are not infrequently of an exercising character. There is, perhaps, not only great bodily weakness and suffering but the circumstances in which they are placed are such as to render them peculiarly liable to very painful and anxious cares. All human means of providing even the necessaries of life may seem to be going from them, and in some the husband and father about to be taken away by death. At such times, and in fact any time of peculiar affliction, there is in an especial way the need of grace to enable such to cast their care upon God. Nothing short of this will effectually relieve their hearts and minds. If they attempt

to carry the burden themselves they will find it too heavy for them ; and to cast a burden of this kind upon God, requires on the one hand unfeigned faith, and on the other a simple desire that God should be glorified. It is often the case in afflictions that we are far more anxious to get the thing that presses upon us removed than we are to glorify God in it. If I am simply desirous that God shall be glorified, no circumstances, however painful, can hinder it, as His grace is sufficient ; and when everything is contrary to all my own wishes and desires, and in a natural sense all against me, He can enable me to be meek, submissive, and patient, and to honour Him with unfeigned faith, by which I shall roll the whole weight of my care upon God. o.

THE CANAANITISH WOMAN.

THIS woman had not the pride of human distinction in which the Jews gloried. She was neither a Jewess nor a Pharisee, quite the contrary ; she belonged to a city which God held up as a most reprobate city.¹ She was a Syro-Phœnician—a Canaanite, of a race held in the Old Testament to be accursed,² whence nothing of repentance could be expected.

¹ Matt. xi. 21

² Gen. ix. 25—27

The Lord comes into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, peopled by the descendants of Canaan. This is where grace ever comes. And this woman was one of these outcasts in the fullest sense of the word. She had no privileges, no claims. Well, she recognises Him here as the Lord, the Son of David, and salutes Him as such. As such she knew what mercies He had brought among the Jews; and she comes and asks for blessing. He does not answer her a word. He takes no notice of her whatever. His ear was closed to her request, at least so far as that He gave her no answer.

A repentant Jew might have appealed to Him under that title. He was in the place of the promise which Messiah came to accomplish. "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."¹ To come as such there must be some claim to the promise. If you meet Christ on the ground of what He is as promised to Israel, you must have some fitness for the promise, some claim to it. If you are seeking by righteousness to get the help of grace, such is not my errand, says Christ; I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Why is there no answer? the heart may say; for she had recognised His Lordship. She had, and could have, no claim or connection with Him

on that ground; with the Son of David a Canaanite had nothing to do.

The disciples were anxious to get rid of her by satisfying her demand, but He would not allow it; He holds to God's order. If she came to the Son of David to get help, she must come as a Jew. But here (ver. 28) she gets a step farther, she ceases to address Him as the Son of David (the ground on which she supposed, giving Him the due honour, she might expect something), and her sense of want constrains her to cry out, "Lord, help."

Are there none expecting that, because they address Christ aright, because they give Him His due title He must answer them, and are astonished that He does not? The poor woman felt her sorrow; she wanted something, and there was the simple expression of her need; but even then, He answers, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to the dogs." My errand is from God; I do not go beyond that. Her owning and addressing Him Son of David was in the way of righteousness.

Her need still makes her go forward, and she says, "Lord, help me!" But He answers, I am come to the children—to seek for fruit on the vine which God owns. You might think God would own righteous, well-conducted people, and that they might then take the fruits and blessings God

attached to that. But you have no claim on that ground; you are sinners. As far as God's ways were revealed outwardly, the Jews were God's people. But she was outside everything—a dog. She is looked upon as a dog, and she now takes the place of a dog. What now, being a dog, could she hope for? Why not give up hope? Why, because she abandons all title and claim in herself, but the need which cast itself on pure bounty; and there was, she asserted, an overflowing abundance of grace, which could even give some supply to the dogs:—"Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."

There was bounty in the house of God for dogs themselves. Be it she was a dog, she made no pretence to take the children's place, and therefore it was no answer to her to call her that, because the Master could look beyond the children, and there was an overflowing supply of grace and fulness that did not leave even the dogs without provision.

And such was the poor woman's real state. She knew the Master of the house was infinitely rich. She knew God and Jesus to be ten thousand times better than the disciples around. She knew there were bounty and plenty enough in the Master's house. The real understanding of God is according to our understanding of our total vileness and

and nothingness. Israel had never understood divine love as it was here exhibited to the dogs—fathomed by her need—fathomed by her wretchedness. She reached up to the source from whence even the children are fed, the fulness of the love of God Himself, which did not shut even dogs out from His bounty. She passed by all dispensation, even to what God Himself had done, seeing He had come down, not to hide His holiness, but to shew what He really was; and when the sinner was brought to a confession of her own nothingness, He swept away everything between the sinner and Himself.

She had arrived at what God was. He had done away with that which had brought man a little nearer to Him, that is, ordinances, etc., and now He comes down to shew what He is, and what man is; and when man comes to his true and real understanding, God is there to meet him in all His unlimited grace.

Law was given by Moses and was but a veil, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The full truth of what man's heart is, is brought out by the revelation of God in Christ. Now there was not anyone between God and man to veil His holiness or to conceal His love; not even any oft repeated sacrifice; not even a Moses with a veil on his face; but man must deal with God Himself, with God in Christ.

And here, you see, the Lord would not satisfy this poor woman on any other plea but on that of her own character. He calls her really what she was, and she understood that there was in God's heart all that the Lord Jesus had seen in it when He was in heaven, for He was here to shew it. And supposing she had been something more than a dog, she would not have needed so much grace as God gave. For, if she had been in less need, what would have been the consequence? Why, that there would have been less grace manifested in God.

Extracted.

THE LORD A DELIVERER.

MANY years ago a christian Englishwoman, whom we will call Mrs. Smythe, living in South America, took her little girl and went to a neighbouring port to meet her husband returning from sea.

This port was a wild outlandish place, inhabited chiefly by natives and low class Italians. The only inn of the place had been a monastery, and was a rambling, one-storied building of no particularly inviting aspect; neither was the inn-keeper of prepossessing appearance. But there was no help for it. So Mrs. Smythe took a room there. She then went to the docks and found her

husband on his ship; but as he could not leave until the next day, she, much as she dreaded doing so, had to return to the inn alone.

At last, about nine o'clock, she could endure it no longer, and failing other help, asked the villainous-looking inn-keeper to accompany her to the ship, to see if she could by some means get her husband to return with her. This she found to be impossible, and she was obliged to set out for the inn again in fear and trembling, but still crying to the Lord for protection.

As she and her companion stumbled along the dark rough road, an Italian came out from some corner, conversed with the inn-keeper in a low voice, and then vanished into the darkness again. Before they reached the inn, however, a large dog appeared, and, quietly following them to the house, lay down outside Mrs. Smythe's window, and refused to budge.

Mrs. Smythe went to her room, and making all as secure as she could (though there were no bars to the window, as usual in those parts), prepared to keep watch all night, looking to God for protection. Her fears were not groundless, for three times during the night did she hear stealthy footsteps coming along the verandah, and as many times did the dog under her window spring up and drive the intruder back.

The inn-keeper was in a very bad temper the

next morning, and from one or two other circumstances she noticed, it was very clear that attempts had been made by someone during the night to rob her of her husband's pay, presumably brought by her from the ship, but that the attempts had failed through the instrumentality of the dog, which Mrs. Smythe never doubted was sent by God to protect her.

This little incident gives us another instance of the special care God exercises toward those who are His children by faith in Christ Jesus.

M.H.

REALITY.

“**W**HAT a man thinketh in his heart so is he.”
 These are searching words, and pull us up with a start, bringing before our souls as with a lightning flash, that God will have absolute reality. We use the words, “thought” and “think” in reference to the *head*, not to the *heart*, but the Lord goes to the very depth of a man's being, and by his heart, not his head, reads him through and through, and pronounces righteous judgement such as we are incapable of doing.

Words may be as smooth as oil, and actions so subtle and deceitful, that the keenest observer among our fellow men may be deceived; but when we have to do with the Lord neither subterfuge nor mask are of any use, He goes straight

to the thoughts of the heart, and says what *they* are the man *is*. David said, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." He had found out how corrupt it was, and how much cleansing and keeping it required. And the same cry goes up still from every heart that has believed God's word.

"Keep thine heart with all diligence," Solomon said; and no man knew better than he how much keeping it required. How often he must have thought of the time when his heart was right with God, and he had asked and received in abundance because he had "asked aright;" and then of all the self-pleasing and ruin which followed, when he allowed his head, and not his heart to dictate.

We are told by Luke that when our Lord was dining in the Pharisee's house, He *answered* and said to Simon (who had not spoken a word), "I have somewhat to say to thee." He actually answered Simon's *unspoken* thoughts, which thoughts shewed his heart was not right with God. And later Jesus spoke words of pardon and peace to the poor uninvited outcast, who had crept into that hall of feasting, to pour out her heart's love and sorrow at His feet, and who also had said nothing and asked for nothing. In both cases Jesus dealt with the heart and its thoughts. Has your heart ever whispered to you in the still hours of the night, that all was not right with your soul, that you were not fit for God's presence, and that without

a Saviour you must perish, because all you had been professing for years with your lips, was only a head confession and not from the heart, and so the thought of meeting God tore away the mask and left you trembling?

Ah, dear reader, this is reality, and not cold confession and calculation, and if the cry has burst forth from your heart, "God be merciful to me a sinner," the blessed voice of Jesus will say to *you* as to the poor sinful woman in the seventh of Luke's Gospel, "Thy sins are forgiven."

We are living in such an age of shams and self-seeking, that God's children need the whole armour of God to enable them to stand and be true. Our surroundings and associates, to say nothing of the world's maxims, affect our thoughts; these in turn our hearts, and it comes back to Solomon's searching words as to a warning beacon, "What a man thinketh in his heart so is he."

Only by looking on everything as God looks at it, can we be kept. For the world's ways and maxims are in direct opposition to God. God says, "Give me thine heart"—that is reality. The world says you must not be in such deadly earnest in religion or you will not get on in life. God says, "Come out, and be ye separate." The world says, "Oh, that was for the Jews, and people must mix with their fellow men and join hands with them in these days."

We are living in the days foretold, "When the love of many shall wax cold," and our cry ought to be, "Lord, make us *true*, make us *real*."

S.

DO YOU KNOW THE TUNE?

OR, AS I AWOKE TWICE IN ONE NIGHT.

THE FIRST AWAKING.

ON the night of the 11th or the morning of the 12th December, I was gradually aroused out of a deep sleep by the strains of music in the distance, which came nearer, and seemed to act like a charm on my spirit—so gentle, so sweet; and as it got nearer and nearer, the thought came to me, "I know that tune well; it is what my children often sing." Yet it never sounded so sweetly before. I thought, how delightful! Are those like the strains of heavenly music? Surely it is so; and then I remembered, it was from the waits who are about at this time of year.

I was so filled with joy I could scarcely keep from bursting forth into singing in the stillness of the night, the tune sounding so sweetly from without; and as it gradually died away in the distance it left such a peaceful calmness surrounding my soul that I seemed lifted up into that Heavenly Home that our Lord has gone to prepare for all that believe on Him. I fell asleep again with the

joyful thought resting on me—*I know the tune! I know the tune!*

THE SECOND AWAKING.

I know not how long it was before I awoke the second time. But oh! how unlike the first awaking, for, as I gradually awoke, I thought I saw into the deep abyss of eternal woe, and it seemed to be a place of thick darkness, and oh! the horror that passed before my thoughts as I looked into that vast abyss no tongue can describe. I seemed to see thousands upon thousands groping and struggling (their arms and legs all being entwined) to free themselves.

I said, What! is there no light in eternal woe?

The answer was, No! Satan and the power of Darkness is there; flee from it. Jesus is the only true Light.

Dear reader, which of these two awakings (or resurrections) will be yours? Think, oh think, Jesus died to save you and me from this horrible pit. He shows you very dimly the two places, one of which you must occupy eternally. He shows you His wounded hands and feet and side—this He suffered for you, and He is still saying to you, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest," and "Now is the accepted time."

Now, now lay hold of the tune so sweet to awake with on your lips—Jesus.

G.W.

SAINT OR SINNER?

READER! Have you ever considered the difference between a saint and a sinner? And can you decide *which you are?*

God says, "all have sinned and do come short of the glory of God." "There is none righteous, no, not one." A saint then is not a person who is better than his neighbours, by either nature or practice. In God's sight all are alike *unclean* as to their nature. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." And all have sinned in their ways: "there is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not." For "whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

A saint then is not a man without sin, or without an evil nature. Nor is he one who by a long course of piety (as is often supposed) has reached a state of holiness or perfection. No. It is neither what he is naturally, nor what he *has done* which makes a person a saint. No one was ever born a saint; nor has anyone ever made himself a saint by his good works. Some people are more amiable, kind, and moral than others; but the most amiable,

kind and moral are sinners, and *must become saints*; else they will be as surely shut out of heaven as the most vile and hateful and immoral. Heaven will be peopled with saints, and hell with sinners; and this world will furnish the people for both. Moreover, if a man dies a saint or sinner, he will remain so *for eternity*. How all-important then to know *what* am I; yea, to have it decided beyond question.

WHAT IS A SAINT?

God says a "sanctified one;" that is, one who was neither holy by birth, nor *life*, but one who has been *made holy*, or sanctified.

Reader, do you receive the scriptures as the word of God? Have you bowed to what He says? Listen, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God."¹ What a list of human wickedness! Do you find *yourself* here? Remember him who could say, "touching the righteousness which is in the law *blameless*" had also to say of himself "the law slew me," and "I had not known sin but by the law," because the law had said "*thou shalt not covet.*"² Have you found that the law is *spiritual* and has its application to your *thoughts, desires,*

looks, as well as ways? (Read Matt. v. 20—28, and see how *you* stand before it.)

“Thy law demands a *perfect heart*,
But we're defiled in every part.”

WHO CAN BE A SAINT?

Listen again, and you will hear God telling those He has warned, in the very next verse: “And such were some of you : but ye *were washed*, but ye *were sanctified*, but ye *were justified* in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”¹ Saints then *had been* sinners, many of them of the deepest dye. But they *are* washed, sanctified, justified.

Have *you* been? Has this great work been done to you, for you? We entreat you not to make light of it. *Sinners* for hell, *saints* for heaven.

Yes, washed, sanctified, justified sinners for heaven; the unwashed, unholy, unjust for hell! and both are so for eternity!

You cannot wash yourself, “for though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God.”²

Baptism will not wash you. Many a baptised one will be among the unwashed in hell. No, my reader, it is “by the Spirit of our God.” It is being “born again,” “born of water and the Spirit,”—the work of God's Spirit *in* thee, the work of God's Son *for* thee. No washing but “by the Spirit of

our God," no justification but "in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Are you washed? If so, Christ is *precious*, yea, is *all* to you. You trust in His blood: believe on His name, rejoice in Him. Do you despise Christ, think little or nothing of Him? You are no saint, whatever you may call yourself! See to it, my reader: if you would enter into the city of the saints, you must have *title*, and *meetness*; you must be "washed, sanctified, justified." You must be a saint now to be a saint in heaven; none are made so there, but here. So on the other hand hell does not make sinners; but it is their final habitation. Which are you now, saint or sinner?

J.B.

WHAT IS TRUE CONVERSION?

JOHN II. 23—25.

"**N**ow when he was in Jerusalem at the pass-over, at the feast, many believed on his name, beholding his signs which he did. But Jesus did not trust himself to them, inasmuch as he knew all [men], and because he needed not that any should testify of man, for himself knew what was in man."¹

It was at the city of solemnities; it was a feast of Jehovah, nay, the most fundamental of the

1 John ii. 23—25

sacred feasts; and the Messiah was there, the object of faith, working in power, and manifesting His power in appropriate signs. And many believed on His name accordingly. It was man doing and feeling his best under circumstances the most favourable. Yet did not Jesus trust Himself to them. Certainly it was from no lack of love or pity in Him; for whoever did or could love as He? And the reason, calmly given, is truly overwhelming: "inasmuch as he knew all men, and because he needed not that any should testify of man, for himself knew what was in man." What a sentence; from Whom; and on what grounds! We do well to weigh it gravely: who is not concerned in it? It is the ordained Judge of quick and dead Who thus pronounces. Is it not all over with man?

One great fact, one truth, accounts for it; the total evil, the irremediable ruin, of man as such. The ways of the Lord are in strictest accord with the words of the Spirit by the apostle Paul: "the mind of the flesh [and this is all that is in man] is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, for neither indeed can it be." Hence they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Its doings and its sufferings are selfish and worthless Godward. Its faith as here is no better; for it is not the soul subject to God's testimony, but mind judging on evidence satisfactory to itself. It is a

conclusion that Jesus must be the Messiah; not submission to, nor reception of divine testimony. For in this case the mind sits on the throne of judgement, and pronounces for or against, according to its estimate of reasons favouring or adverse, instead of the soul setting to its seal (in the face of all appearances it may be, yea, of the most real difficulties) that God is true. For what ground to expect the love of the Holy One to the vile and rebellious? Christ received according to God's testimony, Christ in grace to the lost dying for the ungodly and the powerless, He it is accounts for, as He displays, all; miracles or signs not in the least. They arrest the eye; they exercise the mind; they may touch or win the affections. But nothing short of God's word judges the man, or reveals what He is in Christ to man thus judged; and this only, as we see in John iii., is of the Spirit, for He only, not man, has before Him the true object, the Son of God's love given in grace to a ruined and guilty world.

The truth is that our judgements flow from our affections. What we love we easily believe; what makes nothing of us we naturally resist and reject. As long as Jesus was deemed an ameliorator of humanity, there seemed to be the readiest, warmest welcome. Man would accredit Jesus if he thought Jesus accredited man. But how could he receive what makes nothing of himself, what

condemns him morally, what keeps before him the solemn warning of eternal judgement and the lake of fire? No, he hates the testimony and the Person Who is the central object of it, and the truth connected with it and Him. When broken down before God and made willing to own one's utter and inexcusable sins and sinfulness, it is a wholly different matter; and He Who was dreaded and repugnant is turned to as the only hope from God, even Jesus the Deliverer from the wrath to come. This is indeed conversion, and grace by quickening power alone effects it.

Extracted.

REST IN THE GLORIFIED ONE.

TUNE—"Scatter seeds of kindness."

OH, the love of God is boundless,
 Perfect, causeless, full and free!
 Doubts have vanished, fears are groundless,
 Now I know that love to me.
 Love, the source of all my blessing;
 Love, that set itself on me;
 Love, that gave the spotless victim;
 Love told out at Calvary.
 'Twas love displayed by Jesus
 When alone at Calvary.

Oh, the cross of Christ is wondrous!
 There I learn God's heart to me;
 Midst the silent, deepening darkness,
 "God is light," I also see.

Holy claims of justice finding
 Full expression in that scene,
 Light and love alike are telling
 What yon woe and sufferings mean.
 My guilt was borne by Jesus,
 In darkness on the tree.

Oh, the sight in heaven is glorious !
 Man in righteousness is there ;
 Once the Victim, now victorious,
 Jesus lives in glory fair.
 Him Who met the claims of glory,
 And the need of ruined man,
 On the cross—oh, wondrous story !
 God has set at His right hand.
 How rightly crowned is Jesus,
 Who once atonement made.

Oh, what rest of soul in viewing
 Jesus on the Father's throne !
 Yea, what peace for ever flowing
 From God's rest in His own Son !
 Gazing upward into heaven,
 Reading glory in His face,
 Knowing that 'tis He once given,
 On the cross to take my place.
 'Tis rest in looking upward
 Upon His face so fair.

Extracted.

CHRIST COMING DOWN TO MAN.

AND what is the great and blessed truth that has been brought out by Christianity? That the veil is rent from top to bottom; and that man, as he is, is in the presence of God; the man is there unveiled. What have we got in the cross?

The first thing is God dealing with man in His own presence. But how? Did He come to require anything? Nothing; how should He come and require it? In a certain sense He did require fruit from the vine, but there was none. What then did He come for? Why did He come into a world full of sin? What did He seek here? He sought sinners! Did He come here ignorant of the extent of their sin? No; for He knew what was in man's heart full well before He came. He knew their sin well. He knew all that would come upon Him. But what stops the sinner? Not that he is to come to God. We see the Lord Jesus Christ came down to man in his sins. Is there anything between Him and the sinner? No, my friends—nothing; not even His disciples. They might quiet and get rid of importunity, but neither shew God's holiness nor reveal His love. It was the prerogative of His own love to come and touch the sinner without being defiled by the sin; just as He did to the leper. The leper exclaimed, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The Lord puts forth His hand and touches him, saying, "I will; be thou clean."

And remember, if He came to shew God's love to man in his sins, so that his heart might be won, and have confidence with God, He came to take away sin from man by taking it upon Himself. The veil of the temple being rent from top to

bottom, I see the holiness of God : but the very stroke, which has thus unveiled the holiness of God, has put away the sin that would have hindered my standing in the presence of that holiness. I see what God in His love has done for us in the person of Christ. I see that the bruising of His Son has taken place.

Here I get God Himself coming down to me, and I am enabled now to go back with Christ into the rest of His holiness. In the death of Christ I see the fearful vengeance of God against sin ; and the rending of the veil, which displays God's holiness and love to man. And so the more the eye of God scrutinizes and searches me, the more it brings out the blessed truth, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. It shews the whiteness of the robe that has been washed in the blood of the Lamb.

If I hesitate to stand in His presence, I am putting in question the value of Christ's precious blood. You may say, "I hope to be saved." You cannot hope that Christ will die for you ! It cannot be a matter of hope whether Christ is to die ! The way the heart reasons is, "I am not hoping Christ will die for me, but I hope to get an interest in Him ; I want a proof of His love." When you question this, you question whether Christ has become the friend of publicans and sinners ; and, further, you question the power of His blood.

Suppose you had a title to demand some proof of His love, what could you demand more than God has given? He has given His own Son: you could not ask so much as He has already given. But if I am seeking some other revelation than what He has given me, He rests my peace on believing the one He has given. The soul that has come to God knows that He is love; and it is to Himself we are come.

The very way in which I know God is through faith in His Son. I know His own love, that He thought of this and did it for me. Why is it the soul does not get this wondrous simple peace, to be in His own presence without a cloud on His love? Because we are telling to God, and to our own poor hearts, something short of this—that we are dogs. Grace is to the sinner, and to none other. If I can stand before God in my own righteousness, grace is not needed. He will bring down your hearts to your real condition. There He can act in the fulness of His grace, according to the need of the heart that has discovered its need in His presence. He is manifesting that grace, according to the value of the sacrifice, now that He is at the right hand of God. Not merely now that God can come to the sinner, but the cleansed sinner stands accepted in the presence of God—accepted in the person of Jesus; and that nothing stands between us and God. The Lord

give us only to own the fulness of His grace, and see the way in which we are debtors to Him Who was willing to suffer all things that He might present us spotless to God.

Extracted.

**“TO-DAY IS THIS SCRIPTURE FULFILLED
IN YOUR EARS.”**

LUKE IV. 21.

HOW gracious is the opening of the Lord's ministry in this Gospel! He came to Nazareth, where He was not born but brought up; and instead of working miracles as at Capernaum, He entered, according to His custom, into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up to read. At Capernaum He cast out from a man an unclean demon's spirit; and this had great force also; for how few believe that Satan has and exercises this malignant power over man! But at Nazareth He would begin with the positive side of divine grace in Himself among men, and this according to the authority of God's word. Such was our Lord's aim here, whereas Matthew was given to tell of a crowd of miracles, as He went teaching and preaching round Galilee as a whole.

On this sabbath at Nazareth He reads, from the book of the prophet Isaiah that was given Him,

the place about Himself and His service: "The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach liberty to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bound, to preach the acceptable year of the LORD."¹ Then, before the sentence was ended, He rolled up and gave the book back to the official, and sat down. He stopped short of adding "and the day of vengeance of our God," which awaits His second advent. He was now to proclaim God's sovereign grace to sinners. And this is what Luke was inspired throughout his narrative to record beyond all the others, as the reader may verify.

So, when all eyes were fastened on Him, He began to say, "To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears," and all were bearing Him witness and wondering at the words of grace which proceeded out of His mouth. For He proclaimed the love of God that very day, providing what men want in their sins and miseries, beginning with the poor and wretched and powerless. And the glad tidings struck them with amazement as a new thing. But it was fulfilled in their ears only. There was no meeting God in their consciences. The word was not mixed with

faith in those that heard. Astonishment is not conversion to God, without which all is vain.

This they betrayed by what they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" If they had owned Him as the virgin's son, Immanuel, the sign which Jehovah gave to the house of David in the person of faithless Ahaz, if they had believed what the angel Gabriel announced to Mary, that Jesus should be great, and called the Son of the Highest, and Son of God, it would have been faith, without which it is impossible to please God. It was the legal (however important after the flesh) but the lowest way in which Christ could be viewed. Faith loves and is called to regard Him in the highest; and God's glory depends on this as well as the salvation of souls. Thus they evinced mere unbelief; for if Jesus had been no more than Joseph's son, not a sinner could be saved. Still less could He be the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world, as the Baptist testified: none but a divine Person could effect so vast and deep and good a work.

But how does this gracious presentation of Himself find you who read these words? Is it fulfilled in your ears only? Is your conscience troubled about your sins and your state as a strengthless ungodly man? Or are you labouring to become acceptable to God, with your guilt unremoved and yourself at a distance from God, striving to

draw near by a priest and ordinances and offerings? O, my reader, have you never learnt the great lesson of the Jews, totally failing in this very way; judged really at the cross where the vail was rent, and outwardly when the city and temple were rased, and God for the present took away both their place and their nation? The Bible declares their ruin that you might not take the same road, as fatal or more so to you who do not read aright the Saviour's death and resurrection, though you ought to have more light than they.

Take the place, which is really yours, of "the poor," of those who have nothing but sins before God. To you the Lord preaches the glad tidings of sins forgiven in His name. Through Him, says the apostle Paul, the remission of sins is, not promised only, but proclaimed to you; and from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses, in Him *everyone* that believeth is justified. The Anointed One was anointed of God to preach the good news to those who have nothing acceptable to bring. Does this not meet your case exactly? If you say that you are Satan's captive, God says He brings deliverance to captives; and it is now in all the power of His death and resurrection. If you say that you are blind, He, and He only, gives sight; He, and He alone, sets at liberty the crushed. Is it not the acceptable year of the Lord? Why then do you

doubt, why hesitate? Your warrant to receive the needed blessing, and it is all this and more, is Himself, His grace and His word. If you reject Him, remember that the day of vengeance will reveal Him shortly in flaming fire.

Can words be plainer than His? The heathen oracles were ambiguous, or worse. The law made nothing perfect, says the New Testament. The reason why men, learned and unlearned, cavil at scripture, is not because it is uncertain, but because it is too peremptory for all who believe in themselves or other men, rather than God; and Christ is the One whereby God speaks in a Son, and not as of old in the prophets who were only servants. Then it was but fragments in many measures, and in many modes; now it is in all divine fulness and in perfect adaptation to human wants. It is God speaking to us in a Son who declares, with no less authority than truth and love,

TO-DAY IS THIS SCRIPTURE FULFILLED IN
YOUR EARS.

W.K.

EARTH'S MALADY; HEAVEN'S REMEDY.

IN the early days of the christian era, there was a pious man who offended the Roman emperor, both by the plainness of his speech and the

constant rebuke of a holy life. The monarch considering himself affronted, determined to punish him, and took council with his courtiers as to the best means of revenge. "Send him away into exile," suggested one of the courtiers. "Confiscate his goods," urged another. "Cast him into prison loaded with chains," said a third. "Put him to death," cried a fourth.

But another who knew the saint better, said, "You are all deceived, you cannot punish him so. If you send him into exile, the whole world is his fatherland; if you take away his goods, you will but rob the poor on whom he bestows them; if you thrust him into a dungeon, he will embrace his chains and count himself happy to suffer for Christ's sake; if you put him to death, you do but open to him the sooner the gates of Paradise. Sire, I know the holy man. If you wish to be revenged of him, force him to act against his conscience, force him to commit a sin. He fears nothing in the world but that; neither exile nor loss of goods, nor torments, nor death. He fears nothing but sin."

Yes, there is nothing so terrible as sin; it is the worst thing in the world, let men say what they will.

It is the seed that blossoms forth in death; it is the labour of which death is the reward. Across this beautiful world, where the Creator Him-

self once designed to hold sweet converse with His creature man, the slimy trail of the serpent has passed, and blight and curse have followed in his train. Instead of hallowed fellowship with God, banishment from His holy presence; innocent glee and happy mirth are exchanged for tears and sighs; healthy toil gives place to hard laborious work for the very necessaries of life; life itself is superseded by death, until the whole creation groans and travails together in pain.

What has wrought this change? Has God altered? Nay, for He is the eternal One. What then? That awful thing called sin (a whole world of iniquity compressed in three letters) has come in, and, as a necessary consequence, pain and death also.

Man has listened to the lie of the enemy, and hence entailed misery and destruction upon all his posterity. Is God, the all-pitiful, satisfied with this state of things? Nay, for He is all-holy too, and sin is an abomination in His eyes.

Does He Who marks the laboured breathing of the dying sparrow, as it weakly flutters to the ground, He Who cares for the lily, not care for the creatures made in His own image, sin-stained and sorrow-stricken though they be? I tell you, yes. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

And "For this purpose the Son of man was manifested" here below, "that he might destroy the works of the devil," and liberate the bond-slaves of sin from a thralldom and tyranny, of which Egypt's bondage was but a faint type.

"Behold, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

John's ministry is over; there is no longer any occasion for him, he has served his generation, he has fulfilled his day, he must decrease as the waning moon before the rising sun.

But the Other, the Lamb of God, the promised One, the Emancipator of sin-bound souls, the Restorer of the glory of which man had robbed God, He must go on to the altar. The Lamb of God, the great anti-type of all the sacrifices of the Levitical ritual, has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Not selfishness, nor extortion, nor violence, nor discontent, merely, these are the fruits of sin; but sin itself was met and expiated by the Lamb of God at Calvary, and will be "taken away" at the end.

The message from the cross is, "It is finished." What man could never achieve has been accomplished by the blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

Sin put away, salvation obtained, redemption won, all the barriers raised by sin 'twixt God and man removed; and now the love, mercy and compassion, that were pent up in the great heart of

God, flow out to all mankind irrespective of class or condition.

“And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely,” is the grand invitation which Christ gives to every soul of man.

Truly it was purchased at a great price, even at the cost of Himself. “He gave Himself.”

Reader, what response is yours to Him? Is He worthy of your trust, think you? Have you realised the heinousness of that which is ingrained in your nature, woven into the very warp and woof of your being? Have you said with David, “Behold I was born in sin, and shapen in iniquity, Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow?”¹

Remember, the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart.² God asks for reality; the mere emotionalism current to-day is absolutely worthless. “Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.”³

“To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.”⁴

There is “a fountain open for sin and uncleanness,” and whoever in this day of grace will own his position and state before God, and accept the Saviour, shall find that God delights to pardon, and that “the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.”⁵

W.G.T.

“ALMOST THOU PERSUADEST ME TO BE A CHRISTIAN.”

THE apostle Paul was a prisoner for the truth's sake at Cæsarea, in charge of Festus, governor of Judea. King Agrippa came to pay Festus a visit of congratulation upon his accession to office, and having heard from him of his remarkable prisoner, was desirous of both seeing and hearing him.

The devoted apostle was therefore brought forth, and he stated his case with great force and eloquence. Upon the mind of Festus his address seemed to have but little effect, and he looked upon him merely as an enthusiast, and charged him with madness. “I am not mad, most noble Festus,” said the apostle, “but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. “For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.” And then making an abrupt though not the less respectful appeal, compelled him to make that memorable exclamation, “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.”¹

Whether the king ever became a Christian or not we are not told. He heard the truth, and said the apostle to him in the most earnest manner, “I would to God, that not only thou, but also all

that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." My dear reader, let me affectionately ask, how matters stand between your own soul and God? You, like Agrippa, have heard the truth, and, it may be, are ready to say "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

Perhaps it would be well to consider what is meant by being a Christian. England is spoken of as being a christian country, which would lead some to suppose that the mere fact of being born in this land constitutes a person a Christian. But is it so? Alas, we know that such is not the case. Others there are under the impression, that a child being christened is thereby made a Christian; but this is not in accordance with the teaching of the word of God.

Then there are those, who, by reason of their observance of the outward forms of religion, such as regular attendance at church or chapel, and it may be taking some active part in the work, regard themselves as Christians; but it is possible to do all this, and yet remain a stranger to the saving grace of God.

What was said by our blessed Saviour to Nicodemus, applies to every man, "Ye must be born again;" for just as there is the natural birth, so also is there the spiritual birth. It was this that perplexed Nicodemus, and led him to ask,

“How can a man be born when he is old?” It is evident however that all was made clear to him; for we read of his afterwards defending the Saviour before the council, and we find him at His death, signalising his attachment to Him by bringing costly presents for His burial.

New birth is not a change of the old Adam nature, that with which we were born, but the implantation of a new nature. It is when Christ is received by faith, that this blessed work is wrought in the soul. According to John i. 12, 13, “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” And again, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.”¹

The above scriptures shew clearly that the new nature is entirely apart from the old, a thing distinct of itself. It is when this new birth has taken place, that one is spoken of in the scriptures as being a child of God. “Ye are all the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”²

Let us now enquire when and where the term Christian arose.

We read, “Now they which were scattered

1 1 Pet. i. 23

2 Gal. iii. 26

abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word, and the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord, and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”¹

From the above passage of scripture, we see at once who they were that were called Christians, clearly those who had turned to the Lord. Whether it was a name given to them by way of reproach, or a name they had taken in honour of their divine Master we are not informed. One thing we know, that it was a name upon which the Spirit of God put His seal, for it occurs again in scripture. “If any man suffer as a Christian let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf,”² and we gather from the language of Agrippa, that it was a name by which the children of God were then known.

My dear reader, I think it must be evident to you from what has been said, that unless you have been made a new creature in Christ Jesus, you have no right nor title to the honoured name of Christian. See to it then, that you are not merely in name, but in reality a Christian.

J.H.



¹ Acts xi. 19

² 1 Pet. iv. 16

“FOR ME!”

Alice N—— is a dear little girl in my school, about eight years old, very affectionate, impulsive and winning in manner. She is also a good little scholar, but dearly loves a holiday now and then.

One morning a little time ago, during the school term, Alice came running up to me with the news of some grand doings, to take place in the town next day. It was to be a regular fête day, she told me. Shops were to be closed, and indeed all public offices, as I well knew. The High Schools too were making it a holiday, and now, I discovered, that with Alice the burning question was, whether I intended giving the day or not, ours being a private school.

“Why, Alice,” I said, “if it is to be such a grand day, and so it will from all accounts I hear, all schools will be closed. Almost everyone will have a holiday.”

“Doesn’t that satisfy you now, little girlie?” I added, as she continued looking up wistfully.

No, it did not. Nodding her head doubtfully in reply, and the next moment twining her soft arms coaxingly about my neck, Alice whispered very earnestly, “Ah, no; do tell me, dear Miss C——, *shall I have the day? Are you going to give it?*”

There was no resisting the little pleading voice. Of course Alice got her answer, which was the one plain word, "Yes;" and I need hardly add that her joy and content were then unbounded.

But this little incident, trifling as it may appear, set me thinking; and because I feel that maybe it will help to set some of you dear young folk thinking also, I tell it now.

Is not little Alice in some respects an example for us? Perhaps some of you who are older and wiser will smile at her eagerness, worthy, you say, of a better cause. Others may think Alice only very silly. "Why," say they, "she might have known without asking, if everyone was having it. And besides, what a fuss over nothing! Only a holiday."

Ah, but little reader, supposing if what you call nothing was everything to Alice at that moment? It is not always the intrinsic value of a thing, is it, that makes it precious in our eyes? But rather our personal need of that thing.

Again, you think she might have taken for granted that she was sure of her holiday and not have given herself any trouble about the matter. Alice reasoned differently. She would risk no unfounded conclusions, and so she went to the right quarter for certainty, and to the point direct, *and got what she wanted.*

And will not you, dear boys and girls, act just in

this way about the matter of getting salvation? Well enough you know the truth that you "must" be saved now in this day of God's long-suffering grace, and by the one "name given among men"¹ or else be for ever banished from God's presence.

Yet you put off, and delay, and vaguely hope—some of you—to be among the saved ones in the coming day, when you might just go to God now, and have the question once and for ever settled.

Can it be that you are not awakened to a sense of your individual need of God's salvation? Have you then *no* sins to answer for? Oh, do be undeceived! Hear the solemn word from God on that point: "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

Barbados.



THE SONGS OF HEAVEN.

THERE is a class of people who are resting in their own attainments as regards their eternal destiny, but who may, nevertheless, shrink from expressing themselves with the confidence that must be implied.

The thoughts of such appear never to have penetrated beyond the threshold of heaven, nor to have reflected upon the occupations of those who gain that haven. This is not to be wondered at,

¹ Acts iv. 12

for scripture too is silent as to any but a class who sing the songs of the redeemed—who are full of their Redeemer's praise.

“Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and nation.”

And yet in another sense scripture is *not* silent, for it declares there will be no boasting in heaven. Thank God, heaven's harmony will not be sullied by the debates of competitive Pharisees, ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness.

“By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast.”

What folly it would be to be competing for, and awarding to one another, degrees of purity in a coal mine, when the radiant sunshine must, with one flash, bring all into contempt by reason of common blackness!

This class, being ignorant of God's righteousness, ignoring the glorious sunshine at the top of the mine, know not their own blackness; else would they submit to that righteousness which, while condemning their blackness, has provided a righteous remedy: Jesus “whom God has set forth to be a mercy seat through faith in his blood,” the ground on which God can be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

“HALLELUJAH, PRAISE YE THE LORD.”

A christian wife and mother lay upon her bed, where she had borne with patience months of suffering. For many years she had been a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ and knew peace with God. Though her hours were numbered she was not troubled with anxious thoughts, as to whether she was Christ's or not, for she had come to Him Who said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," and she knew that she was "redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ." The future had no terrors for her; she longed to be with the One Who loved her and gave Himself for her.

By the bed-side stood the husband, also a Christian, and as he quoted passages from God's word, his wife joined in repeating words that had long been the stay of their souls and the comfort of their hearts.

The last words uttered by the beloved one were,

Glory, glory everlasting,
Be to Him Who bore the cross,
Who redeemed our souls by tasting
Death, the death deserved by us!
Spread His glory,
Who redeemed His people thus.

And also—

Jesus Christ is my Redeemer,
Hallelujah, praise ye the Lord.

repeating the last line.

Shortly after she was put to sleep by Jesus.

Reader: were you called to pass from time into eternity before you lay aside this magazine, would your last words be those of praise to the Lord Jesus? Or, would you be filled with fear?

There is no barrier on God's part to hinder "whosoever will" rejoicing in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus as Saviour; for "the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared." "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

Through the death of His Son on the cross, God acts in grace and in righteousness in saving sinners who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Truly it is a "great salvation." God and the Son are one in purposes of grace for sinners. On the cross God's Son was made sin, and there sin was judged. On the cross, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God."

God's word asks a question which is unanswerable. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?"

God has lingered in long-suffering grace, not willing that any should perish, but there is no escape from wrath for those who pass away neglecting His salvation. Are you neglecting?

Do you eagerly embrace every opportunity of temporal gain or earthly pleasure, and disregard God's love manifested in Christ? Beware, lest you reap eternal loss!

Do not delay longer, but whilst the loving Saviour says, "Come unto me," "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." "Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation." Why then should not you too be able to say, "Hallelujah, praise ye the Lord?"

W.J.S.

HYMN.

FATHER of Lights, Whose will divine
 Has, by Thy truthful word,
 Begotten and has made us Thine,
 For aye be Thou adored.

Thine, Father, was the wondrous grace,
 That sent Thine only Son,
 To show Thy glory in the face
 Of Thy beloved One.

He came, Thy great and blessed name
 Of Father, to declare—
 The Just to meet Thine every claim,
 The Sinless, sin to bear.

O matchless love, He came to die,
 And deep to deep did call,
 When He Who now is throned on high
 Atoned for Adam's fall.

Thus only, Father, couldst Thou raise
 From depths of sin and shame,
 A chosen people for the praise
 And glory of Thy name.

Thus only couldst Thou make us meet
 For the high guerdon, where
 The saints in light, before Thy feet,
 That full fruition share.

O counsel all divine, to find
 True worshippers in those
 Who, once estranged by carnal mind,
 Were Thine and Jesus' foes.

Then glory, Father, be to Thee,
 And to Thine only Son,
 All glory to the One in Three,
 And to the Three in One.

R.B.

SALVATION.

ACTS IV. 12; PHIL. II. 12, 13.

THE scriptures use the word salvation in different senses. The salvation of the soul is presented in the word of God as the believer's present possession. Peter puts the matter very plainly, "Receiving the end of your faith the salvation of your souls."¹ Now this is true of everyone who believes in Jesus, and there are no "ifs" nor "buts" in this connection. But salvation can only be obtained in one way. That man needs it, few who listen to the gospel would care to question, but none can of himself effect it. Neither can his brother-man pay the ransom price for him. Salvation can only be procured through faith in the name of Jesus. Such was the testi-

mony borne by Peter to the rulers and heads of the Jewish people.¹ They were looking for a deliverer in their Messiah. But they had crucified Him Whom God had sent to be their Saviour. Nevertheless there was no salvation to be obtained elsewhere. His was the only name available before God. On the cross He offered Himself a ransom for all.² He paid in blood the awful price of our redemption. And hence Peter says that believers are "not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ."³

Clearly, then, the work of the cross was necessary to secure salvation for the sinner. And that work was toward God and for man. Man, therefore, is the recipient of it through God's grace and in no other way. It is "by grace through faith . . . the gift of God . . . not of works."⁴ Thus we have in this aspect, salvation presented from God's side altogether and man in no way coming in as a worker, but as a believer only.

In Phil. ii. 12, 13, on the other hand, salvation is looked at as the end of the journey, as the thing arrived at. Such is the invariable aspect in the Epistle to the Philippians. Hence it might perhaps be called the race-Epistle, since it deals with the journey and the end when the Lord comes. Therefore the apostle speaks of "pressing toward

1 Acts iv. 12

2 1 Tim. ii. 6

3 1 Pet. 18, 19

4 Eph. i.

the mark for the prize," not having attained, but following after, that he might apprehend that for which he was apprehended.

Now this is, so to say, man's side of salvation, inasmuch as it is clearly linked with "doing" on man's part. Therefore the word "work out your own salvation." This expression does not mean, however, as some say, that God has done His part as to the believer's salvation, and has left him to finish the rest; but rather, that the apostle was no longer with the saints at Philippi to watch the stratagems of the enemy of their souls, and to ward off his attacks. Hence they would have to work out their own deliverance. Thus they were left to fight God's battles against Satan themselves. And this is no easy matter. The Christian has a strong and wily foe to contend with, and one who hates him with an inveterate hatred, and who is seeking in every possible way to compass the ruin of his testimony. He is, therefore, to be sober and vigilant, to quit himself like a man and be strong,⁶ in order that he may overcome in the conflict.

Then there should be the fear of grieving the loving Father Who has called the Christian to His everlasting kingdom by Christ Jesus. It is not a fear of judgement that the apostle means when he speaks of fear and trembling. Neither

is it doubt as to the ultimate salvation of the soul, and a fear of being lost at the last. Further, it is not fear because the Christian is left alone, as far as human resources are concerned, for God is working in him. God the Holy Ghost is in every saved person, giving him power to stand against his foes, and leading out his soul to contemplate that One Who is now in the glory, and to Whose image he is to be conformed.

It is evident then that every believer in the Lord Jesus is eternally secure in Him. But he is in fact on the road to glory, and must reach the goal to get it. Hence he is exercised along the road in dependence, in grace, in watchfulness and diligence, the true proofs of the reality within. Thus the child of God learns the ways of God, His faithful and unfailing love, and His holy government, and he "works out his salvation in fear and trembling," for he is ever in danger as to his daily path to glory, though he is dependent and counts on the faithfulness of Him Who keeps him.

W.T.H.

JESUS TEMPTED.

LUKE IV. 1—13.

IN man's natural state, since the fall, he is a child of wrath, a captive of Satan, and an enemy of God. The Lord Jesus, though truly man, was without sin absolutely, born holy and so

abiding, recognised as Son by the Father, and sealed by the Holy Spirit. It was His to glorify His Father throughout His life, and to glorify God by His death as a sacrifice for sin. Thus was God so glorified as to leave Him free righteously to save sinners, but not without faith in Christ on the part of all who hear the gospel.

The first thing that the Lord did, after God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and power, was to be led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by the devil. In those days He ate nothing, and when they were ended He hungered. Adam, innocent in an unfallen earth and in its brightest spot, the garden of Eden, with every need supplied and surrounded by every gratification, had no such trial; Christ was led by the Spirit into a world of misery through sin, and suffered being tempted. It was far different when Moses spent forty days with God, entirely above human need; still more so with Elijah, who was fed by an angel so as to take his forty days' journey into the wilderness of Horeb. Jesus spent His forty days in the wilderness with Satan (and the wild beasts, as Mark adds). How immense the strain and the suffering to His holy soul!

Then He felt hungry, and "the devil said unto him, If thou art Son of God, say to this stone that it may become bread. And Jesus answered unto him, Not on bread alone shall man live [but

on every word of God].” The first temptation which could be a pattern to the Christian is to man’s natural wants. As men say, when the trial comes in an incomparably lighter form, one must live. But the decision of faith is that we must not sin, even for a living. The Lord drew from Deuteronomy viii. 3 the positive and best answer, Not by bread alone shall man live. The man of God is nourished by every word of God. Thus does he lead a better and more enduring life. Jehovah fed His people with food which neither they nor their fathers knew, with manna which fell from above ; but they alas ! murmured before and after it. Jesus hungered ; but if no food was given, He waited patiently. He came into the wilderness, and there and everywhere else would not do His own will, but God’s. Still less would He do the devil’s will. He is invariably the dependent and obedient man.

“And [the devil] leading him up [into a high mountain], he shewed him all the kingdoms of the earth in a moment of time. And the devil said to him, To thee will I give all this authority and their glory ; because it is given up to me, and and to whomsoever I will give it. If thou therefore wilt worship before me, it shall be thine. And Jesus answering him said, Thou shalt worship the LORD thy God, and him alone shalt thou serve,” citing Deuteronomy vi. 13.

Here the Lord meets the worldly temptation, and in the most perfect way. As He prayed beyond any, so above all He worshipped His Father, and served Him alone religiously. From Israel it was demanded as a right; He alone fully rendered it. But it may be noticed that this temptation was third in the Gospel of Matthew, as it was in fact, shown there by "then" instead of Luke's "and." The change of order to which the inspiring Spirit led Luke required necessarily as in the old and better copies, an omission, which later hands in the darker days, being grossly ignorant and presumptuous, ventured to supply. For inserted into Luke's account a double error was committed. The Lord is made to bid Satan go behind Him, instead of which he led Him to Jerusalem, etc., which reverses the lesson of the Lord's victory, and Satan's expulsion for the time. Besides, our Lord really said in its true and last place as in Matthew's Gospel, Get thee away, or begone, Satan; who had no power to stay another moment. These mediæval copyists actually confounded it with the Lord's reproof to the apostle Peter. Our Lord did say to him when he ventured to turn the Lord from the cross, Get away behind me, Satan. Peter was in this a stumbling-block to Him; but it was in no way an indignant expulsion as it was to the enemy.

Luke's third temptation is put in this place,

because it is the moral order, and this temptation was the greatest trial spiritually. Such is the design in Luke's Gospel, as the dispensational rules in Matthew's. For to a spiritual man the natural and the worldly are below an appeal apparently based on God's promise. This was the temptation which the devil urged from Psalm xci., when he set the Lord on the pinnacle or edge of the temple, and said to Him, If thou art Son of God, cast thyself down hence; for it is written, To his angels he shall give charge concerning thee to guard thee safe, and on [their] hands they shall bear thee up, lest in any wise thou strike thy foot against a stone. But the Lord would not be driven from scripture by its misuse or curtailment, nor would He refute it by reasoning, but by standing on God's word, His imperative claim on every Israelite or God-fearing soul, Thou shalt not tempt the LORD thy God.¹ Why should He tempt Him Whom he knew as absolutely faithful to His word? If Jehovah, instead of Satan, bade Him throw Himself down, how ready He would be! It was Israel's sin when they doubted that Jehovah was in their midst, or ventured to do without His word.

How full of instruction for believers are these temptations in which the Lord utterly worsted the enemy by cleaving to the scripture! May we

1 Deut. vi. 16.

follow in His steps and way! But, O my reader, do not pretend to follow Him or to withstand the evil one, till you have received Him as life eternal, and rest on His redemption for the forgiveness of your sins. Then will you too be sealed by the Spirit, and owned by God the Father as His son by faith in Christ Jesus; and then too will you have to face the enemy's temptations as you pass through the wilderness. Truly you will have the enemy against you, but the Lord to sustain and help and comfort you.

W.K.

SLEEPING SINNERS; SLEEPING SAINTS; AND SLEEPING SERVANTS.

SLEEPING SINNERS.

A sleeping sinner, on hell's brink! Such, alas! was the jailor of Philippi when the earthquake, sent in divine love, aroused him at the midnight hour from his carnal slumber, to face the awful fact that he was a lost and guilty sinner.

He had done his worst to God's faithful servants, Paul and Silas, and, having beaten them with many stripes, and made their feet fast in the stocks, he had gone to sleep in his sins as tens of thousands are doing to-day. Stolid indifference, carnal ease, and fleshly pride, wrap impenitent

souls, like the jailor's, in sin's deadly slumber, from which, truly, none but God can awaken.

Many lives are spent in dreams; and Satan knows full well how to use this present evil world, of which he is god, as his subtle means of thus beguiling the unwary, until poor souls sink down unconsciously to death, only however to discover, like Dives, when all too late, that hell is a terrible reality from which there is no escape, and that God Himself has fixed that great gulf, which can never be bridged! Yes; the Philippian jailor was indeed a sleeping sinner, but tell me, dear reader, how is it with thyself? Art thou fully alive to the fact of thy real condition now in the sight of a holy God. Or is thy mind still blinded by the god of this world, and thine ears deaf to the ceaseless wooings of divine love? An earthquake, however, was God's voice to the sleeping jailor which brought him to his senses; for trembling from head to foot, he falls down before Paul and Silas, and, in agony of soul, cries out, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Conscience being thus really awakened, he knows no rest until he finds sin's burden gone at the feet of Jesus; and, with the glorious tidings ringing in his ears, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," he passes that very night from death unto life, and from Satan's kingdom into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

Reader, art thou yet awakened; or art thou sleeping still in thy many sins?

SLEEPING SAINTS.

Is it possible that any saint of God can really sleep in a guilty world, which is fast ripening for God's solemn judgement? Alas! alas! such is the case with many; and hence the needs be for those oft-forgotten words, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." "We are not of the night, nor of darkness; therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober."

Good had it been for Peter, James and John, in Gethsemane's garden, had they but heeded their Master's touching words, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me." But alas! they slept; and that, too, while their blessed Lord was, in His agony, sweating as it were great drops of blood! Yet have we not to face the same sad fact to-day, that saints, when self-indulgent, are certain to forget like the disciples, the Saviour's pleading words, "Watch with me?" The long dark night of this world's history is fast closing in; but is it not, alas! only too true that many of God's people are worldly, and, like the ten virgins, slumbering and sleeping, instead of eagerly waiting for their Lord's return? This is the secret of the increasing

declension in the church of God. Many saints are fast asleep, and seem to have forgotten the warning words of Jesus, "Watch ye therefore, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning, lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping." "And what I say unto you, I say unto all, watch!"

SLEEPING SERVANTS.

If, alas! in these closing days, it be sadly true that many of the Lord's dear blood-bought ones are apparently quite indifferent to the midnight cry, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him," what shall be said of those who, like Jonah of old, are sleeping servants of such a God as ours? Self-willed, disobedient, and utterly regardless of the divine command, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before me." Jonah, leaves God's presence, and goes his own way; but let us not forget the way he took. A ship was ready waiting for him at Joppa (*i.e.* beautiful) to take him to Tarshish (*i.e.* destruction); and, paying his fare, he goes down into the sides of the ship, and, forgetful of the God on Whom he had turned his back, goes fast asleep. How Satan must have rejoiced, and the hosts of hell have triumphed, at the carnal ease of God's disobedient

servant. Unmoved and unconcerned, amidst the roaring of that mighty tempest, the force of which well-nigh broke the ship, Jonah was at length aroused by the warning voice of the ship-master, "What meanest thou, oh, sleeper; arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us that we perish not."

With the humiliating confession wrung from the prophet's lips by the terrified mariners, "I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you," Jonah bids them take him up, and cast him into the sea so that it might cease from its raging. And truly by this means alone, and in this way, did the stormy billows cease their roaring, and the calm come. Is there no lesson for sleeping servants in such a tale as this, divinely true in all its details, as we know it is? Yes, surely, it is death to self, in every shape and form, which is the one and only antidote to self-indulgence! If God's servants can sleep, while sinners are perishing all around, what will the Master say in the near future? Great is the storm that is raging around us to day, for sin is everywhere, and death which follows sin; but a tempest infinitely greater will soon burst on the world of the ungodly; therefore let all God's servants take these things to heart, and forget not the words of the beloved apostle, "Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our

salvation nearer than when we believed ; the night is far spent, the day is at hand, let us therefore cast off the darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."

Yes, "let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch, and be sober." Let us warn sinners to repent, and flee from the wrath to come ; and let us "provoke one another to love and good works," lest the Lord, coming suddenly, find us sleeping ! A dying world, a great white throne, and an endless hell, may well arouse sleeping sinners ; but a seated Saviour, crowned and glorified on high, may well inspire and energise God's servants to be up and doing, for "we shall reap if we faint not." "The end of all things is at hand ; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."

S.T.

PEACE IN EXCHANGE FOR CARES.

IN Paul we see one whose heart was so singly set upon God's glory that though he prayed thrice for the removal of the thorn in the flesh, yet when he got the assurance, "My grace is sufficient for thee," his soul was at once at rest, and he said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities," etc.¹ He was willing to be in suffering, if only God was glorified in him—so that Christ was magnified in his body, either in life or

¹ 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10

death.¹ Blessed experience, to forget ourselves in one all-absorbing, all-commanding desire that Christ should be magnified in us. And it is most certainly in trial that the graces of the Holy Spirit are called into exercise. And what a consolation to our hearts to know we may safely and confidently cast all upon God. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ."² This passage seems to present the matter in this way; God, as it were, comes forth and invites us to roll our burden upon Him. He assures us in every possible way in His word that He is interested in us, that He is concerned about us, in short, that He is careful for us, and thus by assuring us of His own love and care for us He seeks to win our confidence. He says in effect, Don't you be careful, but bring all to Me and leave it with Me.

How precious that word is in Matthew where Jesus says, "Take no thought for the morrow," and His reason is, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."³ The fact that my Father knows my need is given by the Lord as a reason why I should not be careful. We do not trust God as He desires we should.

1 Phil. i. 20

2 Phil. iv. 6, 7

3 Matt. vi. 31, 32

He is, as a gracious, loving Father, seeking to win our confidence. He is pleased when we confide in Himself and His love. And will not He Who has given His Son for us care for us in every little matter?¹ If we are enabled thus to leave all our matters in our Father's hand in full confidence, His peace will keep our hearts and minds. God's peace is a blessed peace which no circumstances can disturb, and that is the peace which passeth all understanding, and which will keep our hearts and minds if we are thus able to confide in God, being without carefulness in a true sense. God says, You give me your *cares*, and I will give you My *peace*. What an exchange! Oh to know it more practically. If a kind friend undertook the management of a matter which was much troubling me, and I had confidence in his ability to attend to it, I should be at once relieved, and I should quietly leave it with him. So with the blessed God. When I really apprehend that He invites me to cast all upon Him, and I do it, then I am relieved. God's way of relieving us is not by removing the trial, but by drawing out our confidence in Himself, and when we give Him our cares He gives us His peace in exchange. Oh, how little we know and enter into the loving heart of God our Father, Who is above all circumstances, and without Whom a sparrow

even cannot fall to the ground. Have faith in God!

If, however, instead of this unfeigned faith in God we carry our own sorrows, and are planning and plotting to get out of them, or to deliver ourselves, instead of the peace of God keeping our hearts and minds we shall only show out the fretfulness, the impatience and the insubjection of the carnal mind, and thus dishonour Him Who has done so much for us, and Who is so infinitely worthy of our trust.

Trials also test the character and quality of our faith, just as the fire tests gold; and when Christ appears, if our faith has stood the testing it will "be to praise and honour and glory."¹

Again, as to our trials it is most important to see and own our Father's hand. They are no mere things of chance, but come as permitted or sent of God our Father. How reasonable then, that we should be submissive and subject in mind. Children are subject to their parents even in discipline, "and shall not we be subject to the Father of spirits?"²

Oh for grace to own our Father's hand, and to bow to His will with submissive hearts.

Moreover, as to trials and afflictions, they will be light or heavy to us in proportion as our hearts are set on the glory. If we are looking at the

1 1 Pet. i. 7

2 Heb. xii. 9

unseen things, if our hearts are occupied with the eternal weight of the glory, then afflictions will be light. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen: for the things which are seen are temporal: but the things which are not seen are eternal."¹

Our afflictions are light when we compare them with the glory; short, when we compare them with eternity. And if our hearts are associated with Christ and His glories, in which we shall speedily share, we shall not think so much of our afflictions.

May the Lord pour into the hearts of His afflicted ones His abounding consolations, and make their afflictions the means of their richest and fullest blessing, drawing out the confidence of their hearts in Himself.

Extracted.

TO-DAY: TO-MORROW.

ONLY two little words, which we have all used, and which we hear used hundreds of times by others, taking no particular thought about them, and yet how momentous and important they are.

To-day is yours and mine; to-morrow must be the beginning of "for ever" for many. It may be for you or me.

You all know that beautiful text, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." But you notice that there is no to-morrow mentioned. If Jesus was with you yesterday, and you have Him to-day, then He will be the same "for ever," and to-morrow need not come into your calculations.

All through the Bible you will find the word "To-day" in connection with blessing and on the other hand "to-morrow" with warning and trouble. We are offered salvation, to-day not to-morrow. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.

When little Zacchæus climbed the sycamore tree in his earnestness to get a peep at our Lord, he was called down, and Jesus said, "To-day I must abide at thine house." What an honour for the despised tax-gatherer! And later He added, "This day [or to-day] is salvation come to this house." Why? Because Jesus Himself was there.

In Luke xxiii. 42 we read, "Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom," spoken by the dying robber; and the Lord's reply was, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Dear young readers, just as you are anxious to have at once anything good that has been promised you, so all God's best and choicest gifts are offered

now, to-day, not to-morrow, "To-day if ye will hear His voice harden not your hearts, for how can you be sure of to-morrow?"

It is always to-day for blessings; and to-morrow for warning. Read 1 Samuel xxviii. 19. In Proverbs xxvii., Solomon says, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow," and the Lord tells us to take no thought for the morrow, to shew us, I think, that we need all our thoughts, and energies for to-day. We cannot sleep for to-morrow, eat for to-morrow, or do the work of a to-morrow which may never be ours; rather let us put all our energy into what is before us to-day, and so glorify Him in our bodies and our spirits which are His.

But then comes the solemn question, "Are you the Lord's?" And are you by grace living for Him? If not, to-day cannot be bright for you, and certainly to-morrow must be darkness. Let me plead with you not to put off coming to Christ. Let the word "to-day" ring in your ears. *To-day, to-day.*

A few years ago, in this room where I am now writing, a young man came to bid us good-bye at the end of his holiday. He was young, strong, and had bright prospects before him for this world, because for the things of time he was full of energy. And so with a deep yearning for his soul, a servant of God who was present, pleaded earnestly with him to take salvation.

He did not care for such a close talk, and as soon as he politely could he got up and left.

This was on a Sunday afternoon, with bright sunshine round us, and many kind words of farewell.

The next Sunday at the same hour he went out to bathe in the river near his home. He was a strong swimmer and had more than once escaped drowning out in a boisterous sea, but the river was full of long clinging weeds, and he was found drowned.

His to-morrow had come.

To-day "there is room in the Lamb's bright hall of song." To-morrow's cry may be, "no room, no room." S.



WHO serves like God, when He deigns to do so?

THE flesh and its desires hide from us, even when thinking of Him, all the import of the thoughts of God.

IF the heart turns to Jesus it can (thank God) bring its unbelief to Him as well as all the rest. There is love and power in Him for every kind of weakness.

IT was but to touch Jesus and be healed. The power that was in Him responded to the touch of faith however feeble. So it is now. All that Jesus is belongs to the one that believes on Him.

THE Lord's love is not wearied by our unbelieving dulness of intelligence; He acts according to the power of His own intention towards us, and causes us to see clearly.