

“SOUND WORDS.”

2 Tim. i., 13.

A MONTHLY PERIODICAL,

FOR THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL AND FEEDING
“THE CHURCH OF GOD.”

*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all
wisdom.”—Col. III., 16.*

VOL. II.

Offices of Publication.

NEW YORK,.....64 BIBLE HOUSE, ASTOR PLACE
BOSTON,.....3 TREMONT ROW.
TORONTO,.....390 YONGE STREET.
MONTREAL,.....4 GEORGE STREET HALL.
SAN FRANCISCO, (R. J. TRUMBULL & Co.,) 420 MONTGOMERY STREET.
OTTAWA (JOSEPH LIVEDAY).....DALHOUSIE STREET.
MANCHESTER, ENGLAND (W. B. HORNER), 93 BLOOMSBURY.

1877.

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"THEY THAT WERE READY."

"And while they went to buy, the Bridegroom came; and *they that were ready* went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut."

Another "year of grace," as men speak, has sped by. How many of those who were in the world when the year began, were in it when it ended? Where are the *souls* of those that have passed away? Are they "present with the Lord" or where are they? Ah! where are they? Where, dear reader, would your's have been had you been called away? The earth goes on, completing its successive journeys round the sun. With unabated force it circles round its centre, sustained by the Hand that formed it, and sent it on its way. Nigh six thousand such journeys has it made. The same earth and the same journey; but are its inhabitants the same? How many of those now on it will see it complete its present journey? Such are the solemn and penetrating thoughts that arise in our minds, as we think of earth, and the rolling by of years marked off by *its* annual revolutions, but how different are the thoughts, though equally solemn and penetrating, that fill the heart as we contemplate the verse before us. It is not a question of earth and time. It is not *death* carrying off one and another, and filling the abodes of blessedness or woe with their respective occupants, that comes before our view. A Bridegroom is coming for his Bride, and there are those who are expecting His coming as having been waked up suddenly to expect Him. There are those that are *ready* and those that are *getting* ready. A vivid picture of the present state of the professing Church as expecting the return of the LORD. It is not our purpose to comment upon the entire parable of which this forms a part, but only to take up briefly the points brought before us in our verse. We do not say either how far all Christians, so called, are really expecting the LORD, but shall just take things as the *verse* presents them. The LORD as the bridegroom of His church, is coming; hearts and consciences are alive to the fact, and acting accordingly. This is the general feature that the verse gives, and if we compare it with the state of things actually around us, we soon see how clear is the light it sheds. What means all the religious activity that everywhere meets the eye as we look abroad? It has entire reference to the future, when carefully looked into. Where there is no future in the mind connecting it with Eternity and God, there is no religion. It is all a pre-

paration for a *future* state, and according to the vividness with which this is presented to the mind, is the earnestness of preparation. Where the coming of the LORD is not consciously the motive, it is death that is prepared for, as that which ushers the person into Eternity, and people are getting ready to die and meet God. Now, though death is a very real thing and may overtake any of us, yet it is not death that in the New Testament is presented as that which ushers unto God's presence in Eternity, whether this be for blessing or woe. Uniformly, whether for the heart's joy, or the terror of the conscience, it is *the coming of the Lord* that *Scripture* sets before the soul, saint, or sinner.

This is the case, whether we look at that which was presented to faith previous to the first coming of CHRIST, or at that which should be the subject of testimony as preceding His second coming. The key note of the gospel of Matthew from which we have quoted, is: "Repent ye: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. . . . *Prepare ye way of the Lord, make His paths straight.*" John the Baptist warned his hearers with "flee from the *wrath* to come," and spake of Him that was coming, as having His fan in His hand, and that He would "thoroughly purge his floor: and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." This is not the aspect of the LORD as coming in grace, to die on the cross for sinners, and lay a righteous ground of blessing for man, but as bringing in in *power* the Kingdom of God, which would be blessing or judgment for man, according to the state in which it found him, as believing or not in Him who was *coming*. CHRIST was utterly rejected by Israel, as presented by John, and instead of setting up the Kingdom of God, and blessing and judging man in accordance with its principles, He offers Himself to bear the judgment of God against sinners, and dies on Calvary "the just for the unjust to bring us to God." Raised from the dead, He goes back into Heaven to receive afresh as the risen and glorified man, the Kingdom, and to return to set it up in manifested power, and according to prophecy. The LORD Himself directly teaches this under a figure in Luke xix: "and as they heard these things, He added and spake a parable, because He was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the Kingdom of God should *immediately* appear. He said, therefore: A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return; and he called his ten servants and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, occupy *till I come.*" In the verse previous to this quotation, JESUS

had said: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost,” and He would teach them, that as *Son of man*, He must work the work that would save the lost, ere as *son of David*, He could sit upon the throne of His Kingdom. It was for this reason the Kingdom could not be *immediately*. He must first die, rise again, and go back to His *Father* to receive it, ere it could be set up. In the meantime, during His absence, His servants were to occupy till He came. Hence, it is for those who are His; *occupying till He comes*. The rest of the world, and especially the Jews, hate and reject Him, and so he adds, “But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, we will not have this man to reign over us.”

Hence, *waiting for CHRIST* characterizes the present dispensation, and was, and still is the actual attitude of those who are *subject* to God’s word. Wonderfully of late have souls been waked up to the *fact* that CHRIST is coming again. Far and wide the sound is going forth amid the midnight darkness of this scene: “Behold! the Bridegroom cometh.” In the Church and in the Chapel, in the house and by the wayside, this soul-stirring cry is heard: “Behold! the Bridegroom cometh.” From the press, too, on every hand is poured forth unceasingly and increasingly, the still, small voice of God, announcing the quick return of His Son. From the heights of Glory the LORD JESUS calls down unto the Churches: “Behold! I come quickly.” And more or less in every ear is being echoed by the HOLY SPIRIT: “Behold! the Bridegroom cometh.” The sound rises and falls, and with it hearts and consciences. With ever-increasing intensity it is thrilling the breast of man with expectancy, striking the conscience with terror, or filling the heart with joyful hopes; arousing love in some, and hatred in others. Heard only to be rejected by some, still it is heard. Disbelieved in, yet it makes itself felt, and infidelity, scornful yet affected by what it rejects, looks round for a reply, and says, “Where is the promise of His coming? For, since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” And yet creation, silent to the scornful scrutiny of the sceptic, answers clearly to the believing heart, with the heaving throbs of expectancy; “for the *earnest expectation* of the creature *waiteth* for the manifestation of the sons of God.” Unwillingly made subject to vanity, it is subject in hope, and in every groan and sigh pleads eloquently to God, in the ear of Faith, for deliverance. Groaning and travailing in pain together until now, it

makes its *hopes* felt in every Divinely quickened heart, and proclaims its own sure and bright *future*. "Because the creature *shall* be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom. viii.) Aye, too, and under the earth the same sound is heard, and "the devils also believe and tremble." In Heaven, on earth, and under the earth, all is alive with expectancy. Everything speaks of the "coming of CHRIST." All alike proclaim that "the coming of the LORD draweth nigh." Knowledge is increasing. Men, restless, run to and fro the earth. Nation is rising against nation. Wars and rumors of war. Men's hearts failing them for fear of the things that are coming on the earth. Society is broken up. The old bulwarks no longer stand the storm of popular excitement. The traditions of the past, as reins broken in the hands of those that hold them, no longer avail to keep the multitudes in order. The race has run away with itself, and would-be rulers stand aghast, adopting this expediency and that expediency, but in all in vain. All is confusion and anxiety. Statesmen cower before tumultuous mobs, and, vainly expostulating, are carried with the stream they know not where. Kings doff their crowns and put them on at the will of self-made subjects. For thus saith the LORD GOD: "Remove the diadem and take off the crown; this shall not be the same; exalt him that is low and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more until HE shall come whose right it is, and I will give it to Him."—Ezekiel xxi. Clear indeed is the light here thrown upon the present moment by the despised word of prophecy. Vivid the picture of the present hour, sketched over two thousand years ago by the hand of Him who knows everything, from the beginning to the end. Nor is it *thrones* alone that are thus up-tossed by JEHOVAH's hand. *Republics* shall fare no better: for thus, too, saith the LORD: "Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far-off countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, for GOD is with us, and it shall come to nought." Plain, also, is the path given for the obedience of faith amid such scenes. "For the LORD spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, a confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, a confederacy, neither fear ye their fear nor be afraid. Sanctify the LORD of

Hosts Himself, and let Him be your fear and let Him be your dread.” And Faith’s answer to such a guidance is, “I will *wait* upon the Lord, and I will *look* for Him.” (Isaiah viii.)

How vain, then, are all the attempts of man to set himself and his circumstances right without God and before CHRIST comes. In GOD’S will and counsels everything waits for CHRIST. Creation and the world, Jew, Gentile, and the Church of GOD, all alike shall have their order, place and blessing, when CHRIST comes. Judgment, too, is in the hands of the SON of man, and will be unsparingly executed when He comes.

Solemn and weighty considerations are these to commence a new year with. Surely, no question for 1871 can be more intensely to the point for every soul than “are you ready for CHRIST to come?” “And **THEY THAT WERE READY** went in with Him to the Marriage, and **THE DOOR WAS SHUT.**” The same door that shut in those that were *ready*, shut out those that were only *getting* ready. In which of these two classes, dear Reader, do you find yourself? If the LORD were to come this very instant, while you are reading these words, and He might, on which side of the door would you be? Are *you* ready, or only getting ready? which? Oh! be stirred. Your eternal destinies are at stake. The Bridegroom may come this moment. To be only *getting* ready when He comes is eternal ruin. There is no time for an iota of preparation *after* He has come. You must be ready now, or never. The door of mercy is for ever closed on the unprepared when CHRIST comes. After that it is only the outer darkness, with the weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth for ever. But why are you not ready? Are you *doing* your best, and *hoping* by your own efforts to fit yourself for Christ’s presence and Heaven? if so, you will never be ready; “for by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight” (Rom. iii., 20). Are you adding law keeping to the finished work of CHRIST, or trusting in CHRIST, together with ordinances? Listen again to the great Apostle of the Gentiles, on this subject. “Behold, I Paul say unto ye, that if ye be circumcised (trust in ordinances), CHRIST shall profit you *nothing*. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised (trusts in ordinances) that he is debtor to do the whole law. CHRIST is become of no effect unto whomsoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace” (Gal. v., 2).

Oh! be warned in time. You are a foolish virgin, and

adopting the fatal principle of which our verse speaks so solemnly: "and while they *went to buy*, the Bridegroom came," and while they were thus occupied the door was shut. No appealing cry for mercy was of any avail after. "Verily, I know you not," is the only answer. Acting on the principle of *the law* and *getting ready*, they had never known the Bridegroom. Fallen from grace they were lost. They were not wise unto salvation. Oh, how many, many foolish virgins are there now! Honest and sincere persons, just as you are, *doing* their best religiously to be saved. How full are the Churches and Chapels around of foolish virgins! *Getting ready* for Eternity and CHRIST. Going eagerly to the blind leaders of the blind, who sell, or pretend to sell, the wares of Eternal life. Law teachers and law keepers. The dark enemy of souls is behind all this. Oh! dear reader, open your eyes; you are on the sure road to perdition. Cease from your *buying* this moment. Flee to Christ this instant. Trust in his precious blood *now*. Rest *entirely* on his finished work. Nothing has to be done to save your precious soul. "It is finished" is the clear, full testimony of the SON of GOD on the Cross. Listen to it and be at peace with GOD. Look, and live. "Believe in the LORD JESUS CHRIST and thou shalt be saved." You have not a moment to spare; cast yourself *at once* upon CHRIST and His finished work, or it will be too late. Hear again the cry: "Behold! the Bridegroom cometh;" "and they that WERE READY went in with Him to the marriage." Look *only* to JESUS, I entreat you. Listen *alone* to His words: "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk *without money* and *without price*." "And let him that heareth say come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life *freely*." "He which testifieth these things saith, SURELY, I COME QUICKLY" (Rev. xxii., 17—20).

THE GIVING GOD.

SOMEWHERE about 3300 years ago, God spake to man from Mount Sinai. It was a most solemn time. The mountain burned with fire, and He spake in the midst of darkness and blackness, and clouds and tempests, and the sound of a trumpet; and so terrible was the sight, that Moses cried out and said: "I do exceedingly fear and quake." God then gave to man His law, demanding strict and uncompromising obedience, saying: "Do this, and thou shalt live."

He required from His creatures holiness, and righteousness, and love. The law was summed up in this—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." (Luke x. 27.)

But in man, that is, in **his** flesh, dwelleth no good thing, and out of his heart, which is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, and the like.

How then, can he love God with such a heart? Impossible! The law therefore only made known to man his sinfulness, and his utter inability to do any good thing. By the law is the *knowledge of sin*. By the commandment sin is made to be known, and felt *as exceeding sinful*. For some 1500 years God thus proved man. For 1500 years was God asking man to give Him holiness, and righteousness, and love, but man had none to give, and he had no power to produce anything of the kind. Man was thus proved to be altogether worthless, but some 1870 years since, God, having failed to get any good *out* of man, revealed Himself in another way, and in another character. He had revealed Himself as an *asking* God, but He could get nothing. He now makes Himself known as a *giving* God—as one who has something to bestow, and that fully, freely, and eternally. Freely, without money and without price—fully, for He *gives* every spiritual blessing—eternally, for he that believeth in the **SON** of God *hath everlasting life*.

GOD sent His **SON** JESUS CHRIST, and it was His special and primary mission to make GOD known to man. For no man hath seen GOD at any time, but He that is in the bosom of the **FATHER** hath declared Him. (1 John i. 18.) JESUS came, as a man, full of grace and truth, to reveal Him who is love—the God of all grace. Look at all the words and ways of the blessed **SON** of GOD, as revealed in the Word of GOD. See Him standing up in the synagogue to read! He looks for a certain Scripture, and what is it He finds? "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 deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the **LORD**." (Luke iv. 18, 19.) *Grace* was found in the lips of Him who came from GOD full of love, and nothing but words of love proceeded from His mouth. It was all blessing, blessing, blessing. The law *curst*, but grace *blessed*; the law kept in bondage, grace set the captives free.

God, then, is a *loving* and a *giving* God. No longer asking from man, but looking out for poor sinners, who are ready and willing to accept what He has to give, without money and without price of any kind. But what does this free and full-giving God give? He has given in the first place, His own Son, His only-begotten Son, the Son of His love, in whom is centered all His delight.

“God so loved the world, that He *gave* His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” We are by nature dead in trespasses and sins, needing life. There was no law that could give life: but God hath *given* the life in His Son, for His Son is life. Therefore, in order that we poor sinners might have life, and might escape the coming judgment, God would not spare His Son, but delivered Him up for us, and He, by the ETERNAL SPIRIT, offered Himself as an offering and a sacrifice for sin without spot to God, that—He paying our debt of sin for us—God might give pardon and life to all who believe in JESUS. JESUS the Lamb of God, did this perfectly and completely. On the CROSS He drank the cup of wrath for us, *died* on the Cross for us, and atoned for *all* our sins, and now he that heareth God’s word, and believeth on Him that sent Him, *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

“The wages of sin is death; but the *gift* of God, eternal life, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.” (Rom. vi, 23). Is the Reader, then, willing to *receive* on these terms, God’s gift of eternal life in CHRIST? There is no other way; God no longer says, “Do this and live;” but He says, believe and receive, look and live, all doing on man’s part ends in death—eternal death; whereas, believing in CHRIST is life from the dead. It is eternal life, for “*He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on Him.*” (John iii, 36.) We must first be made alive in CHRIST, then we shall have power for doing; “for the grace of God which bringeth salvation for all men, hath appeared, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and Godly in this present world: Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.” (Titus ii.) We must have and know the grace before it can lead us to God. Again, God gives *all* spiritual blessings in CHRIST. Now that He is revealing Himself love, the God of all grace, He withholds no blessing, but, out of His own fulness *gives* everything. .

Under the Law, God promised to bless His people, on condition of obedience to all His commandments; but under grace, God *gives* all "spiritual blessings in CHRIST JESUS" to all who receive Him. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God; even to them that *believe* in His name." (John i. 12). In this CHRIST, God has concentrated and treasured up every blessing, and we, having received CHRIST, have all in Him, and we are made complete in Him—"in Whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. ii., 9. 10).

He gives, as we have said, *fully*, for He gives *all* blessings, and He gives *securely*, for they are all in CHRIST in the Heavenly places. (Eph. i., 4).

Does the reader know *this* God? This giving, this full giving God? Does he know what it is to sit still, and *receive* a FULL blessing in CHRIST?

Again, God *gives* those who believe in JESUS, His HOLY SPIRIT, for JESUS said, I will give you another Comforter, and He shall *abide* with you *forever*. He shall be *in* you and *with* you. (John xiv.) He is the *power* by which we are born again. He is the *indwelling* power which makes known JESUS, His beauties, His glories, His grace, His perfections, and all the things that have been freely *given* to us of God. The *bodies* of those who believe in JESUS and His finished work for them, are the temples of the HOLY SPIRIT.

We dwell not now on these marvelous blessings at any great length, our purpose being simply to show the blessed fact that God is now made known as a *giving* God, and not as One Who looks to man to give Him anything. The LORD deepen His work of love in the hearts of all His children, that through drinking deeply and more abundantly into this sweet, deep well of love, their capacities may be enlarged more and more to apprehend the love and grace of Him Who *is* love, "the God of all *grace*."

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE WORSHIP OF GOD.

It is a question often put, and one that has come before us again recently, "Why should not instrumental music be used in Christian worship, as it was in Jewish worship?" Such a question betrays the prevalent ignorance that exists as to the entire contrast between the Jewish and the Christian dispensations, law and grace, ordinances and the Spirit. Unless this

distinction be seen and clearly apprehended, it will be impossible for the incongruity of instrumental assistance in the *present* worship of God to be entered into; and we will therefore briefly look at the Jewish economy, and compare it with the Christian, as this will enable us to see the points of contrast or resemblance. The Old Testament will supply us with the material for the one, and the New Testament with that for the other.

Leaving our readers to supply in detail the Scripture proofs, we notice, first, that the Israelites were an *earthly* people, called to inherit an *earthly* inheritance. As a consequence of this, all their deliverances, although truly Divine, were *temporal* deliverances. Their conflicts were with flesh and blood. Called *saints*, as separated to God by the rite of circumcision, they were as such in the flesh, and it was "called circumcision in the flesh." It separated them outwardly, as a visible sign in the flesh, from the nations that surrounded them. Of the same character was their approach to God. Their religious rites were all external, and applied themselves to the *flesh*, "sanctified to the purifying of the flesh" (Heb. ix. 13), thus putting them *relatively* nearer God than other nations. Their place of worship, whether tabernacle or temple, was visible, external and material. It "had ordinances of Divine Service," but a "worldly sanctuary." Their principle of obedience had entire reference to life in the flesh, and the law if kept, secured *present* blessing in natural and temporal things. Faith was in question, where God was apprehended through all these things, but nothing of what we have enumerated raised the question of *Eternity*. Heaven or Hell was not in view. The salvation of the soul, with the hope of resurrection, in no sort hung upon the observances of these rites, or depended upon the fulfilled requirements of the law. The breach of them might be followed by the attached penalty; but even this left the question of *Eternity* and the world to come, untouched. Death might be stayed off, but never set aside, and all were equally "all their lifetime *in bondage* through fear of death." Sins might be forgiven in the conscience through the sacrifices offered, but sin was never *put away* by them from before God, and the relief was only *temporary* and never complete. Clean as the washing of the water could make the person, it fitted him not for God's presence, for it touched not the unclean nature within, and the veil, as the Apostle (Heb. ix. 8) tells us, hung betwixt the worshipper and God, testifying that "the way into the holiest of all was not *yet* made manifest." It

was emphatically a religion of sight and sense. And even when GOD himself was apprehended by faith and conscience, it was as, to means, through the senses. The signs and wonders of Egypt, the pathway through the Red sea, the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, the descending fire on the sacrifice, with the accompanying cloud of glory filling the tabernacle—all alike brought GOD *visibly* before the worshipper, and bowed him at a *distance* before Him. In keeping with all this *visible* glory was the subsequent building of the gorgeous temple at Jerusalem, with its external grandeur and internal beauty. Precious stones, gold and silver, cunning work of brass and iron, garments of beauty, colors of delight, traceries of taste, forms of grace, lights that cast their brightness on lovely types of deeper things, and made the drops of *very* blood glow with mercy's soft reflection, are all fitly found within. And while clouds of incense arose fragrant before JEHOVAH'S throne, and hovered o'er the blood-stained mercy seat, what more in true accord than that praises to the GOD of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, should peal themselves forth in the ears of Israel's waiting tribes, and that the word should be:

"Sing aloud unto GOD our strength; make a joyful noise unto the GOD of Jacob.

"Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.

"Blow up the trumpet in the new moon in the time appointed, on our solemn feast days.

"For this was a *statute for Israel*, and a *law of the GOD of Jacob.*"—*Psalms* lxxxi.

So sang the sweet Psalmist of Israel, "and four thousand praised the LORD with instruments which I made (saith David) to praise therewith." (1 Chron. xxiii., 5.) And, in later days, when Israel's beautiful house, fallen into disorder, is restored by Hezekiah, we read, "And he set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of GOD the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet, for so was the *commandment* of the LORD, by His prophets." (2 Chron. xxix., 25.)

The blast of rams' horns, and the clear, shrill note of silver trumpets, rallying Israel's hosts, and leading forth to victory the numbered warriors of JEHOVAH, are all in place as we look upon the tents of Jacob. Fitly too were their feasts of gladness, their solemn days, and their times of sacrifice thus proclaimed: "Also in the day of your gladness, and in your

solemn days, and in the beginning of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings, that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the Lord your God." "And the sons of Aaron the Priest shall blow with the trumpet; and they shall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations" (Numb. x., 8). All this is perfectly in keeping with the then ways of God with a people which He had before Him for earthly blessing, and in the flesh, *manifestly* the subjects of His care and government. Blest with earthly blessings in the flesh, they worshipped Him in and with means, that appealed to the various avenues of sense. Sight, touch, taste, smelling, and hearing were all in question. All was visible and external, in form and ceremony—shadows only of good things to come, in which faith and the Spirit had no place. Precisely regulated in every particular by Divine command, through Moses, the great apostle of that system, the law as a whole was, as Paul tells us, but "a schoolmaster up to CHRIST, that we should be justified by *faith*;" and then he adds, "but after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." *Instrumental music* was *one* of the means of instruction in the hands of the schoolmaster. Now faith is come to those that have accepted CHRIST, and we are *children of God* by faith in CHRIST JESUS." (Gal. iii.) The schoolmaster—the entire system of the law as a means of blessing and access to God—has passed away. It is no longer servants at school, but children of God in life and liberty, through the Spirit, "heirs of God, through CHRIST." Gal. iv. We would earnestly beg our readers to prayerfully read what the Apostle says in these two chapters as to what the law really is, and what the place of the Christian is as entirely outside it as a system, in every way, though under law to CHRIST. As *Gentiles*, we were never in any way under the law as a religious system, and as to the Jews who *were* under it, "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His SON, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons." To bring back instrumental music, is to bring back part of the material of the schoolmaster, and to bring back part is to bring back all in God's sight, and makes the whole binding on the conscience, entailing the judgment that attaches to a breach of any part, "for whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James ii., 10). In *principle*, thus to touch the ordinances of the law, is to be "a debtor

to do the whole law." Thus CHRIST becomes of none effect, and to be in *any way* under law, is to have fallen from grace. It is to "tempt God," and to "put," as Peter says (Acts xv.) "a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear." A solemn aspect this indeed to view things in, and we have dwelt upon it, that our readers may see what the law really is, and what the ruinous consequences of bringing back *any* part of it. We trust that it will thus become clear, that the question of instrumental music involves something more than a mere opinion, or bare consistency with one religious system or another, Jewish or Christian. Deep and fundamental principles touching the blessing of man and God's glory, underlie such an inquiry.

"The law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by JESUS CHRIST." We have looked briefly at the one, and brought it into relief in itself and its effects, we will now in brief trace the other as it flows from its source, and contrasts itself with the former. As the Jew was under Moses and the law, so the Christian is under CHRIST and grace. Both give a standing before God, and as we have noticed for Judaism, a standing in the flesh. A Jew changed from his standing in Judaism by giving up Judaism and receiving Christ. He thus became a Christian. A Gentile left his idols, and he became a Christian by receiving CHRIST: "and to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become sons of God, even to them that believe in His name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i., 12). The one thus received was the "Word made flesh," dwelling among men, full of grace and truth, and those who were thus His received of His fulness and "grace for grace." As the Jews listened to CHRIST in contrast with Moses, and *believed* in Him and His Word, they passed from law to grace; they were born again of the Spirit, and entered into a new relationship with God in a kingdom where flesh has no place, and law no claim. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," remains such; "and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit," the LORD teaches them. The one cannot be changed into the other, and has no place in company with it, has no part in the kingdom of God (John iii. 5, 6). Here *all* is of the Spirit; and if of the Spirit, all of grace or gift. "If thou knewest the gift of God (the giving character of God in contrast with law demanding), and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of Him and He would have *given* thee living water," says the LORD to the woman of

Samaria at Sychar's well (John iv., 10). "The *gift* of God is eternal life through JESUS CHRIST, our LORD" (Rom. v), Paul tells the Gentiles, and Peter adds: "God, which knoweth the hearts, bore *them* witness, *giving* them the HOLY SPIRIT, even as He did unto us (Jews); and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by *faith*" (Act xv). In what is now before us, CHRIST is all and in all. The life is *eternal* and spiritual. The power of joy and fruitfulness is the HOLY SPIRIT. Its entire principle, as flowing from God, is grace, and that which in us enters into and enjoys the blessing, is *faith*. A present kingdom of God, "which is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xiv. 17). The Christian is a Heavenly person. His calling is to Heaven. His blessings are *spiritual* blessings in Heavenly places. His inheritance is an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in *Heaven*. His salvation and redemption are eternal. His conflicts are *not* with flesh and blood, but with wicked spirits in Heavenly places. He is sanctified in CHRIST JESUS through the SPIRIT and "by the offering up of the body and blood of JESUS CHRIST once." His life is hid with CHRIST in God. His sins are all put away by the blood of JESUS. He has boldness to enter into the holiest of all by that blood. *No* veil is betwixt him and God. His priest is in Heaven, in the holiest where the blood of eternal redemption is on the mercy seat, and he draws *near* with full assurance of faith, and a body washed with pure water—a holy nature fitted for God's presence. His place of worship is no temple made with hands, but Heaven itself. He has the *substance* of every type and shadow in JESUS, in his sacrifices, and all that surrounds Him now in Heavenly Glory. He knows that "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in Spirit and truth;" and as children of His love, "for the Father seeketh such to worship Him" (John iv., 23). He has tasted "that the LORD is gracious," and CHRIST is everything to him. Having come to Him "as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious," he *rests* upon this foundation, and knows that all Christians as "lively stones are built up a *spiritual* house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by JESUS CHRIST" (1 Pet. ii. 4. 5). Outside the camp, bearing His reproach, seeking a city to come, he gathers with others to the name of JESUS, and having a conscience purged from "dead works" by the blood of CHRIST, he worships the living God, and offers "the sacrifice of praise to God continually,

that is the fruit of the *lips* giving thanks to His name" (Heb. xiii. 15). To introduce instrumental music into such a scene of *spiritual* worship, or make it part of such an order of things, how incongruous! By the *nature* of things then, instrumental music can have no place in Christian worship. To introduce it is to return to fleshly worship, and adopt the elements of Judaism. The plain statements of the New Testament, giving directions as to praise and worship in the *Christian* assembly, are entirely against such a practice. Here all is controlled and sustained by the HOLY SPIRIT. In 1 Cor. xiv. 15, Paul says: "I will *sing* with the Spirit, and I will sing with the understanding." A little lower down, in the 26th verse, in correcting some disorder with reference to singing, he says: "Every one of you hath a psalm," clearly showing that the song of praise *started* from the individual saint, and not from an organ in the gallery, to *make* music for all. In Eph. v., saints are told "to be filled with the Spirit: *speaking* to yourselves in psalms and spiritual songs, *singing* and making melody in your hearts to the LORD." So, too, in Col. 1. iii, they are enjoined, "let the Word of CHRIST dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, *singing* with grace in your hearts to the LORD." Let it be noted here that the LORD is the One for whom the heart's melody is made, and He, too, is the One sung to. It becomes thus a matter of what will please the heart and ear of the LORD Himself, and not of those who worship. The One worshipped is ever before the soul. Gladness of heart at any time is to find its expression in *singing*; "is any merry," says James, "let him sing psalms." Here, then, is plenty of praise and joyous worship; the *voice*, according to GOD's directions, being the medium of it, and the HOLY SPIRIT who dwells in the believer the power of that praise. Simple singing, holy, happy and Divine, meet surroundings for the presence of Him, who, as Man in the midst of His brethren, says, "I will sing praises."

In vain shall we search for anything in the New Testament that can give the slightest color for the use of instrumental music in the worship of GOD in the Christian assembly. The *body* of the believer, as much as his soul, is "bought with a price" (1 Cor. vii.), and dwelt in by the HOLY SPIRIT, is the instrument of GOD's service and praise. The power of testimony in the word through the mouth, the SPIRIT makes melody to the LORD in the *hearts* of the saints, and uses *their voices* to sing *aloud* His praises. Our thoughts in no way can connect,

and it would be near to blasphemy to do so, the HOLY SPIRIT with an organ or an harmonium. We do read of *harps* in Revelation, but this is only a figure, and he who would build anything on this for the use of actual harps in worship, either now or bye and bye in Heaven, must also be prepared to put the lopped off branches of palm trees into the hands of the glorified saints.

After all, the question is: is worship to be spiritual and according to God, or fleshly and according to man? Dear reader, let us entreat you be done with instrumental music and all that is in keeping with it, when you would worship the GOD and FATHER of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. It is but the "beggarly element" of a past economy. Now properly only the accompaniment of idolatrous worship, it is in principle idolatrous, and "what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" "Be separate, saith the LORD, and touch not the unclean thing." (1 Cor. vi)

THE REDEMPTION OF THE PURCHASED POSSESSION.

Eph. i., 14.

THE earth is the subject of redemption as well as man. It is already purchased, and bye and bye, in due season, it shall be rescued or delivered. That is, it is the subject of the two-fold redemption known in Scripture—redemption by *price* and redemption by *power*.

The blood of the Cross has already reconciled or purchased it. As we read, "And having made peace by the blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, by Him, I say, whether they be things on earth or things in Heaven." (Col. 1.)

This gives the inheritance the title of "the purchased possession." But though purchased, it is not yet delivered. It is still under "the bondage of corruption." (Rom. viii.) It is redeemed by purchase, but not as yet by power.

We, therefore, wait for the "redemption" of that which is already purchased. This bright and happy truth, this mystery found among the mysteries of God, has had its pledges and foreshadowings, as well as others. The ordinance of the Jubilee seems to set forth this two-fold redemption by price and by power. (See Lev. xxv.) For that chapter teaches us that at any other time during forty-nine years, the alienated possession of an Israelite might have been purchased by the

kinsman of the heir, and thus redeemed or brought back to the family to which, under God, it had belonged; but if that were not done, it would return to the heir in the fiftieth year, or the Jubilee, without purchase.

These two ordinances again, I say, serve to set forth the mysteries I am speaking of—redemption by money and redemption by power. The kinsman might redeem with money, the Jubilee would redeem without money, by virtue of its own title, by virtue of that force or authority imparted to it by Him who was the God of Israel and the Lord of the soil.

Again, Jeremiah the Prophet was commanded to purchase the field of Hanameel, his uncle's son. He did so in the spirit and obedience of faith, though at the moment the Chaldean army was in the land, and was under commission from the Lord to tread it down and waste it, or possess themselves of it. But when Jeremiah made inquiry respecting this strange thing that he should be asked to lay out his money upon a piece of land thus devoted to the sword of an invader, the Lord tells him that a day of *power* was to come, and that the Lord's own people should possess it again, brought back out of the hand of the spoiler. This was the Lord's answer to His servant. And thus Jeremiah had reason to know that the purchase now made by good money of the merchants, should be made good in a coming day of power. (See Jer. xxxii.)

And let me add one other notice of this distinguished case, the purchase of Hanameel's field, for it has interested me. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" is the Lord's challenge to Jeremiah on this occasion, as it is of Sarah in Gen. xviii. Sarah did not know that she whose body was then dead, could have a child, for *she knew not the resurrection strength of God*. Jeremiah did not know how he who was laying out his money on a piece of ground, which was then in the hand of the enemy, could get its value back again; for, like Sarah, he knew not the resurrection strength of God. That strength makes all simple. The victory of CHRIST, the resurrection of JESUS gives us to our inheritance, sure rights under the seal of a title-deed easy to be read.

THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF THE PSALMS.

THE Psalms afford us special light on the Government of God, and the sympathies of the SPIRIT of CHRIST with His people. This, in the first instance, has the Jews for its object

and centre of display. Still, in making allowance for the difference of their state and ours, and of the relationship of a people with JEHOVAH, and children with a FATHER, God's ways in Government apply to us Christians also. It is not the highest ground on which a Christian is viewed, for that is heavenly, but it is a most important and interesting one, and brings out all the tenderest display of Divine care, the care of Him who counts the very hairs of our head, and the seriousness and vigilance required in walking before God, who never swerves from His holy ways, who is not mocked, though all be the ministration of His grace for perfecting us according to these ways before Him. Of this application of the Government of God to the *Christian's* ways, the Epistles of Peter are more especially the witness. See for example, I. Peter i. 17; iii. 10—15, and the spirit and tenor of the whole Epistle. This Government, in the second Epistle, is carried on to the consummation of all things. The first is more the Government of the righteous, the second the judgment of the wicked, though that judgment, as closing the power of evil and the deliverance of the just, be alluded to in the first also. He was the Apostle of the circumcision, and this subject came specially under his eye in teaching.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. Will you explain the "rest" of Heb. iv? Is it a present or future thing?

A. The rest here spoken of is *God's* rest. "If they shall enter into *My* rest." This decides it to be future. For the present the LORD's words apply: "My Father *worketh* hitherto and I work." They were charging them with breaking the Sabbath. His answer is as it were, "God keeps no Sabbath yet. Sin has come in unto His first creation rest, and now He is at work until all things are again according to His mind. He cannot rest with such a scene as this before His eyes." The Millenium even, is God's last work day, not His rest, but a transition state, although it may be true that as even before that comes, and as soon as the saints are taken up to Heaven, the *Heavenly* places are set in order, and Satan cast out. (see Rev. xii.) His rest may be said to have begun there.

But it is God's rest, that we who believe enter. It is not said "*have* entered," but "*do* enter," and "let us *labour* therefore to enter into that rest," shewing it is a future thing,

because, as the same chapter tells us, "he that *is* entered into His rest has ceased from his own works, as GOD did from His." Now that is not so assuredly while we are "labouring" to enter in. No doubt there is a present rest, *while* labouring such as the LORD speaks of where He says, that in taking His easy yoke and light burden, we shall find rest for our souls, but that is quite another thing,—a rest *in* labouring, not from labour, the rest of a broken will and a heart that sees God upon the throne, and our Father.

No doubt too there is a rest of conscience in the knowledge that the blood of JESUS has answered for us as to our sins before God; but an apostle could not tell us as Christians to labour to enter into *that*. Nor is that *God's* rest. But this is one we are to share with Him when the sun that has now made Him a worker, shall be gone from off the scene into which it has intruded, and a new creation satisfy for ever the heart of its Creator. To that we press forward with joy and hope.

"FRAGMENTS GATHERED UP."

THE love of GOD is the source from which redemption flows. The perfect sacrifice of CHRIST is the channel through which it flows. Faith wrought in the soul by the HOLY SPIRIT, is the power of enjoyment; and everlasting life, known and experienced, *now*, is the result. (*John* iii, 16.)

THE Gospel is not producing a happy world, or spreading out a garden of Eden. It proposes no such thing, but to take *out* of the world a people, a Heavenly people, for CHRIST. But the presence of the LORD will make a happy world bye and bye, when that presence can righteously return unto it.

POETRY.

"THE END IS NEAR."

Clouds of darkness gathering o'er us,
 Awful tidings with them bear;
 Scenes of misery spread before us—
 Dearth, and pestilence, and war;
 All in one loud, piercing chorus,
 Tell us that *the end is near*.

Hearts of men within them falling,
 For the coming woes they fear;

All their efforts unavailing—
 No propitious signs appear ;
 Sin increasing—crime prevailing,
 Tell us that *the end is near*.

Selfishness in all abounding ;
 Gold the idol everywhere,
 Worshipp'd by a host, confounding
 Gold for all that's good or fair ;
 Crowds the mammon god surrounding,
 Tell us that *the end is near*.

Formal godliness increasing,
 Power denied, and forms held dear ;
 CHRIST and fashion coalescing,
 Forming now the character :
 Rites so popular and pleasing,
 Tell us that *the end is near*.

Lawlessness so vastly spreading,
 Void of Reverence, awe, or fear ;
 Sacred things beneath it treading,
 Stamp'd with God's own signature ;
 Never once His vengeance dreading—
 Tell us that *the end is near*.

War, that heaviest curse of nations,
 Running on its dread career ;
 While the mass its desolations
 Listless, or applauding, hear ;
 War, with its abominations,
 Tell us that *the end is near*.

Saints of GOD, all evil hating,
 Faithful to the name they bear ;
 For their coming SAVIOUR waiting,
 To be caught up in the air,
 Hence their rest and blessing dating,
 Tell us that *the end is near*.

Sinner, wouldst thou in the glory
 Of that " cloudless morning " share ?
 Wouldst thou have *this* hope before thee ?
 Wear the crown saints then will wear ?
 O believe redemption's story ;
 Look to CHRIST ! *the end is near !*

Let not earth, thy thoughts engrossing,
 Cheat thee of that portion fair !
 Look to CHRIST ! on *Him* reposing,
 Thou shalt happy be, nor fear !
 Sinner, haste ! the day is closing ;
 Look to CHRIST ! *the end is near !*

“ONLY BELIEVE.”

How encouraging are the invitations in the Bible to come to CHRIST and be saved! We read of some who came, who doubted His *willingness*, but believed in His *power*; of others who doubted His *power*, but reposed in His *willingness*. We read of some who asked *earnestly*, and of others who *never uttered* a word, but only *touched* the hem of His garment. We read of the *bold* and the *timid*: the *little faith* and the *strong*. Yet *all* had their need supplied, *none* were sent empty away. And what do all these varied and expressive figures teach us? Just this—that it was not *the way* in which they came that was of any moment: it was that *they came*, and came to *Jesus*. Their *believing* was not what it ought to have been: *Their coming* was not as it ought to have been; all was faulty: yet *Jesus* sent *none* away.

Yet how often do we hear people say—“I am afraid I have not *come*, or *believed*, or *asked* as I *ought*.” This is quite true, all is faulty. But it is not your *coming* rightly, or *believing* rightly, or *asking* rightly that saves you. It is *JESUS—JESUS* only. You are making a Saviour of *these* instead of *CHRIST*. The *LORD* says,—“He that believeth on *Me* hath everlasting life.” Look not at these, but at *CHRIST* and believe. “ONLY BELIEVE.”

But you say, “I do believe, yet I cannot *feel* that my sins are forgiven, and that I have eternal life.” Now you are making a Saviour of your *feelings*. You would *believe* what *GOD* says if you could only *feel*. Does not this show that you do *not* believe? The *LORD JESUS* does not say, if you *feel* it you have everlasting life, but if you *believe* it. Here is your stumbling-block: you do not believe *Him*. If you would only *believe* first, you would *feel* afterwards: this is *God’s* way. You want to *feel* first then you will *believe*: this is *your own* way. You will never have peace till you reverse the order. “ONLY BELIEVE.”

“But I cannot believe that I have *now* eternal life, because I *have been*, and I *am* such a sinner.” “*CHRIST JESUS* came into the world to *save sinners*.” It is just because you *are* a sinner that He died for you. Your sinfulness is your *title* to the Saviour’s mercy. You could have no claim whatever to eternal life, if you were *not* what you are—a sinner. Perhaps you think within yourself, “Well, if I were only *better* than I am, I could believe it.” You would be more pleased with *yourself* if you were *better*. Is not this self-righteousness? *GOD’S* way is to make you *displeased* with *yourself*, in order that looking

away from yourself to JESUS you may be *pleased only with Him*. "ONLY BELIEVE."

"But my faith, my prayers, my love, my holiness, how cold, how sinful they are!" You wish they were better don't you?

Now honestly ask your own heart, *why* do I wish this? "Why, if they were *better*, I should be much more *satisfied* with myself." Oh, what self-righteousness! God's design all through life is to make you more *dissatisfied* with yourself, and more satisfied with CHRIST and His work *for you*. It is this ever-deepening sense of your own sinfulness that will *alone* drive you out of yourself to look at JESUS. The more sinful you see *yourself* to be, the more precious will CHRIST appear; the less precious CHRIST appears, the more will you become satisfied with *yourself*. Look to JESUS. "Only believe."

Perhaps you say in despair, "What am I to do? I have not peace." Do nothing: "only believe," CHRIST has *done* all. He has *done* the work of salvation, and *done* it for *you*. "Only believe." A father sends a letter full of good news to his child. What will make you glad and happy? Simply *believing* it. Salvation does not consist in *feeling* certain influences on the soul, but in *believing* the SPIRIT'S testimony of CHRIST in the word of GOD. It is the SPIRIT of GOD shewing to the soul the finished work of the LORD JESUS.

But is it not *presumption* for any man to say, "that the Blood of JESUS CHRIST cleanseth from all sin," to say, in other words, that he stands before GOD free from every charge of sin? A man is not called *presumptuous*, because, when GOD tells him the world was drowned by a flood, he *believes* it; and yet, if a man *on the same testimony* believes that he has the pardon of his *sins*, and acknowledges it, he is called *presumptuous*! Is not this inconsistent?

In both cases it is simply the testimony of GOD'S word. "Only *believe*" that testimony, and you *have* eternal life. Remember, however, this is no mere head knowledge. Thousands there are all around you who have this *intellectual* belief and are still *unbelievers*. "The devils believe and tremble"; and their *intellectual* belief is no better. It is the work of the SPIRIT of GOD—of Him only. He *goes before* the LORD in every case of *real* conversion to GOD, to prepare His way. He first makes the heart dissatisfied with itself. He creates a desire to *come* to JESUS, to *believe*, to pray to GOD, and to *strive* after holiness. Then He makes that heart dissatisfied with its coming, its believing, its praying, and its striving, until it sees no goodness in any of them. Thus does the SPIRIT

of God take from under the soul every prop on which it would lean. Then He presents JESUS' toil; His finished work for it; His love to *preserve* it to the end. And all this without anything in the sinner to merit it. Thus by turning the eye away from *itself* to JESUS, does He bring peace to the soul. And the *first* word as well as the *last* which the SPIRIT of GOD utters to that soul, the echo of which is to ring in its ears for ever, is “Look away from yourself unto JESUS—to JESUS only.”

Perhaps you say, “I do believe all my salvation is in the finished work of JESUS, and in that alone, but still I am not happy. I have not peace with God.” Beware, my dear friend, of making a Saviour of your *feelings* instead of CHRIST. You may do this *unconsciously*. Remember always to distinguish between the *ground* of peace and the *realizing* of that peace. If you have renounced all hope of salvation in yourself and your soul is really trusting to the finished work of JESUS alone for it, then you *have* that peace. CHRIST'S *work on the Cross* has made peace with God, and made it for *you*. It is done, and done for *you*. You may not *enjoy* (because in truth, you do not fully *believe*) what CHRIST has done for you: but the *enjoyment* of salvation is one thing, and salvation itself quite another. The *latter*, the salvation, you have: the *former* you at the moment have not. CHRIST'S *work* has done the one, your faith in that has not yet done the other. CHRIST'S *work* gives you peace with God, your belief in that work gives you the *enjoyment* of that peace. Remember this distinction, and never confound the two things.

But you ask, perhaps, “What do you mean by *belief*, in that work?” I mean, believing what God has said about it. Belief in the work of CHRIST is no mystified thing. It means simply, believing *what God says in the Bible about it*. Let us see if you believe that. It is written, “He hath *made* peace through the blood of His Cross.” This CHRIST has *done* for all those who like you are trusting in Him. Do you believe *this*? Do you believe that CHRIST by His one offering, once offered, has made your peace with God? He *has* done so, therefore you are *safe*. You do not *fully* believe that He has done so, therefore you are not enjoying the truth—you are not happy. CHRIST'S *work* has saved you, for GOD says so. *Believe* what He says, and you will be happy.

And what a motive you have for doing this. God says He is satisfied with what CHRIST *has done* for you, and why should you not be satisfied with it too. If God is satisfied, is not that

all you want? He tells you over and over again in His word that He is satisfied—Oh, believe what He says. Be you satisfied with it too. Believe what He says when He tells you this, and you will then have the *enjoyment* of salvation, as well as salvation itself. “Only believe.”

REVELATIONS II., III.

A FEW thoughts may not be without their use just now, upon a portion of the Word, concerning which much that is speculative exists, whilst to get at the mind of God about it is of the utmost importance. For those who have no fuller light upon it, a brief sketch is proposed of the main features of these striking chapters. Only outlines will be touched upon, leaving the filling in of details to the reader, under the blessed guidance of that Spirit which we have received, and which “searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God,” and is here to lead us into all truth.

The first point of importance to note is, what indeed is plainly evident, that this book is the record of the final dealings of God with man, and, therefore, the main subject of it is judgment. But ending in blessing for those who are the subjects of His grace, as God's judgments always do, and consequently we have at the close, the Heavenly City and the new heavens and earth. But it is the dealings of God with things here, according to His own true estimate of them, Who alone judges righteously.

It is a marvellous proof of the place of confidence into which the Church has been introduced, that to it should have been communicated the history of God's dealings with men and things on earth, events nearly all of which will transpire after that Church shall have been removed from the scene altogether. It is like God's saying of Abraham, the friend of God, “Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I do.” He would tell him not only of the blessing in store for himself and his seed, but of His purposed dealings with Sodom. We, too, are friends—“henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends”—and so He has given us the history of the judgment of the world, although it is not that which immediately concerns ourselves.

If my reader will turn for a moment to chap. i., 19, he will find a clue to the division of the book, which will help to the understanding of the chapters before us. John was told to

write "the things which he *had seen*," that is the vision of the Son of Man in His character of judge, "and the things *which are*," or the judgment of the Church on earth as a light-bearer in the world, and "the things which shall be *hereafter*," or more literally "*after these*," where exactly the same words are used as in chap. iv., 1. "I will show thee things which shall be *hereafter*," or "*after these*." Thus the book, if we except the vision of the person of the Son of Man in chap. i. is divided into two main parts (of course there are many important subdivisions) as regards the subject of His dealings; first the Church as His light-bearer in the world, in chapters ii. and iii., and then the world in the following chapters, in which of course we have the various parties dealt with, specified in their proper places.

Difficulties may occur to some in the way of such a division, who have been accustomed to look at the seals of the book as having been already broken, and up to a certain point fulfilled in the history of Christianity. But such a thought is untenable if we look at things with an unprejudiced mind, and give the matter due attention. I would ask my reader then, to consider how everything God has made known of His ways, seems to conflict with such an idea. In the first place, if so many of the judgments have passed, as some would have us believe, they have done so comparatively unnoticed, and why may not the rest be the same, and thus the reality of those judgments is greatly enfeebled. Another thing is, that God's people—those in relationship with Himself—are called to act in harmony with His mind, so that if God were judging now (and it is unquestionably His judgment that Revelations unfolds), we should have to be dealing in judgment with His enemies, or else be acting at variance with His dealings. Now, those who form the Church, this present dispensation—have been called out of the world to be the witnesses to God's *grace*. They are to be "epistles of CHRIST, known and read of all men." Did CHRIST act in judgment when here? Surely not, but in the fullest grace to men; even His bitterest enemies in their attacks on Him failed to call forth the judgment they deserved. To be His epistles we must do likewise. A Jew, under law, when GOD was demanding righteousness from man, at a time and with a people (Israel) when righteousness in government was in question, was to act in judgment towards the enemies of GOD, and, indeed, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" was what the law allowed among themselves. But when CHRIST came, "the only begotten of the

FATHER, full of *grace* and truth," all was changed in this respect, CHRIST the perfect witness to, and expression of, the fulness of GOD'S *grace* to sinful man, would not take up judgment, and in vain men sought to provoke Him to it: "I came not to judge but to save" was the constant tenor of His testimony; and when John would "call down fire from heaven" upon those who received them not, "even as Elias did," he was met by, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of," and again when Peter, in the garden, at the LORD'S betrayal would defend His Master, that Master would remedy the mischief Peter's intemperate spirit had occasioned, and rebuke the one who had endangered the testimony to *grace*, with "Put up the sword into its sheath, for they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." In a word, "I say unto you that ye resist not evil," is the spirit inculcated by the LORD JESUS with His disciples, and that because it was the character of GOD'S ways now with man. And so it is while the Church is here, and the HOLY GHOST is still witnessing to an open door for ruined, guilty man, by the Cross of CHRIST, out of this dark and evil world, while judgment is deferred.

But the time will come when GOD will take up judgment, and His power will deal with those His *grace* has failed to soften and break down, and He who has so long borne in patience with men's ungodly ways and speeches, will begin His "strange work." When He does this, the people who have been the recipients of His *grace*, and who are the witnesses to the character in which GOD is acting now, will be removed from the scene He is about to deal with, and Israel, His ancient people taken up again, and Jerusalem made the centre, from, or in connection with which, GOD judges, and therefore in the second part of Rev., "the things that shall be after these," we have mention of Israel, and the nations and the holy city, &c., again showing who are the actors on the scene, and GOD'S judgments are abroad in the earth, Gentiles are dealt with, and the time of "Jacob's trouble" has come, for the sin of ejecting MESSIAH, and out of which he will be saved. Israel will rightly cry for vengeance on their enemies, when owned by GOD again as His people, at a time when GOD is going to judge the earth. We, if we know "what manner of spirit we are of," shall rather say, "LORD, lay not their sin to their charge."

But perhaps another point will make this plainer, and that is, that the judgment of the seven churches is left out-side the seven sealed book, and is given before any mention whatever

is made of it, which is in chap. v., and that because the setting aside of the Church as the vessel of God's testimony, takes place before He deals with the world in judgment, and John called up to Heaven to see the things which shall be "after these," is just a type of the saints taken up there as in Thess. iv., 16, 17, and of those witnessing the opening of the seals, and the sounding of the trumpets, and pouring out of the vials of God's wrath. And so we have twenty-four thrones around the throne of judgment, and twenty-four crowned elders sitting on them unmoved amidst the judgment—the saints of the first resurrection, beholding the Lamb open the seals of that book which contains the record of the setting aside of the dominion and rule of Satan, and man under him in rebellion against God, in order to the bringing in the everlasting Kingdom of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, and the eternal rest of the new creation, and the things that "God has prepared for them that love Him." But the saints of this dispensation who have shared the rejection of the LORD JESUS, are associated with Him in every act of judgment too; "if we suffer with Him we shall also reign." "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world," says the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, and the promise of the LORD JESUS is, "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, and not denied My name, I will keep thee from the hour of temptation which is to come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

This is all too in God's order, according to what is said, 1 Pet. iv, 17, that judgment must begin at the house of God, before it goes on to the world. So God deals with what is now His house. He takes up what is in the nearest relationship to Himself, just to express His judgment about it. The Church is His house, composed of all who are in the profession of Christianity, whether true or false. As such, it is seen in Rev. ii., iii. It is only in that character it is the subject of judgment, and not as the body of CHRIST, united by the HOLY GHOST to the exalted Man in Heaven, "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones," and as to its place, already there in Him. So that what is given of it in these chapters, only goes so far as the rejection of it as His witness, or light bearer on earth, as having failed, like everything else committed to man in responsibility, by His spueing it out of His mouth, as nauseous to Him on account of its luke-warmness. The threats that are made, are only threats, and not the details of the judgment of the unfaithful portion, which comes in under the seals.

But to come to the chapters which give the record of CHRIST'S judgment of "the things *which are*," we find in them the moral history of the Church as seen on earth, as the vessel of God's testimony to the world—a light bearer, as symbolized in the seven golden candlesticks—what should have been a witness of the love and grace and holiness of God, as known in CHRIST.

Had the Church kept its place, no such testimony could have been given to it as we have before us. But declension early came in, man proving thus his utter inability to hold the place God put him in, or to "continue in God's goodness." As early as Paul's day, the Corinthians had fallen into carnality and shameful excesses of all sorts; the Galatians had added the law to grace, and thus spoiled both; the Colossians had allowed philosophy and gnosticism to lead them from the sufficiency of CHRIST, and in 1 Timothy, the apostle has to bewail the backsliding of heart in those among whom he had laboured so faithfully, "all they that are in Asia," (the locality of these seven Churches) "are turned away from me." Not only Paul, but John, Peter, and Jude, alike concur in the testimony as to the setting in of the last days, and "many anti-Christ," "false teachers privily bringing in damnable heresies, even denying the LORD that bought them," "certain men crept in unawares . . . ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only LORD GOD, and our LORD JESUS CHRIST," tells the sad tale of the failure of those upon whom God had spent His love so fully, to answer to His mind, and maintain the bright witness He looked for. It is remarkable how many of the epistles were written to meet some particular form of evil current. And it is a mercy that he who values God's guidance and delights in His will, will be grateful for, that all these forms of evil, which now have produced their ripened fruits, were already budding in the apostles' days, that we, upon whom the "ends of the world are come," might be in no uncertainty as to how God would have us order our ways, but if "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," God has not left His people without resource, and "all scripture given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

(To be continued.)

OUR BODIES.

"Know ye not that your bodies are the members of CHRIST?"

"Know ye not that your body is the temple of the HOLY SPIRIT?"
1 Cor. vi.

It is impossible to overrate the importance of the doctrine of the SOUL in life and death, or the place it supremely holds as being the seat of the moral feelings, and that in which GOD is known, feared and loved. It is the centre and spring of our existence as responsible creatures, and separates man immeasurably from the animal creation around him, as giving him a personal existence that *never* can cease, and remains untouched whether the soul be with or without the body. It is not our purpose at this moment, to elaborate this subject, especially reasonable and healthful for Christians as this might be, but to take up briefly as the LORD shall enable, the question brought before us by the Scriptures at the head of this paper.

We have a growing conviction from what we see, and hear, and read, that the place which the *body* holds in the ways and purposes of GOD, is greatly overlooked. The minds of believers are little exercised, in a divine way, as to their bodies. The important part the body now plays, in what may be here justly termed *religion*, is greatly overlooked, and with it the blessings, and grave responsibilities that attach to it. The future of the body is but dimly, to say the least, a hope of the heart, and as a consequence, resurrection and glory are little pressed on to. "The prize of the mark of our high calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS," so slightly attracts the heart, as being ever brightly before it as the object of contemplation, that the place *the body* has in connection with our blessing *in Christ*, but feebly influences the soul.

How different was it with the apostle Paul, who strained every nerve, "if by any means," says he, "I might attain unto the *resurrection* from among the dead," and "our conversation is in Heaven from whence also we look for the SAVIOUR the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who shall change our *body* of humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto His body of glory." The proper *hope* of the Christian is to be with CHRIST and like Him, in a glorified body. This will take place when CHRIST comes to raise the dead and change the living (1 Thes. iv). We have *now* the earnest of this blessing by the Spirit, and the effect of this is, "we *groan* within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. viii, 23).

The body of the believer *will* be redeemed by *power*, because it *has been* redeemed by *blood*. It has been "bought with a price," "the precious blood of CHRIST," and upon this ground the believer is to glorify God in his body, "which is God's." As believers, for our blessing and His glory, we are God's by *redemption*; on the ground of *creation*, we are lost and ruined. In virtue of *redemption*, we are recovered to God and blessing, in a new standing, outside Adam and the flesh. We are *in CHRIST* raised up from the dead, the beginning of a *new* creation, and the HOLY GHOST dwells in us, and unites us to CHRIST, so that our *bodies* are His members.

It is not because of our *practical* holiness that we are God's; that the HOLY GHOST dwells in our bodies; and that our bodies are the members of CHRIST. These three conditions are all three equally and exclusively in virtue of redemption, and we enter under the blood of sprinkling by faith. We cannot be too simple in apprehending that our entire standing before God is based solely upon the *blood* of CHRIST. Our practical state is the outflow of our actual standing, and here all is redemption and grace. Unless the soul be at rest before God as to this, all exhortations to holiness and walk lead into legality and distress.

Now the question of our *bodies* does intimately connect itself with *practical* holiness and communion. Hence the necessity for the heart to be *established in grace* while dealing with the details of conduct that this subject involves. In the two Scriptures before us, the Apostle is dealing most searchingly with the conscience as to the *use* we make of our bodies, and founds his exhortations upon two solemn but blessed facts concerning us as believers: that our bodies are the members of CHRIST, and temples of the HOLY GHOST. Nothing can alter these facts, for they are founded on the blood of the Cross, and the conscience consequently is at perfect peace before God, while the heart weighs the solemn considerations they involve.

We desire to bring ourselves and our readers before God in the searching light of these two momentous questions: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of CHRIST?" "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the HOLY GHOST?" The simple and penetrating thought presented to the mind here is that we are to use our bodies for that *only* for which CHRIST used His when on earth, and in which the HOLY GHOST can be the power.

. Is this the unvarying, two-fold light in which we view the

practical use of our bodies? Are our consciences exercised to do *nothing* with them in which CHRIST and the HOLY GHOST cannot have their part? And do we constantly humble ourselves before God in confession when we find it is not so, and seek earnestly for grace to keep our bodies under, and use them *exclusively* for God's glory? It is vain for us to talk of our knowledge and communion, while we are knowingly using our bodies for purposes that Scripture condemns, and in which we well know CHRIST and the HOLY GHOST can have no participation. It is all delusion, or worse. The knowledge that puffs up, but does not edify.

Let us all search ourselves before God, and *then* let us go up to Bethel and sacrifice our peace-offerings of praise and thanksgiving. Let us keep the feast with the *unleavened* bread of sincerity and truth. Let us remember our LORD, and show forth His death in *holiness*, as well as grace. And can this be the case while our bodies are defiled by unholy practices, if not of gross sin, at least of carnal allowances of appetite and variety.

As Christians we "have put on CHRIST," and, because this is so, are abidingly exhorted to put on *practically* "the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and make not provisions for the flesh, to fulfil the lust thereof" (Rom. xiii. 14). Such an exhortation strikes at the root of unhallowed and eager pursuit after gain that, alas, so characterizes real Christians even. The flesh is not looked at as a *judged* thing in God's sight, and the body is not held to be exclusively the member of CHRIST, and the temple of the HOLY GHOST. The heart and conscience have not taken proper Christian ground, and consequently there is not contentment "with such things as we have," and the limitations of God's present care for the body are not rested in. *More* than "food and raiment" is sought after, and the tastes and appetites of the *body*, as a result, regulate the life instead of CHRIST, who, having been "put on," should alone be considered. The eye is not single, hence the whole body is not full of light, and the HOLY GHOST being grieved, there is little joy and peace in believing, and little of the *aboundings* of hope through His energy.

If we are to *enjoy* our *risen* life in CHRIST, and *walk* with God, we must be peremptory with ourselves and mortify our "members which are on the earth" (Col. iii. 5). Old habits which belonged to us in our ungodliness must be disallowed, and the *body* kept under. We must *bear about in the body* "the dying of the LORD JESUS, that the life also of JESUS

may be manifested in our bodies" (2 Cor. iv. 10). It is in this way only that our bodies can be *practically* the members of CHRIST and temples of the HOLY GHOST.

We would especially bring these truths to bear upon the consciences of our brethren in CHRIST who use tobacco, and ask them if they think that it is the *life of* CHRIST in them, that uses their bodies as His members, in chewing and smoking this vile weed? Are those who look upon them, while their mouth's pour forth volumes of smoke and expectorate streams of tobacco juice, to be expected to consider these as evidences of the indwelling of the HOLY GHOST, and that it is *thus* He testifies His presence in the body as His temple? And if the precious blood of CHRIST be known in the conscience, in its sheltering value from judgment and wrath to come, are such practices to be regarded as some of the purposes for which the body is by that same blood bought, and that God is being thus glorified? We have been at a loss to understand, how any Christian with a conscience at all exercised towards God to be without offence, can in any way use tobacco, and yet read such Scriptures as we now refer to. We believe in God's sight the confirmed use of tobacco is on a par with the habitual drinking of ardent spirits. The effects of tobacco and ardent spirits are quite analagous, and the victims of the one, are as much *enslaved* to the evil lust they indulge in, as the other. They are both essentially ungodly, fleshly, and worldly habits. Both producing morbid excitement of the body, they are fit companions one for the other, and equally *evil* in God's sight, what ever they may be in our's. We are called upon to follow righteousness, faith, peace, charity with them that call upon the LORD out of a pure heart (ii. Tim. ii. 22.) and it is a question with some, who feel for the LORD's glory in their *associations*, and we believe rightly, how far it is according to the LORD's will that they should have fellowship at the LORD's table, with those who persistently, and in spite of godly remonstrance, indulge in this vice. "Be not deceived," says the Apostle, "evil communications corrupt good manners," and he calls upon us to "awake to righteousness and sin not," to "have *no* fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them."

Our consideration whether for individual or collective walk, is to be, not what suits oneself or others, but what suits CHRIST and the HOLY GHOST. Our communion at the LORD's table is *founded* upon redemption, and in the blood which "cleanseth from all sin," but it is *maintained practically* in holiness

according to that in which CHRIST and the HOLY GHOST can have fellowship. The LORD give us grace *in all things* to judge ourselves according to this standard, and to find our associations *alone* where this standard is *practically* maintained.

SOME CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF THE INSPIRED BOOKS.

GENESIS.

(Continued from page 205. Vol. I.)

DID I want an example of what I have affirmed, of the unchanging value of the literal aspect of these Old Testament books, and, at the same time, of the greatly higher character of their typical teaching. I need not go beyond the Book of Genesis to find one. The earth on which we tread begins with Genesis. We learn there how it came as Divine workmanship fresh from the hand of God. We learn the history of the blight that fell upon it, and how the world through which we pass began, not in Eden, but as the workmanship of one driven out from God, a murderer, seeking rest where God had branded him a fugitive, relief from an uneasy conscience, and satisfaction for an empty heart in those appliances of civilization, and those arts and sciences with which men are still essaying the same vain task.

We learn, too, in how short a time the world that then was, reached the limit of Divine forbearance, and how a new world (new in age, but not in character) began with Noah's family beyond the flood. We find a fresh experiment then with man in human government, man made his brother's keeper: the result, weakness which cannot bridle, as Noah, or self-will as Nimrod, in despotic tyranny. Then comes Babel, a confederacy of selfish interests without God, which breaks up under His judgment, and nations form out of divided tongues.

There you have the present shape of things. Details there are not, nor will the Divine historian pursue the general history further. The record of the world serves but as it were as a preface to the detailed story of one family of faith.

It is a new scene that we now get into and other lessons that we learn in the tents of the patriarchs. There is this grand distinction between what you have in Genesis and what most resembles it in the other Old Testament histories. It is the *age before law*. God is neither on Mount Sinai nor behind the veil of the holiest. This is a very marked and dis-

tinguishing characteristic of the book. It is an exception to the character of nearly the whole of the Old Testament. Not that this is seen in any positive revelation. "Life and incorruption" are not "brought to light." Heaven is not opened. But it is seen in the style and manner of the Divine approaches to man. God is "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob." There is a character of familiar intimacy in His intercourse with man, that you get nowhere else in the Old Testament. He comes down to talk with Abraham his *friend*. As one has well said: "Whether He communicates His mind, or manifests His presence, it is after the same pattern. He does not employ prophets, but personally makes His pleasure known. It may be in a dream, or by a voice, as well as by a personal manifestation; but still it is *Himself*. And even if angels are employed, they are rather His *companions* than His *messengers*." And man answers this in measures. There is not the same dread of the Divine Presence. Poor, crippled Jacob even prevails over the angel, and will not let him go until he blesses.

In this way what John's Gospel is to the evangelic histories, Genesis is very much to the Pentateuch. But while John fully *closes* the Gospel, Genesis as fully *opens* the Old Testament books. Genesis begins in the light, before the cloud of law has intervened to darken it, and the veil has dropped over the glory. John leaves you in the full sunshine after the cloud has finally passed away. But the gleam of light in Genesis, though thus transient, is full of blessing. The fruit ripened in it remains, and its clusters hang over the wall. A whole cluster the Apostle plucks when he lays hold of the record of Abraham's faith and of the attached promise, in Gal. iii., and insists upon the importance of its being "430 years *before* the law." Yes, four hundred and thirty years before Sinai, God had given assurance of the grace of which the Gospel is now the full declaration. God's grace was before law. He was showing His own heart to man before ever He had questioned the dark secrets of man's heart. He who knew them all. He has but now returned to His first, His eternal thoughts of loving mercy, the law only being witness of man's need of it, and what true mercy indeed it is.

I cannot pursue these lessons in any detail. My object is rather to get the reader to pursue them for himself. I may say, however, that in the age before law, necessarily, we do not find the same deep estimate of sin. The plough-share of law has not yet been driven through the conscience. The *first*

thing for the soul is here, first: child-like confidence in God, if with no deep self-judgment. There is neither sin nor trespass-offering. On the other hand, "sanctification" is not so much as named. The fruits of life are brought forth with spontaneous freeness, but there is little "*girdle for the loins.*" Hence as there is not the proper purification of the vessel, so there is little of service, little of the spirit of self-sacrifice and devotedness to others. Very like the happy days of childhood are these days of Genesis, before the cares and furrows and the sterner purpose of the man have come. While in John we have what we know but too scantily now, but what one day shall be ours, the fresh joy of childhood, with manhood's experience, and the reaped wealth of toilsome years.

But I must turn now to the typical import of the book, upon which I shall have the more to dwell, because it is not what lies upon the surface of the book.

Genesis is thus (again like John, the parallel with which is most instructive) the Book of *Creation* and of *Life*. With this all begins. Counsels of God there were before, of course, but these it has been His mind to give us gradually developed, as fulfilled and elaborated by the Divine Works. Thus Genesis is the suited and necessary beginning to all else. Typically it is the picture of a "Life" which is not, however, the beginning of human existence. There is a life which went before, and which, wrecked and ruined, still survives—a Cain-life, away from God, which can be educated, civilized, religious, after its own fashion, but which "cannot please God"—an elder life thus, which has to give place to the younger, according to the constant law of Genesis. This makes it a book of contrasts: Cain with Abel; Ishmael with Isaac; Esau with Jacob; in a somewhat different line, even Lot with Abraham. The tree is tested by its fruit, and you have God's classification of them, "every one after its kind." Thus it is the book, too, of experiences, which oft, alas, of failure, ever of weakness, are yet needed and profitable.

This is the first aspect of the types of Genesis. Through this there ever and anon breaks out a gleam of what God has been doing from the beginning in the midst of a ruined earth, to bring it as it is yet to be brought into the glory of new creation. The dispensations (as we may style these dealings with man at large) find thus their representation in the book, although the *individual* line of truth seems the thread that connects the separate parts of it together, as it does also the books themselves, in their various meanings of "Life," "Re-

demption," "Sanctification," &c., successively the central truths, as I have said, of these historical books.

But the link between these two lines of truth is not far to find, for human nature is the soil in which God has undertaken to work, and His dispensations are but His dealings with man at large, in view of what he is, both at large and individually, for what he is in the mass he is individually. Thus, in Rom. v. 6, the "due time" of CHRIST'S death was dispensationally such, the application the Apostle makes of it is an individual one.

Genesis, looked at in its typical character, divides into eight parts: seven biographies and a prefatory account of creation. The account of creation, which occupies the first two chapters, speaks, in mystery, of *new* creation, the complete blessedness of which is reached, both for the individual and for the mass of those brought into it, by successive steps, which answer to the six days' work, as upon the large scale do the different dispensations.

You have first (v. 1) a primeval creation, then (v. 2) a fall; first, heaven and earth under order, then "chaos"—emptiness, darkness and a "deep." Then, as in new birth, the SPIRIT and the Word begin the work; the light breaks in and the state of ruin is disclosed. Then a "heaven" is formed again, and the new attraction draws up and purifies the water from beneath: beautiful picture of a soul drawn Heavenward, though yet only drawn, not satisfied or made fruitful. Then with "the third day" comes the power of resurrection, the dry ground comes up, the seas are gathered unto one place and bounded, just as, "risen with CHRIST," the old nature, though in us, gets its bound and is seen as what it is. Then the longed for fruit appears. Next in a heavenly scene, "a greater light to rule the day," CHRIST, full-orbed, beams upon the soul, which answers with reflected light, moonlike, feebly, changefully, yet truly. Then comes, in the fruitfulness of the yet barren waters, the story of the discipline of one brought to God, to whom all things work for good, even the sorrow of trial and struggle with flesh within and flesh without. The sixth day, again, it is not the waters but the *earth* produces, and the image of God is reached.

This is the individual application. Dispensationally, the first day is the age before the flood, the light let in, but no interference with the state of things. The second day speaks of human government, begun in Noah, waters (which are in this aspect men in Gentile lawlessness, comp. Isa. lvii., 20,

Rev. xvii. 15) separated from the waters and set in the heavens, but without present fruit. The third day, speaks of Israel separated from the Gentiles. The fourth day, of the Church with CHRIST, moon with sun in the heavens. The fifth, of the earth's discipline of tribulation after the Church is gone. The sixth of *Israel's* fruitfulness, and the rule in peace of the woman and the man. The seventh (all dispensations past) of GOD's eternal rest. Afterwards we have some points of detail, which I leave. We learn who this man and who this woman is (comp. Eph. v.), and Paradise, with its tree of life and river, carry us on to those blessed visions of Revelation, which, although we see them dimly, we love so well to see.

The lives that follow correspond in their typical meaning to the six days' work in a remarkable way, the third day even being divided into two, as if to give us seven stages (instead of six) to answer to the seven biographers.

Thus Adam gives us the same picture of ruin with the light let in upon it—"the entrance of Thy Word giveth light") that the first day does. Then in Abel (its very meaning "vapor") we have the same tale of powerless yearning after good, and the reality of evil, which the second day tells. Then in Noah, third in the series, as in the third day of creation, comes the type of resurrection power, when we pass consciously from the scene of judgment of the old man, to one secure in the sweet savour of accepted sacrifice. Then follows the fruit-bearing: Abraham's life, the practical result of the new place in a pilgrim-walk. Isaac, type of the Son and of the sons, answers to the heavenly scene of the fourth day. Jacob gives us "discipline," the lesson of the fifth. Lastly, the kingdom-glory of the sixth day finds its correspondence in the life of Joseph, in which the "image of GOD," CHRIST JESUS, is more fully seen than in any other.

(To be continued, if the LORD will.)

THE LAST MORNING.

"THE sun was shining upon Sodom when Lot entered into Zoar." No cloud dimmed the fair horizon of that terrible morning. No prelude of that coming storm awoke the city from its guilty slumber. All was as it had been—bright, beautiful, and at rest. "Likewise as it was in the days of Lot, even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed." The last morning shall dawn as fair as its predecessors. The same preparation will be made for pleasure and

for business, eating and drinking as usual; eager anxiety about buying and selling as usual, planting and building as usual, by men dreaming over the security of their earthly possessions; the domestic scene enlivened, as usual, by the same interchange of natural affection; each individual filled, as usual, with his own little prospects, and magnifying them into wondrous importance; the scholar, the statesman, the soldier, the divine, all busy as usual in their respective walks; the whole world smiling as usual with its activity, its interest and beauty—everything as it had been, when suddenly the heavens shall be rent asunder, and the Son of Man shall be seen descending! Thus shall *this* world be overtaken in its career of indifference and sin; “for when *they* shall say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape.”

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q.—What is the character of those called “dogs” in Phil. iii. 2. Is it the same as of those referred to in 2. Peter ii. 22.

A.—Those termed “dogs” in Phil. iii. 2, and against whom the Apostle warns the Phillipian Christians, were Judaizing teachers who were trying to call off their souls from CHRIST in Glory, by asserting the claims of Judaism over the hearts and consciences of saints as necessary to their blessing in connection with Christianity. They were religious corruptors, simple workers of wickedness; and only the *circumcision*—mere fleshly separatists outside GOD altogether, shameless, malicious, and contemptible. Such still is every thing that attempts to mix Christianity and Judaism, law and Gospel, ordinance and the Spirit. What truly separates to GOD from *all* evil is grace, and such as thus know GOD are the true circumcision. Peter, in the other passage referred to, speaks of those who having once been delivered from the world and evil, by the knowledge of the truth of the LORD and SAVIOUR, have in heart and practice, whilst still professing themselves Christians, gone back into the corruptions out of which for the time they had been delivered; such are like dogs returning to their vomit, and sows once washed, to their wallowing in the mire. In Phillipians it is fleshly righteousness and legal obedience that is in question, here it is Antinomianism—religious license and self-will; but both *alike* are corrupt, shameless, and wicked in the eyes of GOD. Many who would shrink with horror from the latter phase of evil, regard with tolerance, if not with

complacency the former. But "dogs" are "dogs" with God, and may we see as He sees, and equally abhor, Judaizing, as Antinomian principles.

Q. "WHAT form does a pastor's gift take?"

A. The pastor takes charge of those who have been, by the Evangelist, brought to CHRIST as His sheep. He should care for the sheep in every way, especially watching over them against Satan, that they may not get under his power, and feeding and nourishing them in the grace of God, that they may be enabled to follow CHRIST. The LORD, in committing His sheep to Peter, whose previous discipline and training in learning himself, the power of Satan, and the LORD's infinite grace, eminently qualified him for such an office, tells him to feed His lambs, to *shepherd* His sheep, and to *feed* his sheep. In *shepherding* them, he would have to watch that Satan introduced no false or corrupting teachings amongst them, to wash their feet by the Word, while *tenderly and graciously* telling them of their faults and inconsistencies; and where, through failure, they had come under the chastening hand of the LORD, to bear their sins on His own heart before God—in priestly intercession eating the sin-offering—that their souls might, through the grace of CHRIST, be restored to health and vigor. This last would mingle itself with feeding them upon CHRIST through the Word; thus making them, in peace and joy, to lie down in green pastures and beside still waters. It is Peter who, having fully exercised this office, gives direction to others, that it is not "as being lords over God's heritage, but as being *examples* to the flock" (1 Peter, v. 31), they are to exercise the pastor's office.

Q. "Should a Christian's mouth be closed in public testimony on account of his inconsistencies?"

A. We think it would be a very unseemly thing, and contrary to the mind of the LORD, while *continuing* in "inconsistencies," to be publicly ministering the Word to saints, or preaching the Gospel to the unconverted. The Apostle Paul speaks of "giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed" (2 Cor. vi. 3), and of having "renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by *manifestation* of the truth, commending ourselves to *every man's conscience* in the sight of God"

(2 Cor. iv. 2). After Peter was *converted*, he was to strengthen his brethen, and it was as being fully restored and cleansed, that he spoke as he did in Acts iv. 13, 14.

Q. "Is it necessary for the whole gathering in a place to have fellowship as to whether there should be a prayer-meeting weekly or not; or should those on whose heart the desire rests, meet together for prayer?"

A. For a public meeting for prayer called by the assembly, and on the ground of the assembly, there certainly should be the full fellowship of those meeting together in the LORD'S name. Where such a meeting is not unanimously felt to be desirable, those on whose heart the desire to meet for prayer rests, should meet in private, and leave the LORD thus to lead together those who are *agreed*, and they will find the promise of Matt. xviii. 19, made good to them.

"FRAGMENTS GATHERED UP."

The *hidden* things of GOD are as real as the *manifested*. The doings of the LORD in discipline of us are *open*; His pleadings for us are *secret*; one on earth, the other in Heaven—but both equally real. The life of CHRIST in Heaven for us measures and accompanies the life of a needy and defiled saint on earth. CHRIST is *hidden* in Heaven; and we are *manifestly* declared to be the epistles of JESUS CHRIST on earth.

IF we did but value what we have in CHRIST: if we but took account of our condition in relation to the LORD, and not in relation to *circumstances*, we should *always* be happy beyond expression—our joy would be full: but it is in *that* point we fail. We love *circumstances*; we live in the power of them too much, in the light of the LORD'S favour too little, and we are dull, and low, and half-hearted, were it not so with us, the journeys in company with the cloud, chequered as they are, would find us, and leave us, still a happy people. For it is *one* JESUS throughout, whether it be the day of the blood (Ex. xii), of the song (Ex. xv), or of the cloud (Ex. xiii): one and the same JESUS who was with us in the circumstances of human life, in the dying love of the Cross, in the life of intercession in Heaven, and who will give us His unchanged self in glory for ever."

SINCERITY AND TRUTH.

“ Ah ! sir, *sincerity* is a good thing, but *truth* is still better ! ” repeated frequently to me a young Parish Priest after having found liberty of soul. Nobly born, and son of one of high standing in the army, he had early received from his pious mother deep impressions concerning his soul. In the midst of his studies and travels, one thought above all others followed him, “ What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul ? ” Tormented unceasingly by this question, he made up his mind to devote himself to the service of the Church, not with the aim of finding therein that which would satisfy the ambition or the cupidity of the natural heart, but to obtain thereby the peace of his soul. He did not know that *peace* had been made on the cross by the blood of JESUS (Col. i., 20), and, consequently, according to the light he had, he set himself to *work out* his own peace with GOD.

The first time I saw him was at the house of a friend in N—. I was sitting in the front part of the room waiting to see my friend, and he was walking up and down slowly in the back part of the room. His lank form, his long face pale and thin, his entire being indicated suffering, and, without knowing why, I felt myself drawn to him. I remembered as if it were but yesterday, the agony of my own heart before knowing this eternal redemption which JESUS obtained for us by His own blood (Heb. ix.), and which is “ upon all them that believe ” (Rom. iii., 22), and I thought that perhaps he suffered from the same cause. At this moment my friend came down, and after some moments, begged me to excuse him : an important matter of business demanded him elsewhere. “ But wait a moment ! ” he said to me, “ I will introduce you to a young Spaniard ; he has just quitted the seminary, where he has been learning to be a Priest. You can, perhaps, be of use to him. ”

After the first commonplaces of introduction had passed, I at once asked him : “ Have you peace with God, my dear friend ? ”

“ Peace with God, ” said he. “ What do you mean by peace with God ? ”

“ It is the effect, ” said I to him, “ of the forgiveness of sins. It is the consciousness that would exist in the agonized spirit of an unfortunate criminal condemned to be guillotined, to whom a messenger comes suddenly, bringing this despatch

from the Emperor: 'All your crimes are forgiven you; go forth in peace!'"

"Then," replied he, "I have not peace with God, for I have never yet received this message from God. For nearly three years I have been imprisoned between four walls, exercising the greatest severities possible against myself. I have fasted, prayed, ill-treated my body, until I am reduced to what you see, but I have not yet received this message from God."

"You are a *sincere* man," I said to him; "you are not one of those religionists who affect a heavenly air, and within have nothing but lust and wickedness."

"How should I not be sincere, sir, when I know that it is **with** God himself I have to do. *Appearance*, you know, is **only** for *this* world. *Reality* is for eternity. A thousand times a fool is he who sees no farther than this world. For my part it is eternity that occupies me."

"Blessed be God! Blessed be God, my dear friend! This is the work of the HOLY SPIRIT. He has shown you the curse of the law of God against every breach of that law, according to Galatians iii., 10, 'cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them,' and as you are not a hypocrite, but know well that you are violating this law constantly, even in spite of yourself, you at once apply the curse to yourself, well-knowing in your conscience that you merit it."

"That is it exactly! You have just laid bare my heart; that is my state precisely. I see the just wrath of God against me, and I much desire to be able to appease or escape it. It was for this reason that I have left the place where I was, for I have seen a host of things there that wound my conscience."

Just here I took out my bible from my pocket, and opened it, saying to him, "read." He read the passage that the end of my finger pointed out, (Gal. iii., 13,) "*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*" Suddenly his languid eyes lit up. The message that he waited for from heaven to give him peace had come to him *through the WORD.*

"Do you understand now," said I to him, "why JESUS upon the CROSS must needs cry out, 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?'"

"It is clear, quite clear," replied he. "If CHRIST has been made a curse for me, in order to redeem me from the curse of

the law, it follows that He Himself sustained that curse. He thus becomes a substitute for me."

Exactly! a *substitute*. You cannot find a better word. Isaiah describes this admirably in that magnificent chapter which the Eunuch read as he was returning in his chariot. It is the 53d. Read it alone with God, and you will see if it will not make you jump for joy, like David did before the Ark of God. That ark, you know, contained the two tables of stone—that terrible law which condemned to death every man which sinned. But it also contained Aaron's rod—that *dead stick* which became *alive again*, having budded and brought forth almonds. That is to say, CHRIST, who "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25), or in other terms, that "grain of wheat which can not bear fruit unless it first die" (John xii. 24). It contained also the golden pot full of manna, that is to say, CHRIST, "the true Bread of Heaven," for the constant nourishment of the children of God. If Satan would frighten them by showing them that terrible law, they put him to flight by showing him the rod and the golden pot. At the Name of JESUS he flies, because he recognizes his Conqueror. You see that David could rejoice in view of such a type of JESUS and His word; and you, who have now the reality, what says *your heart*?

The heart of the young Priest was evidently quite overcome. A pardon so sudden, a salvation so sure and so free, almost frightened him; he could scarcely believe himself in his proper senses. He appeared afraid to wake himself up, lest he should find his anguish had been calmed only by a cruel dream—cruel because of its very sweetness.

It was not a dream. It was the *truth* which had set him at liberty, according to John viii. 32: "and you shall know the *truth*, and the *truth* shall make you free." This was the first of many interviews that we had together during the five months of my stay at N—. He used to come to my house of a morning, and we read together the Scriptures for full two hours. Each time his peace became more settled, and his expression of suffering gave place to one of profound rest, often exhibiting itself in joy.

One day he came and said to me, "I am quite confounded. I thought that *all* Protestants rejoiced in an accomplished salvation; but I hear them everywhere speaking as if they feared for their final salvation. They are exactly where I was; it seems to me at times, as if they lacked *sincerity*; for

if they were really sincere in believing as I do, that there remained nothing, come what might, to do, to enter Heaven, they could not be doing what I saw them doing."

"Ah!" my dear friend," I said to him, the natural heart of the Protestant is no better than that of the Papist. It is equally full of pride. Do you not see that before being assured of salvation upon a true foundation, we must see that we are fools, unrighteous, impious, utterly corrupt, lost entirely, and that it is "CHRIST *who unto us has been made of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption*"? (1 Cor. i. 31). You will recollect the case of the criminal, of whom I have spoken to you—suppose that he had been able to make his escape from his cell by climbing through the window, how satisfied he would have been with himself, would he not? trembling all the time, too, nevertheless. But when he is convinced that he can not escape, do what he will, and that he sees the great door open by the *grace* of the Emperor, behold him walk out with calmness into the street, without fear, but without pride, the heart humbled, but filled with love for his SAVIOUR and his MASTER.

"You see, my dear friend, that the salvation of JESUS CHRIST takes away from man all ground for him to glorify himself. It can but humble him in *thus* rendering him happy above all that words can express. This is why Protestants, like Catholics, whilst maintaining carefully the *name* of CHRIST as an excuse, have found a lot of things in which they can glorify themselves, and which hinder them from seeing CHRIST Himself, and as a consequence leave them always in fear. It is alone those who *see* CHRIST who can comprehend that word in Philip iv. 4: 'Rejoice in the LORD always.' Such have no more thirst, nor fear of death, and at the same time are filled with that love which constrains them to separate themselves from all that displeases the Master, and to give themselves up in all things to please Him. Naturally, those who do not see CHRIST, and who, as a consequence, do not know what *love* is, are only kept back from doing wrong by the just fear of the law."

"I see," said he; "it is man all over."

"Yes, man all over; and this is why it is written: 'Cursed be the man that trusts in man, and that makes the flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the LORD.' (Jer. xvii. 5.)

"CHRIST ALL."

It is one thing to be *religious*, it is another and quite a different thing to be *converted*. To go to church or chapel; to take the LORD'S Supper; to have family prayer; to read the Bible; to relieve the needy; to contribute to charitable or religious institutions; these are some of the works of religion. But they are *dead* works; they all lack one indispensable element—they are without *life*—all the while the man is *dead*. His heart is untouched, and he is trusting to these for salvation, and not to CHRIST, even when he *thinks* that he is not; or perhaps he throws CHRIST into the scale *along with* these, and thus hopes to get to Heaven. Thus, self-righteousness blinds his eyes, until the SPIRIT of GOD awakens him from his delusion to a sense of his sin and danger, and his need of a SAVIOUR; or until, in spite of warning after warning, and clinging to his delusion, he is awakened by the everlasting burnings and the devouring fire! But to *feel* that we are *dead* and need eternal life; to feel we are guilty and need the forgiveness of sins; to feel we are *lost* and need a SAVIOUR, and to fly under the conviction of sin and danger to JESUS with the cry, "LORD save me, I perish," these are some of the evidences of being "born again" or converted.

Reader! which of these is *your* case? Is it the latter? and have you thus fled to JESUS as *your* SAVIOUR? Then why are you unhappy? Why those lingering doubts, and fears, and anxieties? Do you know that He has been your *substitute* on the cross, and is your *representative* as alive again from the dead—that God has ceased to look upon *you*, but upon CHRIST both *for* you and *as* you? Your unhappiness proceeds from not seeing that you are "*complete in Him*" and from looking at yourself in some way or other as *separate* from Him.

Is CHRIST looked upon by GOD as without guilt and sin? So are *you*, for all your guilt and sin *were* "*laid on Him.*" Is *He* looked upon as *holy*? So are *you*. Is he the object of God's special *love*? So are *you*. In Him *you* were judged, *you* died, *you* rose, *you* ascended to heaven, and are now sitting down in "heavenly places in CHRIST JESUS." O *realize* this blessed truth, and let it dispel every fear, and make you happy.

But *why* are you unhappy? It was the glimpse of CHRIST that first gave you any peace, and now perhaps Satan is turning your eye to something else, so that you have lost it, and no

wonder! Perhaps you are thinking that *in addition* to CHRIST'S *complete* work *for you*, there must be something good *in yourself*—some improvement—some *feeling*, before you can expect to retain that peace. This is the secret of your unhappiness. It is the sight of the Cross *alone* that can *give* you peace; it is to the cross alone you must look for a *continuation* of that peace. It is what you see in CHRIST, and not what you see in *yourself* that will *give* you peace, and *keep* you in peace. O remember this! Perhaps you say, "The more I look into my heart, the more miserable I am." Do you wonder at it? Did you ever expect to see something else there than *sin*? It is worse—infinitely worse than you can conceive! How vain, then, to look *there* for comfort! Would you look into a *dungeon* for light? Would you look into *hell* for love or joy, for holiness or righteousness? You are to look into yourself, not for *holiness*, but for *sin*; not for *good* but for *evil*; not for *life* but for *death*! Look into yourself, in order to be more and more dissatisfied with yourself; at CHRIST in order to become more and more *satisfied* with Him and His work. God has *nothing* but CHRIST before *Him* for you, and you must have nothing but CHRIST before *you* to enjoy peace *with* God, and of Him are ye *in* CHRIST JESUS, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

A FEW THOUGHTS ON JOSHUA IV.

IN this chapter we find two remarkable facts: the setting up of twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, and twelve stones taken out and set up at Gilgal on the Canaan side. All this has its voice for us. As GOD would have the children of Israel for ever remember this fresh introduction of His power on their behalf, putting the memorial of it before their eyes, in a manner suited to the dispensation; so He would have us continually to bear in mind the infinitely more marvellous and blessed way in which He has wrought for us in CHRIST.

It is well to consider the twofold bearing of this type of Jordan. In Colossians ii., iii., we have that which clearly corresponds to these two things. The end of chapter ii. reminds the Colossians that they were "dead with CHRIST." Verses 12, 13 show the *two* things. "Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him, through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead;" and then he repeats it in another form to show what their state was when

this mighty change was wrought in them. "And you, being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him," &c. Then in verse 20 he takes up one of these truths—"dead with CHRIST." This answers to the centre of Jordan, that place where the waters of death were ordinarily rolling, and completely blotting out from view all that was beneath them. "If ye be *dead* with CHRIST from the rudiments of the world," &c. Then, in the beginning of chapter iii., we have "If ye be *risen* with CHRIST." This answers to the stones taken up out of the water and placed on the other side. "Seek those things which are above, where CHRIST sitteth on the right hand of GOD." Then in verse 3 we have both truths again: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with CHRIST in GOD:" and put before us as we now are. "Ye are dead." We have the stones set up in Jordan. And "your life is hid with CHRIST in GOD"—that which is represented by the stones taken out and put on the other side. We have our LORD risen from the dead and seated in heavenly places, and we are in Him there. Then "seek those things which are above."

And mark the association: it was not a single stone that was put in memorial, but twelve, both in the river and on the farther side. If the death of CHRIST alone had been shown, one stone might have expressed it; but our very life, CHRIST, is in the presence of God. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with CHRIST in GOD." And in this truth we have what ought to be just as much as ever before our souls as the stones were before Israel, though we must own that we are little conversant with it. We looked at the death of Christ for comfort, when our souls were troubled because of sin, and we got the assurance of forgiveness. Have we rested there? Is not this the history of many a soul? But it is plain that it falls far short of what we have here, and that the knowledge of the passage through Jordan is a marvellous step in the ways of God's grace. Therefore we may ask, Have we realized our complete deadness to everything here, as before God? Are we dead to the law, to sin, to the world? Have we seen, as it were, the twelve stones taken out of Jordan, in God's own land?

When this is entered into in spirit, it is no question of the trials of the wilderness alone for the heart. The believer is no longer occupied only with the comfort of such a word as this—"There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man," &c.; but he gets the victory over present circumstances, in the power of what he possesses beyond. It is worthy

of remark that to the Corinthians, who were addressed as "babes," having become such as had need of milk, so many allusions were made as to Israel in the wilderness. (1 Cor. x., &c.) Flesh always falls in the wilderness. It must be judged there. Every person must be put to the proof in the trials of the way. The LORD knows how to do this. But the JORDAN for ever closes to faith the question of the circumstances of the wilderness. And what we find here is the *constant* memorial of it, the abiding token that death and resurrection were needed in order to bring them into the land. And thus are we put in spirit into heaven, where the conflict with Satan is carried on. This is a deeper thing than meeting the trials of the spirit in outward things. Through those we learn profitable lessons, but it is not proper conflict. When by faith we have laid hold of our oneness with CHRIST, immediately mortification of flesh is the question, and we are in the presence of God to enjoy what He has given us; and there we learn the spring of those things which hinder our communion with God, and which Satan is always on the watch to use for hindering our enjoyment of the full blessing.

Along with this, there is the disciplinary process, which God uses to bring us into a better knowledge of Himself. He desires, too, that we should know what it is to be offering and eating of the fruits of the land. The manna was suited to the wilderness; but when the experience of the wilderness was past, they ate of the old corn of the land—resurrection-food.

The great point I would desire to leave on our souls is this—the amazing pains our God has taken that our souls should have unqualified rest and joy in being one with CHRIST. We are in Him dead to everything that the flesh values and covets in this world. A Christian is dead not only to the evil of the world, but to its very best—to all that man likes most and that tends to exalt him and give him a place in the earth. The death and resurrection of CHRIST have given us to know that the flesh is good for nothing; that everything to which man can be formed by moral or religious education only proves that the flesh is thoroughly useless Godward, nay, hateful and already condemned. Man says, "Touch not, taste not, handle not;" but God shows that for us He has done for ever with this principle. All the system of restraint was connected with the old man, which faith now has to treat as dead. My case was so utterly desperate that I needed a new creation. This He has wrought for me in CHRIST: I am now identified no longer with the old thing, but with His condition, and this is

intended to govern my ways. What can be of greater consequence for us practically to bear in mind? It is a truth that touches everything in the walk of a Christian here below as he waits for CHRIST. Any union with the world in its schemes, objects, and ways, is unhallowed union with it—is as unnatural as the marriage of a corpse to a living man. We are not only dead with CHRIST, we are alive with Him. Do we sufficiently bear in mind that *God has*, in Him, raised us from the dead? I speak not, of course, as to our bodies yet, but as to our new life. So truly am I one with CHRIST, that whatever is an object of interest to Him should be an object of interest to me. It is easy enough to take up even souls, preaching, anything, in short, in connexion with self instead of with CHRIST. We have to guard against this continually. Self is apt to be a defiling snare. But let us bear in mind, in order to an unsparing, habitual self-judgment, that we are risen with CHRIST, and that, as such, our hearts should go out in everything that is precious to God.

SOME CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF THE INSPIRED BOOKS.

GENESIS.

(Continued from page 37.)

WE must now glance briefly at these separate sections, and see how far we can lay hold of their characteristic features.

(I.)

Chapter iii. is the first of these and the briefest of them. But it takes but little time for the pen of God to depict man such as the fall has made him. There is a mournful monotony about him, and with all his self-importance, little indeed for the Spirit of God to linger upon. What the fall has made him, such, in this Nineteenth Century, he is. Three features of his character are in this record. First, he is a reasoner about—that is, a questioner of—God's love. The woman's heart entertains the serpent's question, and in seeking to answer it, falls under its power. For GOD is not God, if He be not *good*, and if the heart acquiesce not in His ways because they *are* His, we are fallen away from Him. So the woman sees the tree of knowledge of good and evil *in the midst* of the garden, where in God's picture (ch. ii. 9) the tree of *life* was. Then she adds harshness to the prohibition: "Neither shall ye touch it," which He had not said. And then she trifles with

His truth, softening the positiveness of the penalty into "lest (for fear) ye die." He had said "thou surely shalt"; but when God's love has lost reality with us, we do not care to believe His truth. And this is the second feature of man's character, that he is a disbeliever of God's truth. The third is, that, having thus lost faith in God, man becomes a centre, a God, to himself—alas, the miserable slave of his own lusts. Fallen from the sense of God's love and truth, he must care for himself, if God care not for him. "Ye shall be as Gods," the serpent's language; translated into the Divine, it is "without God in the world."

Thence comes the positive transgression. Conscience (the knowledge of good and evil) begins in shame, and man's first invention (type of most inventions afterwards) is an apron of fig leaves, that they may hide that shame from one another. When God comes in, there is only dismal fear, strangely mingling with self-justification, which would cast the blame, even to His face, on God Himself.

Such is man. But how beautiful in contrast is the grace of Him from whom he has departed. Notice the questioning, when He knew full well all that had taken place. He will not accuse, but draw out gently from the heart the tale of its sorrow and its sin. Note, too, that first appeal to man to consider where *he* was, and not till then, the sin which had made him a fugitive. Notice, that when He comes to the serpent, there is no questioning any more, but his doom pronounced, and man hears first of all, his enemy's sentence, and of judgement upon him through the seed of that woman, through whom sin and death had just come in. And with the fruit of death God clothes the naked. Still upon the old creation the threatened judgment takes effect, and man goes forth from Paradise into an earth for his sake cursed, to nurse the new hope given of a Deliverer to come.

(II.)—CHAPTERS IV., V.

Hitherto we have had no more than a hint of any work of God in the soul of the fallen. The grace of God meets him as a sinner, and only that. But now that grace works in him to bring him back, and we get here (in mystery) the first result. It has a double fulfilment: in the sphere of the world at large, and in that of the individual.

In the world at large, Abel is the representative of Him, who, while alone presenting to God acceptable offering, meets from man rejection and death. Cain is the self-righteous Jew,

fugitive and vagabond because of CHRIST'S blood, yet not to be slain. Lamech, of his seed, is to my mind but the last state of that generation, murderous and lawless beyond Cain, and prophesying to himself impunity, when God's judgment is just ready to be poured out. Seth is as it were Abel revived, a figure of CHRIST in resurrection, with whom God begins the reckoning of man's race anew (ch. v.). From this line, Enoch (like the Church now) passes to Heaven without seeing death, before the world's judgment comes; and Noah (type of the converted Jew of the last days) passes *through* the judgment to the chief place in the earth beyond.

In souls individually also, the Cain and Abel seeds are reproduced. The first is the picture of the old nature, religious without God, seeking rest in a cursed earth, sensual, lawless, to the last unchanged, and not to be slain moreover by our hands, though the coming judgment ends it. The second, the younger, is the new nature, but which has to learn the power of the old, and what death, the death of "me," is; but after the flesh has fully shown itself out unchanged, learning the power of resurrection too, as Seth is given in the place of Abel, whom Cain slew. CHRIST in resurrection known, the name of the LORD is owned, and worshipped, and God begins every thing anew in CHRIST for us, the old seed not reckoned in at all. (Comp. Rom. vii., viii.)

(III.)—CHAPTERS VI.—XI.

Noah follows; third in this series: a type which 1. Peter, iii. 20-22 enables us to read very distinctly.

Noah is a "just man," one in whom grace had already wrought, learning in figure what Cornelius learned in fact—*salvation*. (Acts, xi. 14) The whole world perishes. The entire condition of man is judged. But the ark, safe in its covering of pitch (a word which in Hebrew also means atonement) which keeps out the waters, passes through the flood to the other side. We are thus, as men in CHRIST taken off the ground of the old man, which for faith is judged and gone, and brought into the scene of new creation. The lesson of the raven and the dove gives us the side of experience, *not* faith. There we still find two natures, one that can take up with a scene of death, while the other finds no rest for the sole of its foot where the waters of judgment are not competely dried. But Noah has no faith in the raven, we are to have "no confidence in the flesh."

Then, first, after salvation known, comes the burnt-offering,

the witness of the value before God, of that in which we are accepted, and the Lord resting (see margin) in delight on what has glorified Him, declares that He is for us, in spite of the evil that He knows and we find in us. Fruitfulness is promised, something of former sovereignty restored (ch. ix. 2) and death now becomes the food of life (v. 3.). Then the new man is to judge the deeds of the flesh (verse 6.) and thereupon, very significantly (for we must keep down the weeds to have the flowers) fruitfulness is again promised. Lastly the bow in the cloud becomes the token of perpetual covenant—the sunshine of God's love (and He is "light") reflecting itself in rays of many colors, the display of His various attributes, who is "Father of lights," in the cloud of judgment. The cross is thus the bow of promise.

Close upon this, what comes next is the history of man's failure in this place of blessing, a type thus of the failure of the saints at large. The wine of earthly enjoyment deceives to their shame those who should have been the Nazarites of God, and failure thus begun is only the preface to utter apostacy, and Canaan-curse upon those who are the professing Church's (but not God's) spiritual children. (Comp. Rev. ii. 23.)

Wider and deeper the departure becomes, and bye and bye Babel is reached, a unity of self-interest to establish themselves and make a name where God had appointed them to scatter and be pilgrims. Then under God's judgement the first unity of speech breaks up: in short we have the Divine history of schism, still a lesser evil than Babel unity, ever the great enemy of God and His people from Genesis to Revelation.

(IV.) CHAPTERS XI. 10-XXIII.

The life of Abraham follows, the practical result of the new place unto which salvation puts the soul—the life of a pilgrim and stranger, heir to a land which in faith he traverses, but is not yet possessed of. From country, kindred, and father's house, the call of God separates him, and into the land of Canaan, after the old man, Terah, is dead, he comes. There the Lord appears to him—need I make the application of this?—and there he worships.

Failure again comes. Famine tempts him to Egypt for sustenance; Egypt is the type, not of the world in its riot, that is Sodom—but of those "earthly things" which those who "mind" become "enemies of the cross of Christ." Having gone so far, Abram goes further, and Sarai is denied. Sarai

is (as Gal. iv. teaches) the type of the new covenant. The grace in which the believer stands is his alone. But when we go to the world for help, this is soon denied. Policy conceals the truth, and the men of the world lay hold upon what they like well enough divorced from faith, and shower favours upon him who guiltily allows the prostitution. But the Lord interferes and restores Sarai to her place; then the world's favours cease, and Abram is sent away.

Next, in Lot, we have the manner and result of departure from the pilgrim-path of faith. Though a believer, he had been so far following another's faith. Now the weakness of this becomes apparent. His heart clinging to Egypt, while his conscience forbade his settling there, he *chooses* what he could find most like it, and yet in his eyes "as the garden of the Lord." He has thus religious self-justification for it, but which forgets Canaan and goes back to a relationship between God and men, which had passed away in the fall. But thus he soon finds himself in the world with its wicked lusts (Sodom) which is the reality. There he falls under the power of world-religion (which is Babylon or Shenar) (ch. xiv.) and though recovered from that by a spiritual energy not his own, he sinks back into Sodom. There ch. xix. finds him, to which we shall presently refer.

Babylon has been already spoken of. Its power prevails over the wicked world (ch. xiv.) as nominal worldly Christianity over heathenism and its vices, but quite outside the sphere in which the possessor of the (Canaan) heavenly calling walks. The "Hebrew" (or pilgrim) (vers. 13.) fresh from Hebron (communion) in the plains of Mamre (fatness?) overcomes in weakness all its power, while to such an one Sodom and its offers are of no power either. But here Melchizedek comes in (King of Righteousness and Peace) with God's claim of heaven and earth enforced, and in result blessing of God and man. CHRIST in this character in a latter day is what thus meets the eye and refreshes the soul of the believer in view of Babylon on one hand and Sodom on the other.

The question of sonship and inheritance follows. Here the dispensational application may make plain the individual one (see Gal. iv.) Sarai and Hagar thus are the two covenants. Hagar, the legal, bringing forth to bondage; Egyptian in nature, translated in Gal. iv. 3, as "elements of the world." Her seed, Ishmael, Israel after the flesh, a natural seed not begotten, as Isaac, the true sons, by divine power; brought forth before the dispensation or the spirit of sonship had come, cast out of

the house, when the true son is weaned; dwelling in the wilderness of the world; multiplying finally to twelve princes, as Israel will in her twelve tribes attain to royal power in the millennial earth.

Isaac, the true son, on the other hand, type also of the Son of God Himself, presents the child of the freewoman now manifested in the Christian church. The spirit of sonship is her's issuing in meek surrender of life to Him who gave it (ch. xxii.); the result, reception of it again in resurrection-power and beauty (see Heb. xi. 19).

It is important to mark in the individual application (as all through) that in the realization of all this, the order of presentation is not one of time simply. The realization of sonship **does** not follow in order of time the conflicts with Babylon &c., before given. The progress is simply from a lower to a higher order of things. Sonship goes beyond simple heavenly calling, and yet is for us necessarily connected with heirship: "*if children, then heirs.*" So these two things are connected here (ch. xv. &c.).

And alas, even as believers, there are in us these Ishmael and Isaac seeds. The spirit of bondage, the elder, naturally by the power of conscience born, but which is nevertheless lawless (ch. xvi. 12); the younger, the spirit of sonship by divine power, and alone bearing the cross (ch. xxii.) and offering up to GOD SELF and not *service* merely. But, for this we must have come to find ourselves dead (Rom. iv. 19), and impotent, that grace may tell us of Him who quickens the dead.

Details it is not my object here to enter into. Chap. xvii. gives us circumcision as consequent upon the revelation of one who in His own Almightyness gives fruit and inheritance as the eight days old, speaks of resurrection and of new creation. Ch. xviii. is a blessed picture of a heavenly saint in communion with God, and its fruit in CHRIST-like intercession; while (ch. xix.) he who, though righteous, has left the pilgrim-path tells us in contrast of one whose God, GOD may be ashamed to call Himself, of lost communion, a ruined testimony, and a long and bitter train of evils under the government of a Holy God.

(Genesis concluded, if the Lord will, in our next.)

“THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY COME.”

REV. XXII., 17.

DOES CHRIST dear reader find your thoughts in unison with the word put forth by the “Spirit and the Bride,” because you really want him to come? Not only like Stephen wanting to get away from the stoning into His presence; but the Bride wanting the Bridegroom—passing through a dark night, keeping her *affections* fixed on Him: not by saying, “when Thou comest there will be no more sorrow, no dark shades of night; Thou wilt come to take us home to the FATHER’S house; it is true, but it is Thyself I want; I am the Bride and Thou the Bridegroom.”

Are you wanting Him to come according to the character of love—not from mere selfishness, but as having such a taste of His glory as the bright and morning star, and because of being the complement of His joy in the FATHER’S house? Do you yearn for ability to enter into His fuller glory? Is He saying, “I cannot take my glory without you to sit down with Me? Ah! am I saying, “It is not the crown, nor the glory, it is Thyself, LORD, whom I want?”

The bright and morning star is an entirely new glory. There were hearts bound to Him when down here, which traced Him up into Heaven; and ever since then, a people’s eyes have looked up, and their hearts have been expecting Him. It is a little of glory connected with the hearts of His people. How blessed for any to say, “I have watched through the night to get the first glimpse of Him; my heart is so attached to that LORD, and all my blessedness so connected with Him, that I cannot help being constantly on the look out for the first glimpse of Him as he descends from heaven into the air.”

If there are people down here waiting, knowing that CHRIST is coming to take up the Church, they *must* be longing for Him to come, otherwise they don’t know the position of the Bride and the SPIRIT saying “Come!” The Bride is the vessel in which the closest relationship of the LORD JESUS is formed. The child of God has the affections of CHRIST in his soul, and can only turn from being occupied with CHRIST in Heaven, to be occupied with whatever the LORD is occupied with down here. We get our rest and all things in knowing that He *is* coming. The SPIRIT reveals CHRIST, and speaks of the glory to come. He is the great power for everything in the assembly.

When the light of a returning LORD breaks in upon the soul,

how many a want is felt that the heart never knew before! If you could know that the LORD were coming to-morrow, would there not be a thousand thoughts of need in your mind; a looking to see also if there were withal to meet the need of the thirsty. "He that is athirst let him come." This word brings before the soul the thought of need, of *parchedness*, before that need is felt. It tells thirsty ones that they can come to this Rock which was smitten that the waters might flow for ever in order to *meet* every need. This gushing stream tells of the readiness of Him from whom it flows to fill the thirsting soul.

"Even so come LORD JESUS!" There is exquisite beauty in His word, "surely I come quickly," being thus immediately taken up by the SPIRIT and the Bride, and answered in language known to faith. Often the very duties of the servant may be allowed to interfere with the bright burning of this hope in a heart where yet it is burning. It ever burns brightly in the heart of CHRIST; and as soon as the last members of His body are gathered in, that promise will be fulfilled. If the light only burns with a flickering gleam in my heart, there is ever, in all brightness, in *His*, the thought of coming quickly. The heart of the individual believer gets its power in the hope of His coming being *ever present*. We have to judge our ways, our whole course, in the light of it. This (Rev. xxii., 17,) is the only passage in which the SPIRIT is presented with the Bride—very touching it is, connected with wilderness circumstances; the SPIRIT in that character speaking thus: saying, "Come!" What has the Bride to do with the wilderness, save as Rebecca passing through it?

It will be a marvellous scene when CHRIST presents the Church to Himself—when the Last Adam takes that Bride of His to share His glory. Ah! not only that; but it is oneness with Himself that characterizes us; what the heart feels, is the being looked at as belonging to Himself; formed out of Himself, as Eve out of Adam. That the Father sees us not only in a relationship that links us up with the SON of His love in glory, but in such a relationship that the LORD JESUS could not do without us. The Bridegroom *must* have the Bride up there.

If you follow Him in His course down here, from the Babe in the manger to the Cross, and see Him in resurrection on the throne of GOD, the circumstances are very different, but ah! it is the *same* LORD JESUS. It is *Himself*, *He Himself*, is the object of love, and we know that we are for His own

self in glory. What is the distinctest thing on which the heart rests? It may be the earth-side now which one may see, but when we behold CHRIST Himself, it will be the Heaven-side, in the full unhindered energy of the HOLY GHOST; having hearts responsive to that blessed grace which brought us there.

Ought He not to be jealous if He is not the only object before our souls? He not only says, "I am the bright and morning star," but "surely I come quickly," presenting Himself with all the savour, all the attractiveness of what He is. Have we known Him for years, and have we not found the attractiveness of His beauty deepening in us? What is all we have learnt of Him here, compared with what it will be to behold Himself, to look on His face—the One who died for us, the One who loved and watched over us from our infancy—oh, with what *tender gentleness* He watched over us? Is there not the consciousness in each of our hearts *how often* He has given the grace we felt we were standing in need of? But besides that we are to be one with His mind in all that meets us in the wilderness, there is another sort of communion—communion with the desire of His heart, going forth in, "Even so, come, LORD JESUS."

At times our hearts are drooping, we are hardly bestead; but what is all we can pass through here, if we are consciously able to respond to Him, "Even so come!" having really communion with that heart of His, whose every thought is the FATHER'S will, and who has been *waiting* eighteen hundred years to come and take up the people given Him by the FATHER; He the Bridegroom, they the Bride. How blessed to be able to enter into the desire of his heart to the utmost, responding in communion with it, "Even so, come, LORD JESUS!"

AN EXTRACT.

OUR lot is cast in an evil day, these are last and perilous times. Popery and infidelity are on every hand making rapid progress, and we are called upon, yea, it is our joy and blessing and privilege to be witnesses for our absent, despised and rejected LORD. Is then, this precious LORD precious to you? Are your eyes so fully open that you see beauty and loveliness nowhere as you see them in JESUS? Are not His glories and His deep perfections incomparable? Surely you will say yes, indeed they are. There is none like unto Him,

and the more I discover the more I exclaim, "the half had not been told." Shall we then be true to Him? Oh! mark, I pray you, it is HIMSELF with whom I desire our hearts should be engrossed, not men's ways and thoughts, not even Church rules and government, but HIMSELF, the glorified CHRIST in Heaven—the Head of the Church which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. He is a *personal* CHRIST, one we can see, and love, and worship, and talk with. He is looking down on us from heaven, knowing what is going on, interested with all that interests us, and touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Heb. iv.).

I know that a true and faithful testimony for CHRIST will bring trial and sorrow, for *all they who will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution*" (2 Tim. iii., 2.). The reason there is so little persecution now is, because we are not true and faithful to Christ, or are not living godly in CHRIST JESUS. Well, then, the LORD in His grace awaken us all to a lively sense of our place before GOD in CHRIST, blessed in Him, with every spiritual blessing; and may He awaken us too, to our mission on earth, namely *in fellowship with the Holy Ghost who dwells in us, to be witnesses of that blessed Lord and Saviour who loved us, and gave Himself for us—who loved me and gave himself for me—and so may we know the joy of being counted worthy to suffer for Him.*

JOHN, THE PENMAN OF THE APOCALYPSE.

IN the progress of this book we see John moved by different affections. He trembles in chapter i. 17; he weeps in chapter v. 4; he wonders with great admiration in chapter xvii. 6; he loses himself in worshipping delight in chapters xix. 10, and xxii. 3.

That is, he trembles in the presence of the judicial glory of the Son of Man; he weeps at the sight of a sealed book, which, had it been unsealed, would have told secrets about JESUS; he marvels at the sight of Christendom's apostacy; he loses himself in joy when he hears of the marriage of the LAMB, and when he sees the bride of the LAMB.

What suited affections! what creations of the HOLY GHOST in the soul of a Saint! He never trembles, after the One who was alive tells him not to fear. He that had the keys of death and hades encourages him; and that, surely, is enough for us.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q.—“Why should the Book of Revelations be read?”

A.—The most direct reason is that the SPIRIT of God *particularly* enjoins that it should be read, and pronounces a peculiar blessing on those who do. At the very opening of the Book, as if anticipating the opposition of man's heart to do so, and that Satan would specially seek to undermine its value and throw it into the shade, the Apostle John is led by the LORD to *preface* his Epistle by a benediction in these words: “Blessed is he that *readeth*, and they that *hear* the words of this prophecy, and *keep* those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand.” And as if this were not enough to stamp its peculiar sacredness, and as if foreseeing that man would even dare, not only to disregard it, but to even tamper with its very structure, he concludes it with a malediction on any one who should either add to, or take from “the words of the book of this prophecy.” The Book of Revelation unfolds the judicial or governmental ways of GOD: first in the Churches, and then in the world; in special connection with the coming of CHRIST, and the *entire* overthrow of Satan's power in the Heavens and the earth. Satan, acting instrumentally through men, is exposed, and his power brought to nothing. With his instruments he is incarcerated in the bottomless pit for a thousand years, and finally cast into the lake of fire in *this* Book; hence he specially hates it, and would fain keep the saints, and the victims of his wiles, from seeing the truth about him, by hiding the light that exposes him, and which shines so brightly in the pages of the Book of Revelation. What should specially endear this Book, *dear* to the believer, is that it brings the LORD JESUS before him, reaping the fruits of the Cross, as the Lamb, in power and glory.

Q.—“Did Peter do wrong in going ‘a fishing,’ after having been told by our LORD to follow Him? And was it in the way of reproof that the LORD asked him three times, ‘Lovest thou Me more than these?’”

A.—We certainly do think that Peter was wrong in going “a fishing,” and led others astray as well as himself. The LORD had distinctly called Peter to leave his fishing, and told him that He would make him a “fisher of men.” Peter *boastingly* refers to this in the 28th verse of the 18th of Mark, and

doubtless the LORD allowed him then to fail, that he might learn his own heart, and be humbled by it. It was Peter that had said, "Though all shall forsake Thee, yet will not I," and the LORD brings this boasting speech to his mind by the question, "Lovest thou Me *more* than these?"—the rest of the Disciples, and certainly in the way of reproof, though with touching tenderness and grace, for Peter's blessing and future usefulness in His Service

"FRAGMENTS GATHERED UP."

WHATEVER one may have to think or judge about the past, the great thing *now* is to realize the grace of Him who is over all, GOD blessed for ever, CHRIST, who stood on earth as the LORD and SAVIOUR who is nigh unto all that call upon Him, that call upon Him in truth. "His mercy endureth forever," and the consciousness of this gives relief to the heart. It is not in the condition of things on earth, whether in the Church or in the world, that peace is found, but in the Cross, the death and resurrection of Him Who appeared in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. A believing view of JESUS, crucified and risen again from the dead, gives peace: and only as he is looked to, and His Presence realized, can there be blessing. But this may be, I believe, *anywhere*, so the heart is free, for with God nothing shall be impossible. But in many cases there needs a mighty energy of God's hand and Spirit for deliverance, and inward as well as outward fetters have to be broken before the soul can rejoice in the liberty wherewith CHRIST makes free. The true thing is to be with God in the place where one is for the moment, and reckoning upon His power to supply all need, whether spiritual or temporal. For whatever *appearances* may be, the believer knows that "the LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knoweth them that *trust in Him*" (Nahum i, 7).

THE SERPENT OF BRASS.

Numbers xxi. 4-9.

THE history of the children, with all the ways of GOD in blessing and dealing with them, actual and real as everything was, nevertheless was but the "*shadow* of good things to come." (Heb. x. 1.) What happened to them were "for types, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." (1 Cor. x. 2.)

The incident that is brought before us in the 21st of Numbers was thus used by the LORD. He selected this solemn, and yet most touchingly gracious dealing of JEHOVAH with the people of Israel as the type in particular that set forth His own mission to this world to be the revealer of GOD's love to His guilty creatures. He tells Nicodemus, that "as Moses lifted up the 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." From Him thus lifted up, GOD's love, in all its brightness and deep mercy, was to shine forth for all His sinful creatures: "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."

As from that brazen serpent, high up lifted in the midst of Israel's guilty hosts, and glittering under the hot and bright intensity of the noon-day sun, flashed the rays of JEHOVAH's love, thus come down in healing grace to save the dying sinner, and to whose up turned gaze of agony it *at once* brought health and strength; so from Himself thus lifted up on the Cross as a sacrifice for sin, and the sun and centre of GOD's moral universe, should GOD's love shine forth in all its fulness for man everywhere, so meeting *all* His need as a sinner, that whosoever by faith looked upon Him thus lifted up, should in like manner find salvation and eternal life.

Let us now turn to the 21st of Numbers, and from the details given in the type, learn and apply the blessed realities that faith has to do with in the great ante-type.

Three things come prominently into view as we look upon this wondrous scene. 1st. The condition of the people. 2d. The remedy for that condition. 3d. The mode of its application or appropriation.

Nothing can be more intensely real and suggestive than the first of these—the condition of the people, bitten by fiery Serpents. Thus bitten, agony, distress and certain death was the state in which, helplessly and hopelessly they lay upon

the sands of the desert. Escape from the serpents there was none. The poison once introduced into the system, death was inevitable. Get rid of the serpents they could not. Antidote the poison they knew not how. Death, and nothing but death, lay before them. *Every* Israelite was as good as dead, for the whole camp was under the power of the fiery serpents. Which ever way the eye looked the terror of death struck home upon the heart. Thousands already lay motionless in death. Thousands more were dying—agony and despair told the tale of where the poison was just beginning its deadly work. Terror and wild fright was written upon the faces of those as yet even unbitten, for vain they saw was any attempt to kill the fiery serpents, or flee beyond their destroying energy. Israel's guilty tribes were all alike under JEHOVAH'S mighty hand in judgment. Guilty, death stricken sinners they felt themselves *all* to be. Lost, helplessly, hopelessly so, they felt themselves, for under the curse of a *broken* law they knew themselves to be. The ground they stood on failed them for they had sinned, and "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." All was over. The *curse* had overtaken them. "Woe is me! I am undone," was in every heart. "We have sinned" was the terrible verdict that conscience recorded in the breast of every Israelite: "Death is *justly* our portion," was all that any could say. Death and judgment filled the entire scene. Such was Israel's condition as depicted in this 21st of Numbers.

Can anything more graphically describe man's spiritual state, as under the power of sin and Satan, with nothing but death and judgment before him. The figure casts a clear light back upon the history of man's fall as given us in the 3rd of Genesis. There we find Satan as the serpent biting our first parents, instilling the subtle poison of sin into man's nature, and leading him into rebellion against God, so that he falls under death and judgment. Helplessly and hopelessly he lies with all his race under the curse of God. Well indeed has the serpent done his work. His victim is fully caught in his terrible coils—all is over. There is no escape from this terrible and subtle foe; no cure for the deadly wound his poisonous fangs have inflicted. The life blood has drunk in the venom that works *only* death. Conscience, obtained by the very act that caused his fall, strikes terror into the breast of the guilty creature, and the words of the living God of truth echo in the

ears of the trembling sinner "thou shall surely die." His doom is sealed and naked he *knows* himself to be. Satan, sin, death and darkness now fill the scene where once man, the happy creature of God, walked in the blessedness of Divine goodness, and the cloudless light of His favour. Morally the history of man in responsibility is closed, and the door shut upon him, with the *Judge* standing at the door with the wages of sin in his hand.

It is here, so to speak, the Apostle begins with man when laying the ground for the *Gospel* to come in upon, in the 5th of Romans: "By one man" says he "sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death (as a sentence) passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned," and "death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." Meaning by this, that though there had not been between those two periods a breach by man, of a *known* command, still sin was there, having entered as a nature by one man, Adam, and according to that nature man had lived in sin, so that death was, as "the wages of sin," the necessary portion of all. Moreover the "judgment was by one to condemnation," and "by one man's offence death reigned by one;" also "by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation," and "by one man's disobedience the many were made sinners."—In whichever way the Apostle looked out over the race of man, he could only say "sin hath *reigned* unto death."

The coming in of the law midway, so to speak, had only made matters worse. It just proved the nature to be sin, that was all, and that death and judgment were there already as a consequence of the state in which man was, as born of Adam. "The law entered," said the Apostle "that the offence might abound," and that as a consequence, "grace might much more abound." The scene in the 21st of Numbers just sets this forth. Israel had *only* broken the law, and thus brought themselves under *its* curse in addition to what belonged to them simply as sinners, on the same footing before God, as the Gentiles around them.

Man's state *before* God was settled once and forever in Paradise, and therefore whether without law (Gentiles), or under law (Jews), he is simply a sinner, shut up in sin, and under Satan's power while in that state, with *nothing* but death and judgment before him, according to the *righteous* government of God. "We have before proved," says Paul in Rom. iii., "both Jews and Gentiles that they are under sin: as it is

written there is none righteous, no not one." The law just came as a means to tell anyone that thinks differently, that it is so, "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become *guilty* before God." Of this world Satan is the God and Prince, Scripture says, and man's state in it, as under his power, is given us in Eph. ii. 2. "Dead in trespasses and sins," walking "according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," "fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and by nature the children of wrath." Satan has also "the power of death" in his hands, and keeps man under his bondage through fear of death, even where lusts are not actively working.

This, then, is man's condition before God—simply under the power of sin and Satan. By nature and practice lost, ruined and undone. Hopelessly and helplessly exposed to eternal death and judgment.

Let us now return to the 21st of Numbers, and see the remedy that Jehovah, in His love, provided for the state in which the Israelites found themselves. Their helpless misery finds expression in a cry for mercy, and Moses is directed to "make a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole," and "Moses made a serpent of brass and put it upon a pole." There in the very midst of the death-stricken camp of Israel, high up on a lofty pole, so that every eye might see it, is the absolute and only remedy for their condition. Glittering in the sun and showering its healing rays on every side, far and near, stood the brazen serpent. Strange, but effectual remedy. Giving life and health, itself all dead and evil. Powerless, yet possessing power over all the evil and destruction that lay around it. And what was it? A fiery serpent. That which had brought in all the misery and ruin; but no longer alive, and spreading death and destruction far and near. There it hung dead, its head all crushed, and those poisoned fangs no longer able to bite to death the Israelites. The cause of death arrested in its course, and become itself the source of life and salvation.

How this type carries us back again to Paradise, and the promise given in that seeming hopeless scene, of the destruction of him who had there brought in all the ruin. The seed of the woman "shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." With what clearness, too, it casts its light forward to Him, who standing on earth in the midst of a world of sinners lying under death and judgment, says "so must the SON of MAN be lifted up." The promise, the type and

the ante-type are before us. We are gazing on the Cross. JESUS, the seed of the woman, hangs dead upon the accursed tree. The serpent has done his utmost. The poison of sin has spent itself on Him. By death He has "destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the Devil." (Heb. ii. 14.) He has "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," and "as it is appointed unto men once to die; but after that the judgment: so CHRIST was once offered to bear the sins of many." (Heb. ix. 26, 27, 28.) God's love has been declared, in "that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (I. John i. 10.) God, on the Cross, made CHRIST "to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (II. Cor. v. 21.) As made sin on the cross, CHRIST came under the judgment of God, death and the curse became his portion. By *death* He delivers from death, and from him who has the power of death. To redeem from under the curse of the law, he is made a curse, "for cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Are not these the rays of life and blessing that flash from the brazen serpent! Is not the type more than fulfilled in the ante-type? How truly He bore the judgment of God, and how really the infinite wrath of God was sustained by Him who hung, like the brazen serpent on the pole, on the Cross of Calvary, those words "My God, My God! why hast thou forsaken me" declare. But if they speak of wrath borne, they also proclaim "wrath to come," while holding out a blessed and everlasting shelter from the impending storm. With adoring hearts and subdued souls, let us look upon this wondrous sight!

In the midst of the ruined and guilty race of man, in the very centre of Satan's power, surrounded by all the malice and cruel hatred with which he fills the hearts of his victims and hurls them in hot rebellion against the God of Love and Truth, hangs dead upon the Cross—the accursed tree—JESUS, the Son of Man and God's only begotten Son. High uplifted o'er this all-guilty world, that all may see, from pole to pole, He hangs, "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." From His pierced side the river of mercy flows; like a mighty pent-up torrent gushes forth the love that had died to save and bless. In streams of water and of blood, cleansing evil and expiating guilt, "the grace of God that carries with it salvation for all men" appears. God has been glorified about *sin* in Him, "who by the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God" to bear its judgment. The

clouds of wrath that covered man in have cleared away, the love of GOD towering majestically above the wide-spread ruin, and all the enmity of the heart of man beams forth in healing rays for all. Yes, for all; for all are sinners, and "JESUS CHRIST came into the world to save sinners." (I. Tim. i. 15.)

But again let us return to our 21st of Numbers, and learn how the virtues of the brazen serpent, that wondrous remedy for Israel's lost condition, took effect—the mode of its application or appropriation. "And it shall come to pass that every one that is bitten when he looketh upon it shall live." Such was JEHOVAH'S will for Israel. These were the words the lips of Moses shouted forth, as standing with that brazen serpent high **uplifted**, he proclaimed JEHOVAH'S tender mercy to His sinful people. "Look and live!" "Look and live!" "Look and live!" was echoed far and wide. No preparation was needed for that look, for none there could be made, nor was demanded. As you are, where you are, "Look and live!" was the word. Condition there was none. "And it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten *any* man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived." One glance did it. JEHOVAH'S *word* was pledged that it should be so. Death and terror give place at once to life and joy.

Simple and effective remedy, perfect and Divine, though only a *type* of good things to come—a shadow, that brings the substance before the eye. For "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."

"Believe and live!" "Believe and live!" "Believe and live!" are the words of GOD through the lips of JESUS. "Whosoever believeth," is the message now sent far and wide. "Go ye unto *all* the world, and preach the Gospel unto every creature" (Mark xvi. 15). Yes, into all the world, and to every creature. CHRIST died for all. "He gave Himself a ransom for all." "Look unto Me, all the ends of the earth, and be ye saved," is the call of GOD'S love through the lifted up SON of MAN. "That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Sinners, all sinners, whoever you are, whatever you are, wherever you are, look on CHRIST crucified. "Look, and live." "Believe, and be saved," is the word of the living GOD, that cannot lie to you. "*Now* is the acceptable time. Now is the day of salvation." GOD'S love is declared, the

work of redemption is finished, and the Cross is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (Rom. i. 16.)

Poor believing, yet trembling sinner, look upon JESUS hanging on the Cross for your sins. He is God's gift to you. He came to seek and save the lost. God's love is shining even now upon you in that crucified One. "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." Listen to no suggestion of your own poor heart. Turn a deaf ear to the tempter, who, through the lips of his emissaries, would tell you to do something for yourself, or to have something—an ordinance—done for you by another. Law and ordinances are alike nailed to the Cross of CHRIST, and Satan's power is openly triumphed over (Col. ii., 14, 15), in that same work that has put away all your sin and sins from before God. Care not for them that would tell you you are foolish to trust *only* in a crucified SAVIOUR. Let GOD'S word again speak for you to them: "The preaching of the Cross is to them that *perish* foolishness; but unto us which *are saved* it is the power of God." (1 Cor. i. 18.) Safely and eternally may you rest upon that Rock of Ages cleft for the poor sinner, whilst His own words, Who is the resurrection and the life, proclaim in your ears, from the glory at God's right hand, the words He once spoke on earth: "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 unto judgment, but is passed from death unto life." (v. John 24.)

But oh! rejecter of CHRIST and His finished work; you, who would trust in your own righteousness, or turn to a remedy for your *lost condition*, proffered by another through an ordinance, hearken to the word that shall judge you in a coming day: "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." (John iii. 36.)

THE CONVERTED CRIMINAL.

I CALLED on him for the first time on Friday the 18th of November. He appeared very cheerful, but his ways soon convinced me he was doing all in his power to excite himself into happy feelings to drown the thought of his impending execution.

Upon testing him a little as to the *ground* of the hope he

expressed concerning the life to come, I soon found it to be his thorough repentance, his comparative freedom from evil desires, his great love to God, &c. He thought surely he had made his peace with God since he had so many good things to show.

His *lips* talked about JESUS and His love very nicely. He repeated some of God's precious promises, but evidently his *heart* was so intensely occupied with self, that he could grasp no meaning in those promises.

His earnest face, however, and the thoughtful attention he paid to what I said to him, attracted me at once. I remembered how, four years before, I was in the same state—occupied with my humility, my repentance, my faith, my love—and while putting on a cheerful face to make myself believe I possessed that happiness which I had often heard belonged to a man at peace with God, what bitterness and anguish lay in the depth of my soul. I remembered the day when, at the climax of misery, some one had pointed me to the third chapter of Romans, how it had opened Heaven to me—the unutterable deliverance it put me into—and I burned to have him get in the same place.

I told him nothing *he* could do could save him; neither his repentance, nor his love, nor looking to the work of the Spirit in him, could give him peace with God. "You are lost," I said; "you are dead in trespasses and sins—*condemned already*—and you might as well think that weeping and promising to do better could put away the sentence pronounced against you the other day, as to think your repentance, or your promises, or *anything* from *you*, can move the curse of God's eternal law which now hangs over you, as well as over every soul of man who is not saved."

I told him the *only* thing which could meet a "lost" man's need was *salvation*—a "dead" man needed *life*, and a "condemned" man needed *mercy*.

I declared to him he was grievously mistaken if he thought *he had made his peace with God*. *He* could never do that. "What, then, must I do?" said he, in a half-stunned way. "Read there," said I, and my finger pointed to Colossians i. 20: '*And having made peace through the blood of His cross . . .*' I pointed again to Galatians iii. 13, and said, "read again here!" "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us . . ."

I then besought him to read, thoughtfully and prayerfully, the third, fourth, and fifth chapters of Romans, and commend-

ing him to the LORD, who alone, I knew, could open his blinded eyes, I left him in his lonely cell.

I did not call again until the following Tuesday, November 22d. The Turnkey at the entrance-door told me one of the criminals was anxious to see me since morning. Without asking which of the two, I called first on the one occupying the cell nearest the entrance-door, but found him much as before—more occupied with the actual consequences of his crime than with his *lost condition* before God—ready enough to pray and engage in devotional exercises; but completely blind as to the *ground* of salvation.

I left him, much downcast in my spirit—full of that dejection which often makes me long to be with CHRIST when I have set forth a *finished salvation* before sinners, and they answer me, *I'll try to do better*; and I had well nigh forgotten the Turnkey's announcement, when Daniel Mann's cell being opened to me I was soon reminded of it. Scarcely had I taken my seat on the wooden bench beside him when he said to me: "I longed to see you."

"What for?" said I.

"Since daylight this morning," said he, "I haven't been able to *pray*; I can only find time and room for *praise*."

"How is that?" said I—"what makes you so happy?"

"You remember," said he, "your visit to me last Friday, and the three chapters you told me to read in Romans? Well, after pondering a good deal on what you had told me, and which sounded so differently from any thing I had ever heard, I read them over and over again, but I seemed to get more and more miserable. All day Sunday, and all day yesterday, were dark and gloomy. I felt as if I must surely perish. Last night I could not close my eyes a single moment, but I lay on my couch in misery. Oh! what misery! Suddenly, while in my despair, my mind was arrested by a part of the fifth of Romans—these verses: 'For when we were yet without strength in due time CHRIST died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, CHRIST died for us.' O, dear, *dear* sir, need I tell you the effect? I jumped to my feet. I praised God outright. I felt like a man who is already in Heaven. I saw why JESUS was on the cross crying out 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' I understood what is meant by 'It is finished.' I saw God's love to me, and I praised and

praised again. I saw my salvation was not out of anything from me, but out of CHRIST'S finished work; so I cried out, O glorious thing! I am as sure of my salvation now as I am sure CHRIST'S work is finished; yea, *was* finished over 1800 years ago. I have it, I have it, for *I believe.*"

As he spoke, his earnest face wet with tears, looked to me like the face of an angel. Tears rolled down my face too. I took his neck in my arms, and could but exclaim: "My brother, my dearest brother! we shall sing together throughout Eternity the value of the blood of JESUS."

Again he said: "How blind I have been. I never saw till this morning. Till then my eyes were altogether turned *inwardly*—looking within to see something that GOD could be pleased with; but since this morning early my eyes are turned *outwardly* to that which *has been done for me.* Till this morning I always thought what I had heard many say, that CHRIST had done His part, and we must do ours to be saved. What my part was, however, I could never get any one to tell me with *certainty*, and still less could I get my soul to tell me. I had the Bible, but I didn't know where to begin. I was told I must repent, and earnestly and prayerfully I went at it, but never had the certainty I had fully satisfied God. I was told by many to be very earnest in prayer, and I agonized with God until I could but cry out: LORD, if I *must* go to hell, I'll go there praying. I tried every way, but there was no light. Sometimes I tried to make myself believe I was harder to please than God, and comforted myself with the thought, that when I got there I would find Him much less severe than I thought; but, after all, all was darkness, and the chance of hell for the world to come wasn't very frightful to me compared with this world. Before my trial I prayed many a time that I might be hanged, but not brought back to the Penitentiary. But this morning as I saw my salvation all *finished*—yes, *finished by the LORD JESUS*—as I saw I was justified freely by GOD'S grace through the redemption that is in CHRIST JESUS, an indescribable peace took hold of me—all was bright. I saw at once I now had the key to the Scriptures—the Key of Heaven itself. The face of God was now visible to me—I could see Him smiling on me, and I shouted to the top of my voice: *This is the true light that cometh from Heaven!*

"Ah! talk to me now about *my doing my part*, and I can answer: I've been doing that since my mother's womb, and here is the sad end of it!"

Here I felt in my heart the pang which crossed his own, and I said: "Yes, you've faithfully finished the work the devil gave you to do, but hear the word in John xvii. 4: 'I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.' Who said that? What work was that which the Father gave Him to do, and which He, in anticipation, says He has finished?"

The pang was gone. His dear face beamed again. The word *finished* was enough to soothe all his sorrows now. It made him laugh with delight every time it was pronounced. We knelt and praised God together for a long while, and I left that happiest of all places on earth—a converted criminal's cell.

(Extracted from the "The Last Twenty-one Days of the Convict Daniel Mann, sentenced to death on the 10th of November, 1870; executed on the 14th of December following. Being a simple narrative of the author's interviews with him." Obtainable at the depots. Price 15 cents.)

REVELATIONS II., III.

(Continued from page 28.)

A NUMBER of frequent occurrence in the Word of God is chosen—a number of one kind of perfection—seven being the highest simple number which cannot be divided without a remainder. The LORD JESUS took up seven assemblies, whose state furnished the needed characteristics, to make up the picture of the Church's moral history. Not from Pentecost, but from a period of marked declension, and going through the various phases of that history, and commencing with warnings, but ending in judgment and rejection.

So widespread, however, is the thought that this dispensation has not failed, or at any rate not so grossly as to entail judgment on itself, that it may be needful to refer briefly to one or two other portions of the Word to prove this. Nothing more marks the end of the last days as being come than the way in which men quietly assume that Christianity and civilization are going to regenerate the world, and usher in Millennial blessings, instead of, as both Scripture and experience prove, the fact being that judgment must precede blessing. I say Scripture *and* experience, for the one reveals it clearly as what would be, and the other proves how incompetent man is to set right the scene—or man in the scene. While the truth is also overlooked as to the character of the dispensation accord-

ing to God's thought, which is, the gathering out of the world the Church—out of Jew and Gentile—to form one body, and share the headship of the LORD JESUS over the new creation, when heaven and earth are gathered into one. The setting this scene right will surely come in its appointed time and place, after the Church is gone to heaven, and that by judgment, and in connection with Israel. One or two passages will suffice to prove that the LORD has no thought of putting things right here by the Gospel, and many more will at once occur to the one whose mind and heart are exercised in God's Word. I find the LORD JESUS saying: "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth, I tell you nay, but rather division, for there shall be five in one house, two against three and three against two." And yet at His birth, the heavenly hosts were praising God, and saying, "on earth peace," and surely that Blessed One, then a babe in a manger in Bethlehem, was the One through whom God was to be glorified and man blessed with peace. But we must not forget that another thing came in before that blessed announcement could have its fulfilment, and that is the rejection of that lowly One. Men set Him at naught, and crucified Him, and a rejected CHRIST the Christian owns as his LORD and SAVIOUR, and so is called to share His place outside the world that has crucified the SON of God. It is the forgetting this that leads Christians into the world to put it right, a thing God is not attempting now, and instead of doing that they too often imbibe its spirit and sink to its level more or less. The salt loses its savor, and separation in thought and word and act to God is little thought of. Paul says to Timothy, "All that will live Godly in CHRIST JESUS shall suffer persecution." "I pray not for the world, but for them that Thou hast given me out of the world," are the words of the LORD JESUS; and again, "not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." *Suffering* with CHRIST is the Christian's portion "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us." Again, "If any man come after Me, and take not up his cross daily, he cannot be My disciple." Is it that the world has changed, and that it loves CHRIST now, or is it Christianity that has accommodated itself to the spirit of the age and Christians forgotten separation to God, that makes these passages have so little apparent use now. Paul had to say to the Corinthians, "Ye have reigned as kings without us." Is this rebuke not

needed now? and to the Philippians, "Many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of CHRIST. . . who mind earthly things." How easily, when the heart is engrossed with this sense, and the flesh indulged in all the luxury of the age, can Satan get men to believe in the stability of this scene as it now is, and to forget the shaking God's word has foretold. "Where is the promise of His coming, for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were," and "My LORD delayeth his coming," meets one on every hand. And alas! how many a carnally-minded Christian, whose heart is in the world, although holding, perhaps, as a doctrine, the coming of the LORD, has yet let slip the power and freshness of that "blessed hope," and is saying in his heart, if not with his lips "My LORD delayeth." "Let your loins be girt, and your lamps burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their LORD, when He will return from the wedding; that when He cometh and knocketh they may open to Him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the LORD when He cometh, shall find watching."

In Rom. xi. we have as distinct and definite sentence passed upon the dispensation as in the passage before us. The natural branches of the olive tree (Israel) broken off that the branches of the wild olive (Gentiles) might be grafted in. The one fell through unbelief, the other stands by faith, and is warned to "continue in God's goodness, otherwise thou also shalt be cut off," and then the apostle goes on to say that "blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," and then speaks of the restoration of Israel as a settled fact, that it would take place, for Gentiles have not continued in God's goodness, but failed as badly, or worse, than Israel.

In the chapters before us then, we have Christ walking among the seven golden candlesticks, looking to see what light they give, and how far things down here accord with the mind of God, and sentence passed accordingly upon that which has so signally failed. Let us seek to trace the outlines He has given us here:

The seven assemblies naturally divide into the first three and the last four, and the division is marked by the change in the place of the exhortation "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." In the first three it is put before the promise to those who overcome, in the last four after, and certainly not without purpose. The first three

give the general picture of what led to the last four, which go down to the end. In what is said to Ephesus we have the fact that departure from "first love" leads to the removal of the candlestick. CHRIST will set aside that which has proved so unfaithful. The spueing out of His mouth in Laodicea being the fulfillment of the thing. In Smyrna which follows, we have persecution as the marked character. The enemy's effort to overthrow the testimony by open resistance, but the fire only burns up the dross, and so everything is bright. But Satan changes his mode of attack, and in Pergamos the patronage of the world and its smooth seductions are used effectually to beguile the heart from CHRIST, and false doctrine tolerated within, does its deadly work but too successfully. The result being Thyatira or Romanism as a system, characterized by idolatry, Jezebel usurping authority to teach and seduce CHRIST's servants, Sardis follows with a name to live, but dead. Abundant profession but her works "not perfect before God" nor is it hard to read in her the character of the profession of this day, so universal in what is called Protestantism, but whilst it has its faithful remnant, yet as a whole is but a dead and empty form.

Next we have Philadelphia with its revival of the real authority of His word, which with a little strength is kept, and His name not denied. The word of His patience is kept in much weakness and amidst opposition, and the hope of His coming, which is spoken of with increasing nearness, "I come quickly," points to the near approach of the end. Laodicea closes the history with its luke warmness, when in the midst of almost universal failure, individual faithfulness to CHRIST is almost all that is found, and the whole is set aside as His witness on earth. The light is put out which has been so long flickering, and the next chapters give us the Saints in Heaven and the opening of the book of the Judgment of the world. Let us turn back for a little to notice a few of the details more particularly. To begin with Ephesus. CHRIST holds the seven stars in His right hand, implying His perfect authority over them, and walks amidst the seven golden candlesticks, to see how far what meets His approval is found. If we look at the testimony He has to give of it, how graciously and yet faithfully He deals with it. Everything that can be commended, He will commend. It was the same love which would lead Him to say to "His own," so full of wrong thoughts, and a selfishness which betrayed itself in a "strife as to which should be the greatest," "ye are they which have continued

with me in my temptations," and yet in an hour or two they would be "scattered each to his own home" and leave Him alone. Here then He speaks of "works, and labor, and patience," but where were the faith and love and hope, which when the heart was right these flowed from as in 1. Thess. i. 3. These were gone alas! Now it is just this that He draws attention to. It is not great activity that pleases Him. Only love can satisfy love, and the freshness of heart towards Himself personally had gone thirty years before, at Ephesus, when poor Paul, the aged servant of that Master, had to say "All they which are in Asia are turned away from me." Nothing could make up for the lack of love to the LORD JESUS, although the want of it may be sought to be covered over by outward activity. How precious the thought that He values our love to Him and misses it if it is gone. "My Beloved is mine and I am His," is the joyful utterance of the heart that is right and has Him for its object. And love will show itself, not in mere pious emotions, but in obedience to His will, instead of mere blind activity in religious works, in which the flesh plays a prominent part and finds its gratification and self is indulged. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The place of Mary at His feet is the one to be desired, more pleasing to Him than the bustling activity of Martha, although with man the latter will gain the most applause. But "thou hast left thy first love" is the solemn warning of the One who had so great a claim upon that love, but who could not be satisfied with merely activity in judging evil, when He missed their affection to Himself. The judgment of evil is surely right in its own place and it is a sad sign of the terrible declension of these days, to see what indifference there is to truth and error. Heresy and false doctrine scarcely awaken any godly judgment and abhorrence in many who one hopes are Christians. "Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee* and remove thy candlestick out of its place, *except thou repent.*" Has the Church ever repented? Is it returned to its first love? Has it not rather gone on farther and farther on in apostacy? and nothing can avert the removing of the candlestick. His patience only is the limit of its continuance from day to day, or hour to hour in its present place.

Now, although we find that the Church as a whole is addressed as responsible, yet the LORD only looks for individual

* Quickly is omitted by the best authorities.

faithfulness. A man has to overcome now, not only in the world, but in the Church, or he will soon sink to a very low level, and "He that hath an ear," shows how we are cast over on to individual responsibility, instead of the Church being that which is expected to maintain God's testimony on earth. As in Matt. xiii 9., when the nation had rejected Messiah, He takes a place by the sea shore, and talks about a sower going forth to sow—to begin anew, and not look for fruit from that which is already judged. But "Who hath ears to hear, let *him* hear," puts people under individual responsibility to listen to, and act for God, whatever others might do. "To eat of the tree of life in the Paradise of God," is the reward of those who overcome. In Smyrna we have the open hostility of the world, and by persecution Satan seeks to overthrow the testimony. So far from his efforts being successful in this way, all is bright, and the LORD has nothing to say, but in the way of comfort and encouragement to His suffering people. How different must "I know thy works" have sounded to Ephesus and Smyrna. The same voice it was that spoke to each, yet what different feelings it would awaken.—What comfort to his faithful and tried ones. What uneasiness it would bring to the hearts of the unfaithful at Ephesus. They are suffering death here, and so CHRIST addresses them as the one who is the first and the last, who was dead and is alive. He had gone into all that they were called to pass through, and robbed death of its sting, and made it gain to die, for to depart and be with him was far better than being here. And he adds by way of promise that the second death—that which gave its terror to the first death—should never be their portion, but that the crown of life was what He had to give. "Tribulation ten days" is doubtless an allusion to the ten principal persecutions Christians endured, ended by Constantine patronizing Christianity. With what advantage to the cause of truth, the next assembly, Pergamos, will show us.

What a change we get here, Pergamos dwells where Satan's seat (throne) is, and, although the picture given is not so bad as what we have afterwards, yet the effect of the change is quickly manifest. The patronage of the world is a more deadly weapon in the Devil's hand to use against God's people than open hatred ever could be. That is why the last days are called "perilous times." Men would estimate that as meaning perilous to the body, but that is not God's thought. In such days as these it is easy to let go a good conscience

and make shipwreck of faith; and though of course, one who has eternal life can never perish, yet how many will be like Lot, saved "so as by fire." Like him bartering their privileges as God's people for a little of the world. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" has done its deadly work of robbing the souls of many, it may be, who will read this, of all real communion with God. The song once sung on the banks of the Red Sea has given place to the murmuring of the wilderness, and the heart is down in Egypt again, without enough energy of faith being left to press on to Canaan. But what a state to be in, the first love to him who bought you with his precious blood, is gone, and the world has robbed you of all peace of heart and joy in Him. No wonder, if it is so, your heart has got its idols; you are trying to serve, it may be, God and Mammon. Silly indulgence, ease and luxury, the pleasures of this world, the effort to add dollar to dollar, or farm to farm, a name and place in this world, where CHRIST got only shame, and rejection and the Cross. These things are eating out practically the life of thousands, and when the blessed LORD JESUS comes, He will find you doing this. You may think with yourself, Oh, I hope to straighten up before then. I ask did Lot ever get right till he left the scene of his failure? No, never. Take heed, then, lest you, like him, reap only sorrow from your own ways here, and like him are saved only as "by fire."

The doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of the Midianites are prominent features at Pergamos, and mark the steady declension that went on. As Ephesus they hated the deeds of the Midianites, and now, here, they tolerate the doctrine, so we may be sure the deeds were not far off. Balaam, too, could not get God to be against His own people, but open opposition only brought out blessing. He seduces them into alliance with the Midianites and his subtle plan succeeds, and this is just the difference between Smyrna and Pergamos.—CHRIST will fight against them with the sword of His mouth, and to those who overcome He will give the hidden manna, and the white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knows save he that receiveth it.

(To be continued, if the LORD will.)

A WORD IN SEASON.

THIS is the time of the world's *manhood*. All its elements are putting on strength, and taking their full form. The civil and

the ecclesiastical thing is asserting its manhood or full age. Vigour marks the progress of the Church of Rome, and of the commercial spirit: governments linking themselves with the one for their support, and the people imbibing and breathing the other for their advancement.

The world is thus stirring itself and playing the man. But CHRIST is still the *rejected* CHRIST, and faith has to own a *weak* cause in the presence of an advancing world, and of strengthened apostacies.

Thus is it, I judge, at this moment, and thus will it be. But judgment is to fall on this strong thing in the hour of its pride and vigour, and a glory (still hidden, but trusted and waited for) is to receive, to enshrine, and beautify and gladden, that which now walks on as the despised and feeble companion of a rejected LORD.

All this is may be serious to the thoughts of our natural hearts; but it is plain in the judgment of faith. It is the will of the LORD to let these apostacies grow up to manhood strength. *The Apocalypse presents them to the eye in that form and condition, just where judgment overtakes them.* The woman, or ecclesiastical apostasy, is *riding*, just at the moment of her overthrow; and the beast is holding and managing the *whole world*, just as he is met in the day of the LORD. The apocalypse in no wise shows us a weakened or depreciated condition of these great agents of the course of the world; but exhibits them in surpassing strength, and bloom, and honour, just at the end. We are not in the days of the apocalypse, it is true, but we witness the energies (which play their part there in all this vigour and pride of manhood) getting themselves ready, and preparing to take their appointed place.

The heart of the children of men is not aware of the true character of all this. *Progress* is desirable, as they judge. Man in his social place is advanced: and all his welfare in the human system around, with its securities, and peace, and refinements, and morals, and religion, is served. But what is there of God in all this? Were I to adopt the world's boast, and go on with its expectations, I should be strengthening my securities; but I should with that be losing my companionship with the heart and mind of CHRIST, which is our only true dignity this side the manifested Glory of the Kingdom. God gives all *spiritual* blessings now, peace, and joy, and liberty, with promise upon promise. But He is not regaining the earth to its circumstances for our enjoyment. Judgment must do

that. *Judgment is to make way for Glory in the world, and peace on earth.*

This tries our hearts. We cannot but feel that it does. All things are not now disposed by CHRIST, though He is in the place and title of all power and authority. He does not affect so to speak, to have all that the heart or values at His *present* disposal. His present Kingdom does not actually reach so far, though in title His authority is over all things. He does not speak of making us happy in *circumstances*: and it is for us to count the cost of this. It is for us to acquaint ourselves with what He is dispensing, and then to ask ourselves, can we value it? And it is *faith only* that values it. Nature cannot; the heart cannot. What JESUS now dispenses is exactly what faith, but what faith alone, can understand and appreciate.

May we lay this to heart; and, in the midst of all the alarms and forebodings of this serious solemn moment in the history of the world, say to our souls, the LORD is gathering out His elect, and leaving the great material around us for judgment—this is the way of His wisdom, and it promises us *no* security in present things, but will work out, for faith and hope, all their brightest thoughts and expectations.

May we, in the real power of our souls, say with another:

" His wisdom ever waketh ;
His sight is never dim :
He knows the path He taketh ;
And I will walk with Him."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q.—"To what point of time does Isaiah lxiii. refer, and why is it said in the third verse, 'I have trodden the wine press *alone*'?"

A.—The action referred to here is not, we believe, the coming of the LORD with His saints, as described in Rev. xix., to execute judgment on the Beast and the False Prophet, and which takes place *as He comes* from Heaven, a victory which the heavenly saints share with Him, but a terrible display of judgment which He executes *alone* after His feet, according to Zechariah xiv., have stood upon the Mount of Olives. It is the Eastern and not the Western nations that are the subject of this. The Assyrian, not the Beast. It is the 83d Psalm and prophecy of Isaiah xxxiv. fulfilled. The vengeance on Idumea. Hence it is more earthly in its character and mode of execution, and specially connects itself with Judah. Treading the

wine press (Isaiah lxiii.) is referred to in Rev. xix. as something He who was coming would do, but it is not the "supper of the Great God." The language, of course, is figurative, but the thing spoken of is the actual destruction of Edom. Jehovah, as man, is depicted in the blood-red garments of vengeance, and as having wrought deliverance for His redeemed ones. It is thus the spirit of prophecy depicts Him, and presents Him to the sight of the believing remnant of Jews.

Q.—"In the 13th verse of the 11th of Luke, it speaks of God giving His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. Has this a present application?"

A.—As asking for the Holy Spirit to be sent down from Heaven it could not, because He came at Pentecost, and has been on the earth ever since, and will be till the Church is taken to glory. The desire here is a personal one, and is a request for *spiritual* blessing in contrast with earthly benefits. A quickened soul now might certainly ask to have the Spirit given him, or another might ask for it to be given him, as we learn in Acts viii. 15. One, too, who has the Spirit might ask for a larger measure of the Spirit, according to Eph. v. 18. To quickened souls, after the Church has been taken, this prayer would also be most clearly applicable.

Q.—"What are the tares in the 13th of Matthew; are they the same as the foolish virgins in the 25th, and those spoken of in 2nd Thes. ii. 11?"

A.—The tares are unconverted persons holding *false* doctrines. The foolish virgins would seem to have a sound profession, and to be devoted externally, but without life and the indwelling Spirit. These would be the same as those in II. Thess., in not having life and the Spirit, only that there the holding of the truth is more connected with outward unrighteousness, and pleasure seeking,

Q.—"What are the birds in the 32nd verse of Matthew xiii. and what is the leaven in the 33rd verse?"

A.—The birds are evil spirits lodging in the branches of the great worldly system of blended civil and religious power that the Kingdom of Heaven externally has become. The leaven is corruption, whether moral or doctrinal. The Apostle Paul refers to the one in I Cor. v. 6, and to the other in Gal. v. 9.

THE REST OF THE SOUL.

THE only rest for the soul wearied with doubts and with remorse, wrung with a want which nothing satisfies, is CHRIST Himself. Not forms, but CHRIST. CHRIST, GOD and Man, giving His life for ours; sealing the everlasting Covenant, and making peace for us by the blood of His Cross. CHRIST, the Divine Source of all light, of all truth, in Whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." CHRIST, the vast vessel, filled with the HOLY SPIRIT, Who enlightens, Who teaches, Who consoles; so that those who believe in Him can say: "We have all received of His fulness, grace upon grace." Here is the only refuge for the distressed soul, the Rock upon which it can build, the dwelling where it can rest until the great tempter is bound, and all conflicts are ended in victory.

All other remedy is but quackery; this alone is the remedy of God, procuring a cure immediate and eternal. It is not by "opinions" that we must meet "opinions;" it is the truth of God we must take hold of. It is the stroke of "the sword of the SPIRIT" that we require against the theories of men, which, in their pride, they call their "opinions," in order to make them feel in what a network of sophistries and of folly they are entangled, while running toward their ruin.

What man requires is not opinions, it is truth. It is not theology, it is God. It is not religion, it is CHRIST. It is not literature and science, but the knowledge of the free love of God in the gift of His only Son.

In our day, when crime is increasing, philanthropists and those who pretend to regenerate society, ignorant of the only remedy which can take away the miseries and the guilt of man, direct all their efforts to education, as if crimes the most odious were not committed by the best instructed of men, as well as by the most ignorant. "He who has the SON has life," but "he who has not the SON of GOD (whatever the amount of knowledge he may possess) has not life." (1 John v. 12.) He is dead, he exists in death. His life is but a vapour, his knowledge is folly, his health is but chronic disease, his fortune his poverty. Be he moral or immoral, he lives for himself, and gains victory neither over the world, nor over his appetites, because he has not the power which alone can gain the victory—a living faith in a SAVIOUR once crucified, but now alive. (1 John v. 4. 5.)

If the one who reads these lines is poor in this world, and

besides without CHRIST, then he is poor indeed. Let him not flatter himself that his sufferings down here will secure him rest by-and-bye. JESUS knows all the evils that the poor undergo. He sees all those who are pressed by poverty, who are bruised by disease, who are distressed by anxieties; but all these evils are but the beginning of sorrows if the Cross be despised, if they know not JESUS, if they believe not on Him.

“Without shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins.” (Heb. ix. 22.) Without the actual pardon of sin through faith in this blood, no peace, no strength to suffer with patience the afflictions which are the heritage of the flesh. The Gospel is preached to the poor, it is the one remedy which they need; the sovereign balm for all their wounds. That which saves is not merely the Gospel preached, but the Gospel believed: the Gospel is not merely in words, but also in power and in the HOLY SPIRIT and in great assurance. (1 Thess. i. 5.) No rest, no sustainment in present affliction, no consolation upon the bed of death, no peace whether for the poor or the rich save by the Blood of CHRIST: for “there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we *must* be saved.” (Acts. iv. 12.) All, from the first to the last, have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Rom. iii. 22.) All have equally the need of being converted to God: for “except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

If the one who reads these lines groans, not only beneath the weight of temporal ill, but still more under the burden of a distressed conscience, let him look to JESUS. He invites you. He has words of consolation for the unhappy. “Come to me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.” “Ho! every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters.” “Let him that is athirst come.” “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” (Matt. xi. 28; Isa. lv. 1; Rev. xxii. 17; John vi. 37.)

JESUS has suffered death, “the just for the unjust.” “Once in the end of the world hath He appeared, to put away sin (the cause of all our sorrows. Gen. iii. 17), by the sacrifice of Himself.” (Heb. ix. 26.) All that is necessary to atone for sin has been accomplished; Divine justice is satisfied, the holiness of GOD has been demonstrated—for the Man, CHRIST JESUS, the fellow of Jehovah (Zech. xiii. 7), has fully glorified GOD; He has been obedient unto death, and now salvation through Him is preached to every creature under Heaven

and by Him all that believe are justified from all things. (Act. xiii. 39.)

“Believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and thou shalt be saved.” (Act. xvi. 31.)

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS TO CONVERTS.

Acts xi.

It is worthy of remark, that in this chapter we have the first account of Gentile converts:—of the receiving, in sovereign goodness and grace, poor sinners who had not even the promises to boast of which God had given to the Jews. To such it is, too, that Barnabas comes with the earnest exhortation contained in verse 23: “That with purpose of heart they should cleave unto the Lord.” What Peter was taught here as to the Gentiles, we all have to learn as to ourselves. When the blessed news of grace and pardon first reaches a sinner’s ears and heart, he rejoices in the thought of pardon and forgiveness. He does right. Jesus, the blessed Son of God, has met him in mercy with His precious blood. But with this the light enters into his soul. When there have been deep discoveries of sin before the soul has become happy, the peace of the soul is more settled. The sin to which grace is applied is in a measure already known. But when, through the proclamation of Divine pardon, without previous convictions, the soul has suddenly received joy, though there is always the discovery that we are sinners, the knowledge of the depth of sin in the heart, and what has to be forgiven and cleansed, is very small. The consequence is, that, after God has called us, and the Divine light has broken into our souls, we feel disturbed and uncertain, and even begin sometimes to doubt the fact of our being cleansed. This is wrong. The deeper discovery of sin and the knowledge of our own heart is useful. If we walk humbly and near to God, this knowledge will be made, comparatively speaking, peacefully; if not, in humiliation and failure. But you may not call unclean what God has cleansed. God has brought cleansing and pardon to us down here. We have not to wait for it until we go up there. God has cleansed you. You are clean *now*. But I desire to lead you to some further exercise of heart upon it, and clearer apprehension of God’s ways: a fuller exercise of conscience, that your peace may be as solid as your joy was genuine when you first heard of grace and forgiveness. In Luke xv. the great principle set forth is, that it is God’s

happiness when we are brought back to Him. Of course the joy of the restored one comes in, but is not the primary thing. The object of all three parables is not to show our joy, but the joy of God in our restoration. The three parables all teach the same grace, but we get, I believe, the joy of the SON, of the SPIRIT, and of the FATHER. But remark that in the first two we find a grace which finds and brings back what was lost, without any further question of the state of the soul. In the third, we have man's departure even into the lowest degradation of sin, and what passes in his soul on his return, till he is clothed in Divine righteousness, with CHRIST, in his Father's house. God has foreseen and provided for the whole case of the sinner. The younger son was as really a sinner when he left his father's house as when he was eating husks with the swine. He had abandoned God to do his own will. But the LORD pursues the case to the full degradation of sin, for sin degrades man. The young man comes to himself, turns back towards God, is converted; but he has not yet met God, nor has he the best robe on him. He did not know in his conscience Divine righteousness. When he really meets his father, not only is he in tender love—only the more shown because he had been lost—received when in his rags, into his father's arms, but he is made righteously fit for the house, clothed with CHRIST. His father was on his neck when he was in his rags, but he was not received into the house in that state. He could not have been. But God has provided for the sinner what Adam in his innocence had not. He has provided CHRIST. Grace reigns through righteousness. The best robe, no part of the son's portion before he left, is now put on him, and he is fit for the house to which that robe belonged. All the extent of the soul's departure from God has been weighed. The soul may be exercised about it, and will till self is wholly given up as a ground on which we can stand with God. No going in legally as a hired servant—before God it is rags and exclusion, or the best robe and joyful admission. All true experiences lead to that emptying of self, and CHRIST all, and we in Him before God. Then, as I have said, our peace is as solid as the joy of the thought of forgiveness was blessed, and the joy itself deeper, if not more genuine. Another truth is connected with this. God having perfectly cleansed us by the blood of CHRIST, the Spirit dwells in the cleansed heart. "As many as are lead by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The Spirit gives us the consciousness of our relationship as dear children. "Because ye

are sons, GOD has sent forth the Spirit of His SON into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." What manner of persons ought we to be, who are the temples of the Holy Ghost? we may well continually ask ourselves. But do not let failures make us doubt that we have it. Low and wretched as was the state the Galatians had fallen into, they never doubted they had the Spirit of GOD; but they were getting wrong as to the ground of their standing, as to how they received it; so that the Apostle had to ask them, "Received ye the SPIRIT by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. iii. 2.) "We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance." We have life as truly as CHRIST is alive; but we are not yet in heaven. The thief, indeed, was privileged to be taken directly home, believing only to-day, but to-day the first companion CHRIST had in paradise. We do not look for such immediate departure, but our ground is the same; we are as truly saved, but not so soon to be in heaven. Rather have we to go through this evil world: to go through it as crucified with CHRIST, dead indeed, but risen—to go through it with His Spirit dwelling in us. Be careful lest you grieve that Spirit. You have to go through the world bearing the name of CHRIST upon you. See that you bring no reproach upon that Blessed Name by being *inconsistent*. The world will be sharp to exclaim, there are your Christians! You will have to go through the world with GOD dwelling in you. To carry this treasure in an earthen vessel. Entrusted with this treasure, an habitation of GOD through the Spirit. Of course it is only through His grace that you can carry such a treasure through an evil world; but there is power in CHRIST, there is sufficiency in CHRIST for all he would have you to do or be. He exhorted them that they should cleave to the LORD. Depend on Him! Some are allowed to have a long season of joy on first believing, but GOD knows our hearts, and how soon we should be depending on our joy, and not on CHRIST. He is our object! joy is not our object. Do not let your joy lead you to forget the source of it, and then it need never wane. This joy is right and beautiful in its place; I am not saying a word against it—GOD forbid. But I warn you against resting in it. Do not let your joy be your dependence. Do not lean on it for strength. There is danger of joy, however genuine, making you forget how dependent you are every moment. Depend upon Him—cleave to Him with purpose of heart. Do not be content with being happy (may you continue so), but with

Paul, forgetting the things which are behind, press on, etc. (Phil. iii.) I have seen many Christians so full of joy that they thought there was no such thing as sin left. It is true, sin no longer remains on you; but the flesh is *in* you to the end. The old stock is there, and you will find that, if you are not watchful, if Divine life is not cherished and cultivated in your hearts by looking at CHRIST and feeding on Him, it will be putting forth its buds; if it does, they must be nipped off as they appear. No good fruit comes of the old stock. It is the *new* that bears fruit unto God. But though the flesh is in you, do not be thinking of this, but think of CHRIST—cleave to Him; and may your souls be maintained in this truth, that CHRIST is your life! ay, that CHRIST is so your life that CHRIST must die (the thought of which is blasphemy) before you can perish. And as He is your life, so is He the object of that life. “The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” (Gal. ii. 20.) As you grow in this knowledge of Him, a joy grows deeper than that of first conversion. I have known CHRIST, more or less, between thirty and forty years, and I can say that I have ten thousand times more joy *now* than I had at first. It is a deeper, calmer joy. The water rushing down from a hill is beautiful to look at, and makes most noise; but you will find the water that runs in the plain is deeper, calmer, more fructifying.

Observe, they are exhorted with purpose of heart to cleave to the LORD. A distracted heart is the bane of a Christian. When my heart is filled with CHRIST, I have no heart or eye for the trash of the world. If CHRIST is dwelling in your heart by faith, it will not be the question, What harm is there in this, or that? rather, Am I doing this for CHRIST? Can CHRIST go along with me in this? If you are in communion with Him, you will readily detect what is not of Him. Do not let the world come in and distract your thoughts. I speak especially to you young ones; we, who are older, have had more experience of what the world is, we know more what it is worth, but it all lies shining before you, endeavoring to attract you. (What does it fill its shop windows for else?) Its smiles are all deceitful, still it *is* smiling upon you. It makes many promises it cannot fulfil, still it *promises*. The fact is, your hearts are too big for the world, it cannot fill them; they are too little for CHRIST, for He fills heaven: yet will He fill you to overflowing.

Observe again, it is cleave unto the LORD. Not cleave to

duty, or law, or ordinances (though these are good in their places), but to the LORD. He knew how treacherous the heart was, and how soon it would put anything in *His* place. You will have to learn what is in your heart. Abide with **God** and you will learn your heart with Him, and under His grace; else you will have to learn it with the Devil through his successful temptations. But God is faithful and if you have been getting away from Him, and other things have been coming in and forming a crust round your heart, and you want to get back again, God says, What is this crust? I must have you deal with it, and get rid of it! Remember **CHRIST** bought you with His own Blood, that you should be His, and not the world's. The denial of this fact is an artifice of the Devil. Do not let the Devil come in between you and God's grace. However careless you may have been, however far you may have got away from Him, return to Him; doubt not His joy in having you back, count upon His love, look at the sin which led you away, with horror, but do not wrong Him by distrusting his love, any more than you would an affectionate husband or wife, by throwing a doubt on their love if you had been for a moment ungracious. Hate yourself, but remember how He has loved you, and will love you until the end! Mistrust not His work, mistrust not His love. "It was granted unto the Gentiles to have repentance unto life." All is of God!

I would have you carry away in your minds three things which by grace are given you. 1st, cleaving to the LORD; 2d, perfect forgiveness; 3d, a purged conscience. To illustrate this last, take the case of Peter. He denied his LORD—denied Him to a serving-maid; but the LORD had turned and looked on him, and he had gone out and wept bitterly. A few weeks after this (Acts.iii.), he could say that they were a lost and ruined people, because "they denied the Holy One and the Just"; the very thing he had done himself, in a worse way, too, for he had been with Him as His friend for three years. But his conscience was purged; he knew he was forgiven; and now he could turn round, and fearlessly charge others with the very thing he had done himself.

One word more. Talk with Him. Never be content without being able to walk and talk with **CHRIST** as with a dear friend. Be not satisfied with anything short of near intercourse with Him who has loved you with such manner of love!

J. N. D.

HYSSOP.

“And he spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon even unto the *Hyssop* that springeth out of the wall.” (1 Kings iv. 33.) Next to the grace of God in Jesus, the living truth as told forth in all His ways and words, nothing is so calculated to touch the heart as the tender consideration of God in the way He has come down in His *written* word, to enlighten our understandings in Himself and His grace. The light would be too much for us did it shine out all at once. It must needs, by reason of *our* state, come to us little by little. It is thus it does come to us in the precious details of the word of truth. “The entrance of Thy *words* giveth light,” says the Psalmist. Every word in the “Holy Scriptures” is important. Not one is there by chance or out of place. Each letter is pregnant with meaning, and the several words are like so many diamonds, precious in the way in which they reflect the light Divine, that they are given to convey. He who gathers such diamonds is rich indeed, and the merchandise of them is “better than silver and the gain thereof than fine gold.” In nothing is it more true “that to him that hath shall more be given,” and “the diligent soul shall be made fat.”

With such thoughts as these would we by the Lord's help take up the word “hyssop,” and let its soft reflections fall upon our souls. Well might Solomon speak of such a plant and let his God given wisdom tell of its rare excellencies, those types of deeper things that God would have them be, the inlet of to the soul. “The hyssop that springeth out of the wall,” humble, lowly thing hanging by another's strength, the lowest in the series of trees that Solomon's ready tongue descanted on, marked contrast to the stately cedar that stood at the other extreme.

What have we here but that which typifies humility? Is it not a ray cast forward upon One who says “learn of Me for I am meek and lowly of heart.” Yes, it is the humbled Son of man we are looking at, “the mind that was in CHRIST JESUS.” (Phil. ii.) The “hyssop” is clearly CHRIST in His humiliation.

But let us look at some other passages in which the word “hyssop” figures, and where it is evidently CHRIST that is in question. In the 14th of Leviticus, we have the cleansing of the leper and in the 4th, 5th and 6th verses the materials for doing so are enumerated, with the mode of dealing with them. “Then shall the priest command to take for him that is

to be cleansed, two birds, alive, and clean, and cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop. And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water: as for the living bird he shall take it and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the *hyssop*, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water." All these things, as we all know, typify CHRIST in His sacrificial work for the sinner, and here we see the "hyssop," dying as it were for the leper. It is dipped in blood.

Oh precious SAVIOUR, hanging dead for our sins upon the Cross, mocked too in Thy humility and dying love, by those who "filled a sponge with vinegar and put it upon *hyssop*, and put it to Thy mouth." Surely such is the language of our souls as we look upon this lovely type of JESUS.

The purifying of the unclean person,—the restoration of the believer to communion, is brought before us in the 19th of Numbers, and here again we find the "hyssop" entering into the work which purifies. "And the priest shall take cedar wood and hyssop and scarlet, and cast them into the midst of the burning of the heifer." This too is CHRIST on the Cross, but here *suffering* the wrath of God and crying out "my God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me." How sweetly does the "hyssop" make itself heard in this wondrous scene. "But Thou art holy," "But I am a worm and no man," is the language of the lowly sin-bearer.

All this is but the proved perfectness, in death and suffering, of what CHRIST *always* was as Man on earth. It is the burning of "the hyssop that springeth out of the wall." See Him enter this sad world. He does so as the lowly Babe cradled in the manger. Then He is the Nazarene, increasing in wisdom and stature, but subject to His parents. Next He stoops to be baptized of John, fulfilling righteousness. All this is "hyssop," well pleasing to God, and Heaven opens to say, "This is My beloved SON, in whom I am well pleased."

It is the "hyssop" that teaches on the Mount, and says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." "I am meek and lowly of heart" are its inviting tones to the poor, heavy-laden sinner, in the 11th of Matthew. "Why callest thou Me good?" is its rebuke to the pride of man, that looked on it as man apart from God. Are the scarlet robes of royalty assumed, it is the "hyssop" that beneath them rides "meek and lowly sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." Contemptuously arrayed in purple, it is "the hyssop" that

Herod and His men of war set at naught. These are a few only of the instances in which JESUS, as the "hyssop," is brought before us in the Gospels, and the Spirit delights thus to depict Him in His *humiliation*, that we may learn to love Him in this character, and drink in His Spirit. For "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble."

In the 12th of Exodus we find a "bunch of hyssop" in the hand of the believing Israelite, who, as a lost sinner, is securing himself from impending judgment, by sprinkling the blood of the lamb on the lintel and two side-posts of his house. Here it sets forth that which is the practical link between the sinner and the blood that saves him. It is nothing that the sinner is in himself by nature, but something that *grace* has provided for him as much as the blood. It is faith working self-judgment and lowliness of heart. It is that which leads to the full reception of the Gospel, externally exhibiting itself in repentance, of which it is really the essence, enabling God righteously to own the *state of soul* in man to which the sacrifice of CHRIST applies. Where there is no "hyssop," grace cannot work, because the principle of Divine blessing is, "He giveth grace to the *humble*."

This is finely exhibited in the 18th of Luke. The Pharisee has no "bunch of hyssop" in his hand. The publican has, and smites "upon his breast saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." Hence, he goes down to his house "justified rather than the other"; "for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The Pharisees refused to take the "bunch of hyssop" offered them by John the Baptist. They "rejected the testimony of God against themselves, being not baptized of him," the LORD says. The publicans took it, and justified God, being baptized by John with the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

The poor Syrophenician woman first comes to JESUS without "the bunch of hyssop," and can get no blessing. She then takes it from the hands of JESUS, judging herself in the words: "Dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table," and gets all she wants. The centurion has it in hand when he says to the LORD, "I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof." The repentant thief on the cross uses it, when, condemning himself and rebuking his fellow, he turns to the dying SAVIOUR by his side, saying, "LORD, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."

In all these cases the *one* seeking blessing uses the "bunch

of hyssop" for himself, but in the 19th of Numbers, to which we have already referred, beside the "hyssop" in the sacrifice, a "bunch of hyssop," verse 18th, is that which, in the hand of another, is used to sprinkle the water of purification upon the unclean person. The typical import is the same, and means entire humiliation of heart in the one to be cleansed. David seeks this state of soul when, in the 51st Psalm, he says, "purge me with hyssop." I believe the more grace works in the soul, the more precious and sought after "the hyssop" will be. It is the practical link, as a fruit of faith, between our souls and God, bringing not only blessing at the start, but insuring it all the pathway through on this principle.

It is possible that, in this latter instance, the hyssop may have some reference, too, to the state of heart in the clean person using it, as setting forth the lowliness of soul that God looks for in a servant of His grace. And surely we see this blessed feature in our Lord's action in washing his Disciples' feet, in the 13th of John, and that while fulfilling the type of the 19th of Numbers in His own person, He would also teach them not only the service they should render to their brethren, but also the spirit in which it should be rendered. Paul, as the servant of the Church, felt he was "less than the least of all saints;" and when exhorting us to the service of feet-washing he says, "ye that are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself." (Gal. vi. 1.)

The same thing would be in question in preaching the Gospel, which the one using the hyssop to sprinkle the leper, in the 7th verse of the 14th of Leviticus, might set forth. So Paul speaks of himself as the chiefest of sinners; takes the lowest place before such, and says to the Corinthians that he was with them "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."

All this is "the hyssop that springeth out of the wall"—God in His place, and man in his, as weak and dependant upon Him. The Lord give us all to feed upon Himself in His lowliness and *humiliation*, that our God may not only be able to bless us fully, but to use us freely, as those in whose hearts the "hyssop" is always growing, and ready to His hand. "To this man will I look," says the Lord, "even unto him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word." (Isaiah lxi. 2.)

WATCH AND PRAY.

WHAT a mighty influence this world exerts over us! It is ever interweaving something into the framework of our hourly life; drawing a film between the soul and God, and deadening the keenness and sensibility of our spiritual perceptions. There is no moment when it is not upon us. Like the law of gravitation, which universally takes effect where-soever it is not kept out by a special counteraction, so is it in our intercourse with the world. All the day long there is an influence playing upon us which draws our characters to the surface, and there fixes them; it rushes upon us with an overwhelming torrent; enters into the soul through our eyes and ears, and every inlet of the senses; through our instincts, our wants, and our natural affections; smothering or extinguishing everything that would lead to something higher; each day drawing a fresh hard layer over the heart; each energy laying another touch on the deepening character, and every moment fixing its colors with deeper steadfastness, until we live and act as if it were our only home.

For this we need a strong counteracting influence. Our life is too outside and visible among the throng of men; we are not enough alone with God; we live in the unreal, and become unreal ourselves. There must be calmness of intercourse with God. God's Presence is full of reality, and His presence must be the antidote to the withering blight and the hourly infection of this world, and must abolish in us all that is not real and eternal. Never do we put off the paint and masquerade of life as when alone with Him. The duplicities of the heart, which the world had interweaved, are held in check, and by habitual communion with God are weakened and overcome. This is the only counteracting and transforming influence; and think as we will, we may rely upon it, that if we are not under it, are not in constant fellowship with the FATHER and the SON, in the power of the HOLY GHOST, the world will most surely and deeply conform us to itself!

In our intercourse with it, a thousand tests touch us on every side; and if we would maintain uninterruptedly our communion with God, we must be watchful—we must watch against sin, against self and against the world. *“Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.”*

“BEHOLD I COME QUICKLY.”

(Rev. xxii.)

THE horizon of the soul must ever be CHRIST's coming. It is such in the heart of the LORD for His people. “BEHOLD I COME QUICKLY!” is His unceasing word to them, from that bright glory where He sits at GOD's right hand waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. From the moment He took His seat there, His attitude has been one of expectancy. As still doing the FATHER's will and glorifying Him (John x. vii.). He waits eagerly, yet patiently, for the moment, known only to the FATHER, not even to Himself as the SON (Mark xiii. 32.), when He shall be told to fetch His people home, and set up His kingdom over the earth.

The FATHER's heart is full of the thought of having His children with Himself in glory, and of blessing His creatures according to that glory on earth. All this waits upon the coming of His son, and He is “not slack concerning His promise,” but only waiting in long suffering love that souls may be saved. He is the “God of Hope,” and thus hope enters into all He does, always working by *hope*, with faith and love, in the hearts of His saints.

Saints are now in the kingdom and patience of JESUS CHRIST, John tells us in Rev. i. 9, and Paul prays that our hearts may be directed now “into the love of God and the patience of CHRIST.” Not for a moment is the hope of His coming absent from the thoughts of the LORD as He looks upon His people. It gives its character and shape to all He is for them.

When leaving them on earth to take His place on high, “occupy till I come,” was the *one* thing He left them to do, and thus everything was to hang upon and lead up to His coming. “Hold fast till I come,” is the one stay He gives the faithful heart amid the corruptions of Thyatira. “I will come upon thee as a thief,” is the warning to the dead professor in Sardis. To those, who surrounded by human self-sufficiency and a form of godliness denying the power, are cleaving to His name and word, His sweet encouragement is, “I know thy works,” “Behold I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”

“Behold I come quickly” is ever echoing through the book of Revelation, as if to constantly recall the heart to CHRIST Himself as immediately about to return, so that it may not become occupied with *earthly* events, even though these be

seen as transpiring under the hands of God. Intelligence about these things, and a vivid foreseeing of the judgment about to come to the world, is well, nor can the "sure word of prophecy" be over estimated, but CHRIST Himself, personally must hold the heart, His coming be the margin of the mind, all else falling within this. Hence the Book itself is to be read, and its sayings kept, under the spur of this thought, "Behold I come quickly; blessed is he that keepeth the saying of the prophecy of this book," and all service is to be rendered with the sound ever ringing in the ears, "Behold I come quickly; and my reward is with Me to give to every man according as His work shall be."

Even when the world, in a gross form, is not carrying the heart away, and the Scriptures are the object of research, there is danger, unless CHRIST and His coming are the spring of the affections leading to the study; and work for the LORD may be rendered, apart from Himself and His coming, but it will get no reward, for His will is, that "blessed are those servants whom, when their LORD cometh, He shall find watching." The LORD knows the tendency of our hearts to let slip, even in His own things, the hope of His return, and He has constantly to say, "Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with me."

He knows, too, the unbelief of our hearts, and that though not giving up the truth of His coming, yet that we should be likely to put it off, and to be saying in our hearts, "My LORD delayeth," or at least to be listening to those who do say this, so He closes all He has to tell His people, with, "*Surely I come quickly.*"

It is like when anticipating the hardness and unbelief of the natural heart in the Gospels, He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you." He thus throws out into relief what He has to say, in order to impress it upon the soul as that which would be specially likely to tax its energies. At once giving the lie to the suggestions of Satan that the poor sinner's heart is so ready to lend an ear to. He raises his voice, so to speak, in earnestness above all other sounds, and strikes home the truth, bearing down all resistance with, "Verily, verily, I say unto you."

So here it is, "Surely, I come quickly;" words that cast their sound back over the whole volume of inspiration; that echo, so to speak, in every sentence of the word of God.

We may be reading of different things; truths all dissimilar may engage our attention; the conflict of good and evil may

be before us; the grace of God may be calling out the affections, or His government dealing with the conscience: Heaven and earth, the one at one time and the other at another, as the sphere of God's acting, may be holding our wondering gaze, but the still small voice of Him which testifieth these things, saying, “Surely, I come quickly,” is to be heard arresting the heart and conscience for Himself as the Coming One.

The HOLY GHOST, on earth and in the saints, ever attentive to the voice of CHRIST, not speaking from Himself, but always what he hears, is constantly whispering these words in the soul of the believer, or sounding out their warning notes to the world. “The spirit of Truth:” it permeates all His teachings through the Apostles. The Comforter and guide of the Bride of the Lamb, He never ceases to answer back to the Bridegroom, “Come;” and striking the chords of her heart, leads her also to cry, “Come.” “The Spirit and the Bride say come.”

Nothing so tells of the direct action of the HOLY GHOST, in the soul of the believer, as the heart and lip saying, “Come, LORD JESUS.” The HOLY SPIRIT alone can keep CHRIST before the heart, and bring to our remembrance whatsoever He has said unto us; and, by contrast, in nothing is the direct agency of Satan more seen than in hiding the truth of the coming of the LORD. It matters not to him in what way, be it the world or the Church, the truth or service. He knows well, God's will is, that His saints should ever be waiting for His Son from Heaven, and he knows that the coming of His Son will be his destruction, and the deliverance of man from his power. He knows it will bring happiness and blessing to all creation. He hates all this, as he hates God. Repeating his action in Paradise, he lies and deludes; tells some truths, but hides others, his purpose being the same, to get man under his power, and dishonor God. But the “seed of the woman” has triumphed over him in the Cross; holds now a place and name above him; and will shortly bruise his head, even under the feet of His saints.

The saint's part is to turn a deaf ear to all his suggestions, by simply cleaving to Scripture, under the teaching of the HOLY SPIRIT: “He that hath an ear let him hear what the SPIRIT saith to the Churches.

Attentive to the voice of that glorified JESUS, “the Bright and Morning Star, saying, “SURELY I COME, QUICKLY,” his part is to respond, with adoring desire, and increasing earnestness, “Even so, Come, LORD JESUS.”

BAYLON AND THE BEAST.

Rev. xvii.

BABYLON is a great system in the earth by which men's hearts are drawn from God. It supplies them with something to have natural enjoyment in besides joy in God. In this, Babylon is the great whore drawing out corrupt affections. She is supported by the great power of the earth; but power is not what is presented in Babylon, but the withdrawal of affection from God to have it spent on what ministers to natural lust. There are the kings of the earth, the merchants of the earth, and all nations brought in as acted on by Babylon. She ministers to the enjoyment of kings, to the wealth of merchants, and to the excitement of nations: she is borne by the beast whose character is blaspheming power; but she, by corrupt fascinations rules over the kings of the earth. When she is judged, then the beast will rule by blaspheming power, drawing out the wonder of the whole world, and their worship too; but before the beast comes to rule, he supports the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.

Open blasphemy is not the character of prevailing evil in the present day: neither is it an astonishing display of combined power, because the beast still carries the harlot. But the evil of the present day is *enjoyment* in the world, not in CHRIST; riches in the world, not in CHRIST: and the excitement of these things so intoxicating men's minds, that all engagement in the things of CHRIST are out of mind. All this may be under a profession of truth; because it is the beast that is the blasphemer, who, before he himself rules, supports the mother of harlots—the *parent of all* who draw affections from God to the things of the world.

The woman is drunken with the blood of the saints; but the inhabitants of the earth are drunken with the wine of her fornications. When the saints are persecuted, then the spirit that draws the heart away from God becomes excited: it takes fresh stimulus from this to present with attraction its sinful gratifications; and these abominations act on the spirit of the inhabitants of the earth and excite them. The kings, as the great ones of the earth commit fornication with her: the inhabitants, as the common people of the world, are excited by it. If there is a wicked show in a town, it acts thus doubly. The rich people pay for going in, and enjoy the show: the poor people crowd outside the door under the excitement of it. Both are acted on by the evil.

The beast was full of names of blasphemy; but the woman had a cup full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: the effort of the woman is not to make you an open blasphemer, but to live in sin; she will leave you the form of godliness, but the power thereof she will make you deny. The beast has not even the form of godliness, he is full of names of blasphemy; but he is not ruling, he only supports the woman who does rule.

“The beast which thou sawest was and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition.”

The beast in its first constitution is seen in Dan. vii., thus it was—but it has declined and ceased to exhibit itself; but in its revival it will assume a new feature as coming out of the bottomless pit—simply energized by Satan. Its constituted strength was not this, but its restored is. That which has its source in wickedness, and its end in judgment, revealed to the servants will have its importance lowered before them in some little moment of boast; but they who have not the mind of God, and walk by sight, are altogether dazzled by this display; and so, they that dwell on the earth shall wonder whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, “when they behold the Beast that was, and is not, and yet is.”

“THOU SHALT FIND IT AFTER MANY DAYS.”

John Flavel was a Minister of the Gospel at Dartmouth in England. One day he preached from these words, “If any man love not the LORD JESUS CHRIST, let him be Anathema Maran-atha.” (1 Cor. xvi. 22.) The discourse was unusually solemn, particularly the explanation of the curse. At the conclusion when Mr. Flavel rose to pronounce the blessing, he paused and said, “How shall I bless this whole assembly, when every person in it who loves not the LORD JESUS is Anathema Maran atha?”

The solemnity of this address deeply affected the audience. In the congregation was a lad named Luke Shut, about fifteen years old, a native of Dartmouth. Shortly after he went to sea, and sailed to America, where he passed the rest of his life. His life was lengthened far beyond the usual term. When a hundred years old, he was able to work on his farm, and his mind was not at all impaired. He lived all this time in carelessness and sin; he was a sinner a hundred years old, and ready to die accursed.

One day, as he sat in his field, he busied himself in reflecting on his past life. He thought of the days of his youth. His memory fixed on Flavel's sermon, a considerable part of which he remembered. The earnestness of the preacher, the truths spoken, the effect on the people, all came fresh to his mind. He felt that he had not loved the LORD JESUS; he feared the dreadful anathema; he was deeply convinced of sin, was brought to the blood of sprinkling. He lived to his one hundred and sixteenth year, giving every evidence of being saved and born again.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. "When Saints are gathered unto the Name of JESUS, though they be but two or three, can they, ought they, to carry out the principles of the Church of God, as given it when first formed, regarding discipline, etc., seeing the Church externally is in ruins? If the two or three refuse to act on those principles, are they gathered to His Name?"

A. The integrity of an assembly in no sense depends upon the number gathered to the LORD'S Name, be they two or two thousand. If the LORD is in the midst, according to the promise of Mat. xviii, it is His assembly, because He is there, and the principles of the Church of God are at once in question, because God is there. Neither He nor His government ever change, and CHRIST as SON over His own house ever rules according to GOD, and with respect to His glory. Practically for us, Scripture is our guide, and we have CHRIST'S power and authority with us, when acting according to the written word, and "if any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you, are the commandments of the LORD," Paul says. The external ruin of the Church changes nothing of this, CHRIST'S word abides. Certainly any number, few or many, refusing to act upon the principles of the Church of GOD are not gathered to CHRIST'S Name. It is mere self-will and wickedness, and the LORD knows how to deal with it. Our place is to walk in peace with one another, sustained by the LORD'S own encouragement, Rev. iii. 8, leaving everything else in His hands.

Q. "Say two brethren and a sister are gathered to remember the LORD in His death, or simply for prayer, in either case would it be right for the sister to engage audibly in prayer, and

should not the two or three endeavour to keep by the order of the assembly, as if the whole Church were present? Would, 1. Cor. xi. 5, in any way prove that a woman should pray in the assembly?"

▲ Much of this question we have answered above, and so do not repeat. For the rest it appears clear to us, that woman's place in the Church, whether as to teaching or praying, is silence. 1 Cor. xiv. 34, is conclusive for the one, and 1 Tim. viii. 8, as to the other. An *inference* drawn from 1 Cor. xi. 5, proves nothing, and can never be set against the direct statements of Scripture. All that the passage referred to teaches, is that woman when in the public assembly of the Saints, and whilst praying and prophecying is going on, is to have her head covered, as an external witness of her subjection to man, under the LORD.

Q. "What is meant by the last day in John vi. 39 and 40?"

A. We apprehend that "last day" refers to the end of the dealings of God with man on the footing of responsibility in this life. In a general sense this would take in all men, but for the Jews it specially refers to the end of the dispensation of the law, under which they were, the closing of which would be by resurrection. Martha refers to it in this way, in the 24th verse of the 11th chapter, and so Paul, Acts. xxiv. referring to the things which are written in the law and in the prophets says, "that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." It would seem that "the last day" begins with the first resurrection, which is what the LORD refers to here as to blessing, and concludes with the last resurrection at the great white throne for judgment. The LORD, John v. 28 and 29 says, "the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." "The hour," and "the day," refer to the same period in which resurrection would be in question, but as we know from other Scriptures, the two transactions are divided as to time. Eternal life is the present possession of the believer, and resurrection brings in salvation in its full results at the last day. We are not on Church ground here, as corporately the body of CHRIST, but on our personal footing before God.

Q.—"Will the world be deprived of every quickened soul at the moment of the Church's rapture?"

A.—Scripture is silent on this point. Immediately upon the Church being removed from the scene God will begin to deal with the Jews and Gentiles as such, introductory to the manifest setting up of the Kingdom, doubtless such souls will be quickened.

“FRAGMENTS GATHERED UP.”

Nothing, save the blood of the Lamb, will shut out the Destroying Angel. He enters, with the Sword of Judgment, every house that is not sprinkled with the blood. Nothing else will meet the holy and righteous demands of Heaven. Nothing else will meet the deep and varied necessities of the sinner. Nothing else will meet the accusations of the enemy and turn aside the accuser. They, and they only, are safe, who are under the shelter of the priceless value, the eternal efficacy, and the redeeming power of the blood of the slain Lamb. “We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” (Eph. i. 7.)

“The nearer a man is to God *externally*, if his soul has not *living fellowship* with Him, the *worse* he is. Judas is worse than the Pharisees, the Pharisees than the Samaritans. Hence the profession of Christianity, where there is not its living power, is the very place where the most evil is to be looked for.

The history of Judas is, first, that he was a prudent man, loved money, carried the bag. Then Satan suggests to him a way of gratifying his lust; now hypocrisy comes in, he goes on with his *religion*, after he has concluded to betray CHRIST, and with the sop Satan enters into him; now he is hardened even against the relentings of nature.”

“SOME of us are too disposed to look at the *death* in Adam, rather than the *life* in CHRIST; the ruin and sorrow that came in through the first man, rather than the mighty, everlasting relief that has been introduced by the Second.”

“UNBELIEF looks on circumstances within or without as reasons to doubt the love and faithfulness of God; faith looks upon the promises and reads the circumstances by the light of what God has said. Faith measures every difficulty by the *power of God*, and then the mountain becomes a plain.”

“O SIR, I AM SO MISERABLE!”

THE LORD was blessing in K——. For years the place had been slumbering in the cradle of death. Regular as their town clock the people had filled their pews and joined in the various religious exercises from week to week, and as regularly had returned home in the full satisfaction of “duty” performed.

It was that Sunday Christianity which, beyond the limits of that day, is quite unrecognizable from the world itself, enjoying the same pleasures with it, courting the same honours, seeking the same paths, using the same means.

Surely, none but God can shake people from such deadly slumbers. God did shake them. Dead professors became alarmed at their deadness, and lost sinners fled to Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

While the blessing was quietly going on, despite the difficulties the great enemy of souls ever seeks to throw in the way, a young woman sent me word through an elderly lady friend of hers, expressing a wish to see me.

Already I had been pointed to that young woman who, for several weeks, had been coming to the meetings and appeared very much exercised in her soul, but various reasons had led me to wait till persons thus exercised, *themselves* expressed a wish to be visited, and I had left her to herself and the LORD.

As soon, however, as I knew her wish, I called to see her.

“Why have you sent for me?” I asked, after I was seated.

“O Sir, I am *so* miserable!” was all the answer she could give.

“You have been attending the preaching several weeks,” I said, “and I am sure you have not failed to hear me speak of what Jesus, the Son of God, did on the cross. How that *there* ‘He bare our sins in His own body’ (1 Pet. ii. 24). You know when He was there how He cried, ‘My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?’ and yet He was not delivered, because ‘*the LORD had laid on Him the iniquity of us all*’ (Isaiah liii. 6), and iniquity deserved wrath.”

“O yes, I have heard all this,” she said, “but the more I hear it the more miserable I feel. I had never had an hour of trouble about my soul until I went to hear you the first time. My friend asked me to go with her, and I refused, saying I had heard many bad things about you, but she insisted the

more, telling me I should not be led by prejudiced people's talk but go and hear for myself. I went, and that very night I came home with this unaccountable misery. I can't explain it, I can't analyze it. I hear people all around rejoicing and talking about the love of God and the cross of CHRIST, but the more I hear about that, the more miserable I feel. My misery, Sir, is very great. Can't you do something for me?"

She had unburdened herself, and I now plainly saw that she was in that state where souls are in their last struggle against the *grace of God*, and try to cling to anything else.

"I can do nothing, *nothing whatever* for you," I answered. "You must perish in your misery, unless you are willing to receive what JESUS did for you. Were I to baptize you in water this hour, were you to come and make remembrance of JESUS in the breaking of bread with us next LORD'S day, were I to pray for you day and night, were you to fast till you are starved, all this would not, could not save you. Salvation is already finished, finished every jot. It is divinely complete. *Believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST and thou shalt be saved.* 'Through this Man is preached unto you the *forgiveness of sins*, and by Him *all that believe are justified from all things.*' (Acts xiv. 38, 39)."

I said much more to prove to her that salvation is by *grace alone*, through *faith*, but all I could say was only met by sighs, so I left her with the LORD praying Him to turn her self-occupied eyes "unto JESUS," that she might see that the same JESUS who once bare our iniquities is *now risen* and sitting at GOD'S right hand—*without our sins* of course. He left them forever in His grave to be remembered against us no more forever.

She continued coming as before, and for several weeks I could see but little change in her state. One LORD'S day afternoon she said to me: "I believe the light is dawning on me. I sometimes see something bright above. Could I see you again?"

I could not see her till the following Friday when I had a blessed feast. Her very face beamed with delight.

"I found full peace at the meeting last evening," she said, while you were comparing the various foundations people try to rest on with the foundation of GOD. I saw plainly the foundation I had been trying to rest on ever since I first saw my sinful condition was just this: putting my earnest resolution to lead a Godly life together with my feelings of deep sorrow, and bringing that to GOD as recommendation. I

would not have owned that even to myself, but when I saw *the foundation of God* the deepest and most secret recesses of my evil heart were made evident to myself. When I saw the foundation of God, that *Eternal Redemption which CHRIST on the cross, obtained for us*, I scarcely knew what to do with myself for joy. All the way home, after meeting, I could but repeat to myself: *O what a fool, what a fool I have been! always trying to do or to feel some great thing instead of just believing what JESUS has done, and what my sins made Him feel, on the cross.*"

"Now," I said, "I am going to urge you on to what I discouraged you from a few weeks ago. I feel convinced you are alive from the dead now; you are born again, a converted soul, a child of God, an heir of His, and a joint-heir with CHRIST. *Your heart is right now*, so I don't care how much you do. You know CHRIST now. *Live unto Him*. Before you knew CHRIST, God looked for nothing but sin from you. It was all you could bring forth, and the end of that is death. But now God expects a holy life from you, a thorough separation from the world and the world's ways; in a word, He expects you now to *follow* CHRIST, to walk in the world as *He* walked in it. If you are faithful in that path, you will have to suffer much shame, for the world is no better now than it was in His day, despite all its profession; but knowing and *believing* now what He has done for you, you cannot but *love* Him, and love can suffer anything; indeed, it not only *can* suffer, but it counts it a privilege to suffer for CHRIST and with CHRIST. May God, by the HOLY GHOST, work in you now *for His glory*, as CHRIST, on the cross, worked *for you for your redemption.*"

P. J. L.

"There is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in CHRIST JESUS." (Romans iii.)

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND PEACE.

It is most important to understand the distinction between *life* and *peace*. The former is the result of being linked with CHRIST'S *Person*: the latter is the result of His *work*. "He that hath the SON hath *life*." (1 John v., 12.) But, "being *justified* by faith, we have *peace*." (Rom. v., 1.) "Having made peace through the blood of His Cross." (Col. i., 20.) The *very moment* a man receives into his heart the simple truth of the

Gospel, he becomes a child of God. The truth which he receives is the "incorruptible seed" of "the divine nature." (1 Peter i., 23; 2 Peter i., 4.) Many are not aware of all that is involved in thus simply receiving the truth of the Gospel.

As in nature, the child of a nobleman may not know the varied results of the relationship, so it is, likewise, in grace; I may be ignorant, both as to the relationship and its results: but I am in it, notwithstanding: and being in it, I have the affections which belong to it, and I ought to cultivate them, and allow them to entwine themselves artlessly around their proper object, even Him who has begotten me by the word of truth. (James i., 18.) It is my privilege to enjoy the full flow of parental affection emanating from the bosom of God, and to reciprocate that affection, through the power of the indwelling spirit. "Now *are* we the sons of God." He has made us such. He has attached this rare and marvellous privilege to the simple belief of the truth. (John i., 12.) We do not reach this position "by works of righteousness which we have done," or could do; but simply "according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly, through Jesus CHRIST our SAVIOUR." That, being justified by His grace, we should be *made heirs* according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus iii., 5-7.) We are "*called* sons and *made* heirs:" and all this, simply by *the belief* of the truth of the Gospel, which is God's "incorruptible seed."

Take the case of the very vilest sinner, who, up to this moment, has been living a life of gross wickedness. Let that person receive into his heart the pure Gospel of God: let him heartily believe "that CHRIST died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures:" and he there, then, and thus, becomes a child of God, a thoroughly saved, perfectly justified, and divinely accepted person. In receiving into his heart the simple record concerning CHRIST, he has received new life. CHRIST is the truth and the life, and when we receive CHRIST, we receive life. "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life." (John iii., 36.) When does he get this life? The very moment he believes. "*Believing* ye might have life through His name." (John xx., 31.) The truth concerning CHRIST is the seed of eternal life, and when that truth is believed, life is communicated.

Observe, this is what the word of God declares. It is a matter of divine testimony, not merely of human feeling—we do

not get life by *feeling* something in ourselves, but by *believing* something about CHRIST; and that we have on the authority of God's eternal word—"the holy Scriptures." It is well to understand this. Many are looking *in* for evidences of the new life, instead of looking *out* at the object which imparts the life. It is quite true, that "he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself:" (1 John v., 10), but, be it remembered, it is the witness of a life which is received by "*believing* on the Son of God," not by looking in upon oneself: and the more undividedly I am occupied with CHRIST, the more distinct and satisfactory will be "the witness" in myself. If I make the witness my object, I shall be plunged in doubt and uncertainty; but if I make CHRIST my object, I have the witness in all its divine integrity and power. There is special need of clearness as to this, because of the strong tendency of our hearts to make something *within* the ground of peace and contentment, instead of building absolutely and exclusively upon CHRIST. The more simply we cling to CHRIST, apart from all beside, the more peaceful and happy we shall be; but directly we take the eye off Him, we become unhinged and unhappy.

In a word, then, the reader should seek to understand, with *Scriptural* accuracy, the distinction between *life* and *peace*. The former the result of the connexion with CHRIST'S *Person*; the latter the result of believing in His finished work. We very frequently meet with quickened souls who are in sad trouble and disquietude as to their acceptance with God. They really do believe on the name of the Son of God, and, believing, they have life; but from not seeing the fulness of the work of CHRIST, as to their sins, they are troubled in conscience, they have no mental repose.

Take an illustration. If you place a hundred weight upon the bosom of a dead man, he does not feel it. Place another, and another, and another, he is wholly unconscious. Why? Because there is no *life*. Let us suppose, for a moment, the entrance of life, and what will be the result? A most distressing sensation occasioned by the terrible weight upon the bosom. What will then be needful in order to the full enjoyment of the life which had been imparted? Clearly, the removal of the burden. It is somewhat thus with the sinner who receives life by believing on the Person of the Son of God. So long as he was in a state of spiritual death, he had no spiritual sensations, he was unconscious of any weight pressing upon him. But the entrance in of spiritual life has imparted spiritual sensibilities, and he now feels a burden

pressing upon his heart and conscience, which he knows not exactly how to get rid of. He sees not, as yet, all that is involved in believing "on the name of the only begotten Son of God." He does not see that CHRIST is, at once, his righteousness and his life. He needs a simple view of the finished Atonement of CHRIST, whereby *all* his sins were plunged in the waters of eternal oblivion, and he himself introduced into the full favor of God. It is this, and this alone, that can remove the heavy burden off the heart, and impart that profound mental repose which nothing can ever disturb.

If I think of God as a Judge, and myself as a sinner, I need the blood of the cross to bring me into His presence in the way of righteousness. I must fully understand that every claim which God, the righteous Judge, had upon me, a guilty sinner, has been divinely answered and eternally settled, by "the precious blood of CHRIST." This gives my soul peace. I see that, through that blood, God can be "just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus," (Rom. iii. 29.) I learn that, on the cross, God has been glorified about my sins; yea, that the whole question of sin was fully gone into and perfectly settled between God and CHRIST, amid the deep and awful solitudes of Calvary. Thus my load is taken off, my weight removed, my guilt cancelled; I can breathe freely; I have perfect peace; there is literally *nothing* against me; I am as free as the blood of CHRIST can make me. The Judge has declared Himself satisfied as to sin, by raising the sinner's Surety from the dead, and placing Him at the right hand of the Majesty in the Heavens.

But, then, there comes another thing of immense value. I not only see myself as a guilty sinner provided with a way of access to God, as a righteous Judge, but I see God, in pursuance of His eternal counsels of electing love, begetting me through the word of truth, making me His child, adopting me into His family, and setting me before Him in such a way as that I can enjoy communion with Him as my Father, in the midst of all the tender endearments of the Divine family circle. This is, obviously, another phase of the believer's position and character. It is no longer a question of his coming to God in the full and settled consciousness that every just claim has been met. This, in itself, is ineffably precious to every sin-burdened heart. But there is far more than this. God is my Father, and I am His child. He has a Father's heart, and I can count on the tender affections of that heart in the midst of all my feebleness and need. He loves me,

not because of what I am enabled to do, but because I am His child.

Look at yonder tottering babe, the object of ceaseless care and solicitude, wholly unable to promote his father's interests in any way, yet so loved by the father that he would not exchange him for ten thousand worlds; and if it be thus with an earthly father, what must it be with our heavenly FATHER. He loves us, not for ought that we are able to do, but because we are His children. He has begotten us, of *His own will*, by the word of truth. (James i. 18.) We could no more earn a place in the heart of the FATHER, than we could satisfy the claims of the righteous Judge. All is free grace. The FATHER has begotten us; and the Judge has found a ransom. (Job xxxiii. 24.) We are debtors to grace for both the one and the other.

But, be it remembered, while we are wholly unable to earn, by our works, a place in the FATHER'S heart, or to satisfy the claims of the righteous Judge, we are, nevertheless, *responsible* to "believe the record which God has given of His Son." (1 John v. 9-11). I say this lest, by any means, my reader should be one of those who entrench themselves behind the dogmas of a one-sided theology, while refusing to believe the plain testimony of God. Many there are—intelligent people, too—who, when the Gospel of the grace of God is pressed upon their acceptance, are ready to reply, "I cannot believe unless God gives me power to do so; nor shall I ever be endowed with that power unless I am one of the elect. If I belong to the favoured number I *must* be saved—if not, I *can't*."

This is a thoroughly one-sided theology; and not only so, but its one side is turned the wrong way; yea it is so turned as to wear the form of an absurd but most dangerous fatalism, which completely destroys man's responsibility, and casts dishonour upon God's moral administration. It sends man forth upon a wild career of reckless folly, and makes God the author of the sinner's unbelief. This is, in good truth, to add insult to injury. It is, first make God a liar, and then charge Him with being cause of it. It is, to reject His proffered love, and blame Him for the rejection. This is, in reality, the most daring wickedness, though based, as I have said, upon a one-sided theology.

Now, does any one imagine that an argument so flimsy will hold good, for a single moment, in the presence of the king of terrors, or before the judgment seat of CHRIST? Is there

a soul throughout the gloomy regions of the lost that would ever think of charging God with being the author of its eternal perdition? Ah! no; it is only on earth that people argue thus. Such arguments are never breathed in hell. When men get to hell they blame themselves. In heaven they praise the Lamb. All who are lost will have to thank *self*; all who are saved will have to thank God. It is when the impenitent soul has passed through the narrow archway of time, into the boundless ocean of eternity, that it will enter into the full depth and power of those solemn words, "*I would, but ye would not.*" In truth, human responsibility is as distinctly taught in the world of God as is divine sovereignty. Man finds it impossible to frame a system of divinity which will give each truth its proper place; but he is not called upon to frame systems, but to believe a plain record, and be saved thereby.

C. H. M.

FAITH.

It is a long time before we thoroughly learn, not only that there is nothing good in man naturally, but that the only thing that God can accept in man, regenerate even, is faith. Yet the word of God is clear enough on this all important point. "Without faith it is *impossible* to please Him." (Heb. xi. 6.) Faith is the *one* active principle in the life of man that God owns and answers to. Faith in man is alone righteousness before God, as to what man is or does. "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" the Jews enquired of Christ, and His clear and pointed reply was, "this is the work of God, that ye *believe* on Him whom He hath sent"; adding a little after, "and this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and *believeth* on Him, may have everlasting life." (John xi. 28, 20, 40.) From these two statements of our Lord we learn, that while on the one hand, all blessing for man flows sovereignly from God according to what He is Himself, yet, that on the other, what actually brings man into blessing, is the *faith* that he exercises on what God sets before him for His blessing.

We feel it is important, and will be helpful to souls to develope, as the Lord shall enable, this latter side of the subject, and to clear in the mind the difference between faith itself, and the objects of faith. The objects of faith are diverse, and with them the blessings that flow from them, but the faith is one and the same. The objects of faith are all

necessarily *outside* man. Faith is *in* man and personal, so that the objects of faith are nothing to him, unless he personally appropriates them, and thus links himself with them.

The question will naturally arise here, "what is faith?" The Divine answer to this is very direct and expressive, and supplies the mind with just the conception of faith, that it is really seeking after. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. xi. 1.) This is not exactly a definition of the principle of faith, but a setting forth of the powers and actions. Faith enables the soul to realize the objects of hope, giving them distinct form and substance before the heart. Faith gives the soul the present enjoyment of things not seen, by demonstrating them to the consciousness, so that they form the life and character.

What faith actually lays hold of is the word of God, and is a faculty, that man has not by nature, but which comes to him, as the gift of God (Ep. ii. 8), in and with the word. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. x. 17.) It is of all interest to see clearly, that faith is what God produces in man by His word, and as a power in him, is no part of man's heritage in Paradise, much less of anything that he obtained by the fall. He did obtain something by the fall, which has ever maintained in him the sense of his responsibility or accountability to God, but this was conscience or "the knowledge of good and evil," a faculty which in exercise, apart from faith, becomes the mightiest instrument in Satan's hands to keep man from God, and far removed from all blessing in superstition.

All men have conscience, but "all have not faith" (1 Thess. ii. 2), the Apostle tells us. The mind may be exercised upon truth, and, in an outward, partial way, it may be accepted; but it amounts to nothing before God. "The flesh profiteth nothing," the Lord tells us (John vi. 63); "it is the Spirit that quickeneth." More than this, "the mind of the flesh is enmity to God" (Rom. viii. 7)—has no inclination to receive the truth, but quite the contrary. Hence, till "born again" by "water (the Word) and the Spirit," man cannot even "see the kingdom of God" (John iii. 3) as a desirable object. He loves darkness rather than light, and avoids the light; will not come near CHRIST, nor "receive His testimony," but "he that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." (John iii. 33.)

This capability of receiving *Divine* testimony, and of believing on the name of JESUS, is the effect of being born

again, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of GOD." (John i. 13.) In another way, the LORD states this same truth Himself. "No man," He says, "can come to Me except the FATHER which hath sent Me draw him," and "every man, *therefore*, that hath heard and hath learned of the FATHER, cometh unto Me." He tells the Jews: "Ye do not *understand* My speech, because ye cannot *hear* My words" (John viii. 43); and then, a little after, He adds: "But ye *believe* not, because ye are not of My sheep; My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." (John x. 26, 27.) This ability to apprehend God's Word, which is the very essence of faith—what faith is—as having its source in God Himself, is developed by the Apostle John in his first epistle thus: "We are of GOD; he that knoweth GOD heareth us; he that is not of GOD heareth not us;" and by contrast with this he says: "They are of the world; therefore, they speak of the world, and the world heareth them." He then gives a full statement of the source and power of faith, in these words: "Whatsoever is born of GOD overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world—even our faith."

These Scriptures, besides giving us the source of faith, set forth clearly the two sides, so to speak, of faith, and shows it to us as a GOD-given faculty in man, by means of which, on the one hand, he receives all that flows from God, and, on the other, rejects all that is of the world—that visible scene of sight and sense in which man, as in the flesh, lives and moves outside God altogether."

Faith links the soul with God outside all that is visible and created, introducing it into the light where God Himself dwells, and thus sets it above the power of Satan and the darkness in which he works.

Eve, all innocent in nature as she was, yet lacked this mighty principle of Divine sustainment. Satan subtly engages her through her senses with the visible beauty and desirableness of the created scene around her. She *saw* "that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant, and a tree to be desired to make one wise" (Gen. iii. 6). The lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life were fully aroused, and, unkept "by the power of God through *faith*" in His *word* (1 Pet. i. 5), she fell fully under the power of the tempter, and lost herself in sin and judgment.

Adam, not deceived, yet following also his senses, and alike heedless of the word of God, is led by Eve into the same

broad path "that leadeth to destruction," and a race, "conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity," with a heritage of death and judgment, flows from them.

The warning now thunders in every living soul of man, "Love not the world, neither the things of the world; for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world; and the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1. John ii. 15-17); and this is the will and work of God, Jesus says, "that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent."

The voice of the Son of God rises clear above the ceaseless hum of the tempter's charmings, which ever appeal to sense, and challenges the soul upon the principle of *faith*. His watchword is, "*Believe!*"

Such, in promise, was the language of God to Adam in Paradise, when the word reached his soul, telling him of the Deliverer that should come through the seed of the woman, "He shall bruise thy head."

Faith came by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. In the power of faith, Adam calls "his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living." Leaving the *sight* of his eyes, where all was now death and judgment, he steps forth upon the platform of faith, grasps firmly the promise of God, and, bringing Eve along with him, stands before God no longer the condemned sinner, but justified by faith. As having that *in him now* which God could own, "unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." (Gen. iii. 21.)

We do not here dwell upon the *object* of faith presented by God to Adam, nor upon the sweet typical import of the coats of skins, but simply strike out into relief the principle of faith in Adam, which brings him, now a sinner, into blessing.

Sight had given place to *faith*, and the lost garment of innocence is replaced by the robe of righteousness—"the righteousness of God through faith." (Phil. iii. 9.) •

The principle of blessing for man, then, is faith—"the obedience of faith;" and the history of man, as far as blessing is concerned, is but a development of God's ways with man in connection with this principle.

SOME CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF THE INSPIRED BOOKS.

GENESIS.

(Concluded from page 54.)

(V.) CHAP. XXIV-XXVI.*

ISAAC becomes now the chief figure in the scene. We must remember that he is a double type—in the first place, of the SON of GOD Himself; in the second, of the *sons*, as in Gal. iv. In the first aspect, Rebekah, in Chap. xxiv., is the figure of the elect people of GOD, called out by the mission of the HOLY GHOST, sent into the world to be the Bride of the risen SON, the heir of the FATHER. In the second, she is the principle of grace in a new form; the Ephesian, if I may so say, “*grace in the Beloved.*” (Eph. i., 6.)

Hence, her name Rebekah (captivating) speaks of personal attraction, such as for GOD, the sons, linked with the SON, have. It is the truth of the FATHER’S, not mere acceptance of us, but acceptance in One ever before Him as His beloved.

The personal history of Isaac is a short one. His is a simple life and a calm one, with few experiences. He is a pilgrim necessarily as his father was, but full of blessing and enjoyment. His is not the energy and boldness, but the meekness and quietness of faith, the spirit of self-sacrifice and self-surrender, such as before we noted the spirit of sonship is. Yet he enjoys richly, reaping a hundredfold in the same year he sows. He is a great digger of wells too, for the springs of living water, the treasures of the HOLY GHOST, are to be found of one “rooted and grounded in the love” of the FATHER, prepared by the knowledge of Him who is Love, to “know the length and breadth, and depth, and height” of His wondrous ways. (Eph. iii., 17, 18.) And still the path of such sheep of the Good Shepherd, is amid green pastures and beside streams of running water, yea, a table is prepared before them in the very presence of their enemies.

(VI.) CHAPS. XXVII-XXXVI.

But now we come to a more eventful history, and Jacob presents us with a very different line of things. Scarcely so much in figure as in fact, we learn the discipline of a child of GOD. “If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons.”

* I am inclined to think that this section should include Chaps. xxi-xxiii., the whole history of Isaac.

Thus, Jacob necessarily follows Isaac: discipline is based on sonship. And, just as it is written, "He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness, so do we find the crooked subtle Jacob, the "supplanter" as his name is, becoming as the fruit of it, "Israel," a prince with God.

But there are many steps in this process, and in them the holy government approves itself. "What a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Jacob sows deceits, and reaps it plentifully in return. With a true desire for Divine blessing, he cannot trust God to bestow it simply, but must use his own means and make himself thus like profane Esau, to get for himself what God denies to Esau. But thus, while God gives the blessing which He ever meant to give, Jacob is by his own act driven out of the land in which he is to inherit the blessing. Esau remains for the time being, lord and master of the scene, even as the flesh, the first-born, but dispossessed of both birth-right and blessing, and which is still Edom, *i. e.* Adam, not essentially, but apparently only changed*—is not deprived of dominion by fleshly effort, howsoever, really aiming to secure what God has promised. It is the lesson of Rom. vii., in one of its varied forms.

So Jacob is driven out, as alas, souls are, by their own fleshly efforts after victory over the flesh, out of the land where by faith his fathers walked. But before he has left it yet, (at Bethel) God appears as if to stop the wanderer, and a touching assurance of Divine care and love, spite of all wanderings, is given, which poor Jacob's legal heart is little able to understand. The presence of the Gracious One is dreadful to unbelief, and the free promise of God is answered by the servile vow which would turn it into a bargain for the poor worthless service of the creature. So he departs out of the land.

Weary years follow. Outside the path of faith, the victim of deceit, and still, alas, the deceiver, his life is a sad contrast to that of his fathers. He has no altar; and God who is with him, according to the promise of Bethel, yet does not openly appear upon the scene. Yet is he blessed in the land of his affliction. The names of his wives are significant. Seeking Rachel, (*i. e.* sheep) the principle of Christ-like submission, as I take it, he gets first Leah, (which means, "wearied,") the breaking down of strength by vain and legal toil; and even so, before Rachel is fruitful he has to receive the bondmaids, Bilhah, (terror or

* Adam and Edom are from the same root with only a change of vowels, which change frequently in Hebrew.

feebleness) and Zilpah, (a "dropping" as of tears). Thus the blessing comes through sorrow and self-judgment, and of this, the children's names in contrast with the their mothers', speak. And not till after all this is Rachel fruitful, and then Joseph speaks of renewed hope and hope from *God*.

After this, the call of *God* comes, and he sets his face towards Canaan, having to contend still at every step with the difficulties in which his own crooked course has involved him. Even when there, the same difficulties pursue him, and in the unbelief which it is the nature of a course like his to engender, he cannot trust the promise of *God*, which has been made him, nor *God's* host (seen at Mahanaim,) against Esau's, and falls into his old plottings and contrivances. Still, he has his face *Godward* now, however his heart fails, and the *Lord* comes in to take him into His own hand, that he may not fall into Esau's. Alone, and in the darkness, He meets and wrestles with him, cripples the human strength, which, wherever found is found in opposition to *God*, and gives him then as crippled, the new name which tells of power with *God* (and therefore with men) which is derived from weakness.

Still, even yet, Jacob does not properly know *God*. He may build now an altar to Him and call Him *his* (ch. xxxiii., 20), which is wondrous joy, but yet he is not delivered from the uncleanness of his own ways. He builds a house where his father was a stranger, and buys a parcel of a field to settle down in. The misery of Dinah's fall, and Simeon and Levi's violence follows as the natural result, but immediately after this, *God* calls him to Bethel, where he appears openly to him, *God* not now merely of Israel, but of Bethel, *i. e.* of His own house. In this way, Jacob's faith now recognizes Him, servant to the grace which has delivered him, in that house which holiness becomes.

And now Rachel herself disappears, first of all bringing forth Benjamin, son of his mothers's sorrow, but of his father's right hand. *CHRIST* thus, come out of death into the brightness and joy of resurrection, takes his place in the soul. He lives in us. All else disappears to make way for Him.

I must be content with these mere hints of the precious and most needed instruction of this eventful history. In another aspect, Jacob is, I doubt not, the representative of the people who derive their name from him, and in whom most fully the Divine ways in government shine out. In them, too, the seeking to possess the Divine blessing in a carnal way, has delayed their attainment of it, and exiled them from the land which yet

in the purposes of God belongs to them. They too, have had their Bethel, and did not understand their visitation. Their different generations find representatives in the children of the different mothers, free and bond. Of them, too, CHRIST came, like Joseph, rejected by His brethren, soon to be owned their ruler and sustainer. They too, with their faces turned Godward, will be met by Him in controversy, their strength crippled, and to find in weakness their true power with God and man. Finally, they too will have their second Bethel, God openly declaring Himself to them, and their Benjamin, the son of the right hand, CHRIST in power, will take his place among them, and all their former state give way to Him.

(VII.) CHAPS. XXXVII—L.

And now we come to the history of Joseph. He, on the one hand, so plainly speaks of CHRIST, suffering and then glorified, that little help will be needed to read the lesson. Hated by his brethren for his testimony to their evil, hated yet more for his claim to rule, he is sold to the Gentiles, and passes for dead among the Jews. Rising out of his humiliation, he is elevated, unknown now of his brethren to the right hand of the throne, and the administration of all power of the Gentiles committed to him. In his humiliation, interpreter of the thoughts and counsels of God; in his elevation, he administers with power according to the same wisdom, and reduces all under the immediate authority of him who was seated on the throne. At the same time, another scene presents itself. His brethren who had rejected him, forced by famine, are brought by the path of repentance and humiliation to own him at length in glory, whom they had once rejected when connected with themselves. Benjamin, type of the power of the LORD upon earth among the Jews, is united to him who unknown had the power of the throne among the Gentiles; that is, CHRIST unites these two characters. But this brings all the brethren into connection with Joseph. Finally, Jacob and his family are placed as a people apart, in the most favored country of all that was under the power of the throne of the great king." *

Thus far, as to the application of the type to CHRIST in person. In measure and principle, it applies also, I doubt not, just so far as the mind of CHRIST is wrought out in them, to those who, partaking of the sufferings of CHRIST, will partake also of His glory. And here we see but dimly just because we know so little what the fellowship of His sufferings is.

* Synopsis of the Books of the Bible, vol. 1. p. 51.

This path is very unlike Jacob's, which, alas, we can understand much better. Jacob suffers for sin, in discipline; Joseph for righteousness. The one life is in great part the fruit of the flesh, the other, the fruit of the Spirit. We may briefly trace what little we can trace.

Child of old age is Joseph. He comes into no prominence till discipline has wrought its work in Jacob's soul. A witness against the evil deeds of brethren, he incurs their enmity, which is increased by the revelations of coming glory, which are made to him. Men of Joseph's stamp are counted dreamers still, yet those who reject the dreams cannot after all afford to treat them with contempt. The cross is found upon the way to the glory. Those who are spiritual kindred, give in envy and wrath the CHRIST-like place of scorn and suffering to one whose ways they do not understand, and deliver him up to the world as lawful prey.

The way is long. Through trial and temptation, by patience and endurance, the work is perfected. The mastery of the world is at length attained. Even down here and now, there is that which is the pledge and type of future glory, and an inheritance reserved for another time. Solemn is the lesson that Joseph's life is that of one "separated from his *brethren*," and yet blessings are upon the head of this separated one, and blessing flows from him, to those who cast him out.

The closing chapters, I cannot enter into. Their dispensational application is that which is plainest, but even there we are constantly reminded that "we know in part." Soon shall we be face to face with the things themselves. F. W. G.



HAPPINESS.

CHRIST'S heart was always in Heaven while He was on earth, and everything came forth to Him in all the savour of the FATHER'S love. He was of one heart and one mind with the FATHER. Hence, no one was ever on earth so *happy* as CHRIST, because of His seeing everything in connection with GOD'S purpose and GOD'S will; and the greater the sorrow, the higher its wave broke over His heart, the more this is seen. There was always some expression of praise, some reference to the FATHER, showing the *joy* within untouched, as a spring of water hidden for refreshment. He was straitened till the FATHER'S will was accomplished in the death upon the Cross.

Water was in the rock, but until smitten it did not give

forth water—so it was with CHRIST. And now He is revealed to us in Heaven, as the eternal SON of GOD, who was smitten for us, and we can turn to Him and say, There is our spring of living water, He is ours. We have got eternal life in Him as a well of water springing up. All the way through the wilderness, the water flowed, to slake their thirst, to refresh them: all the way, and it spoke blessedly of CHRIST.

The freshness of heart in CHRIST was always the same. You and I get so weary in our experience of the wilderness, but CHRIST'S heart is never wearied; it is as freshly set on the Bride as when GOD chose us in Him before the foundation of the world.

Whatever the mind is *most* fixed upon, and is ever turning to, gives its impress to the mind. If my thoughts and feelings are fixed on CHRIST, I get the impress of CHRIST. If I am ever turning to Him in all His heavenly measure of love, I shall get the impress of it; and if my soul then rises to CHRIST in that freshness of love which can say, "Come, LORD Jesus," there is His answer in all its freshness, "Surely, I come quickly." He does not forget us toiling through the wilderness and the sands of the desert; He is *with* us all the way, and all freshness is in Him. If the heart turns to the heart of CHRIST, the heart of the SON of GOD, I find that heart immeasurably fuller than mine, of love—there, there is always freshness of love. I may be a way-worn pilgrim, there I shall find freshness—a spring of *cold water* to refresh me just when fainting in the wilderness. Oh, that love in the heart of CHRIST, that knows no weariness, no dragging steps, no hanging down of hands. I may always turn to Him, and say, "Come." His heart can always answer, "Surely, I come quickly." Oh, the freshness of CHRIST'S love and the brightness of that water forever flowing in incomparable purity and freshness!

If we connect the wilderness with our great High Priest in Heaven, we may still feel the bitterness of wilderness trials, but we shall have the sweetness of CHRIST'S sympathy with us every step of the way. All blessing, carried on and sustained, must be so by the present action of the LORD JESUS. Where has there ever been found a single blessing, save in the hand of CHRIST? Could you wish for any save what He gives?

Can you spread out no wants before CHRIST, the *Giver*, the *Healer*? Believers grieve the SPIRIT, and thus lose their happiness, by not *using* CHRIST, and then GOD must compel

them to do it. He knew how to make Paul startle up the jailer at Phillippi. Do I know that CHRIST up there has to do with my heart individually? Has He looked into it to-day? Has He seen any brightness in it towards Himself, or coldness? Well, He does not trust a bit to the feelings of the heart. He knows what it is—whether it looks bright or not; everything is naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. He does not trust my heart, but He says, I want to give you all that is in *My* heart of love.

I see CHRIST's heart yearning over poor sinners—not poor sinners' hearts yearning after CHRIST. When CHRIST meets a sinner, and gives him peace, the only thing He thinks of is His own blood; and any thing added to that He would turn away from and repudiate. Ah! there is no name to which JESUS of Nazareth responds more heartily than the name of SAVIOUR—it has not become a common name to Him. He will not share it with another. He may have every glory, but above all is this name of SAVIOUR between Him and God. He, the "SAVIOUR GOD," "redemption through His blood!" Ah! there is something here that has a voice to one's soul, the thought of that SAVIOUR GOD, in whom we have redemption, being the One who is to have all the glory. When you get home, will your delight be in the glory of that CHRIST? Not only happy because you are saved, but because of seeing what *He is*—what a SAVIOUR you have got! Being saved is *nothing* to the brightness of the glory shining out of the SAVIOUR CHRIST; because He is *what He is*, we have redemption through His blood.

Will He ever lay aside His character of REDEEMER? "The Lamb in the midst of the throne" points Him out as the one whose redemption-glory will still be seen, though we shall be realizing a different part. Israel, when in Canaan, realized a different portion from the Israel in the wilderness; but this was still their glory—that they were the people of a REDEEMER-GOD. When you get into glory, every one of you will be pointed to as a spectacle showing forth the redemption-glory of the REDEEMER-GOD. GOD sees in redemption one of the thoughts dearest to His own heart: it shows out His highest glory, all centred in CHRIST, according to His eternal purpose. Is that glory in the Person of CHRIST the thing that fills your soul? When telling over the glories that attach to the Person of that CHRIST, do you say, "Ah! that is the One in Whom I have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins"?

God has set us in His Sox; hidden us in Him. As Moses was put into the cleft of the rock, so God has put us into CHRIST.

If I am hidden in CHRIST, there *can be* no condemnation for me. Can God condemn what is in His Sox? Can God find fault with Him? Satan cannot stand against one who is *in* CHRIST; all condemnation will roll back against Satan; there is none for me. I rejoice in CHRIST as a life-giving Spirit, not merely as one who brought me out of Egypt, but as one with whom I am united in life: the One smitten on Calvary, raised from the dead, a life-giving Spirit in heaven. Death may be stamped on every particle of the first Adam in me, but the Spirit of life in the last Adam has made me free from the law of sin and death; it makes me know that CHRIST is my life; the stream of life is flowing down from Him to me, leading me on in life in the Spirit, because the Spirit of God dwells in me; and I am not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.

CHRIST is the smitten Rock, and the water of life is flowing from CHRIST through my soul, witnessing of heavenly things; and if eternal life is flowing through a body dead because of sin, yet it will give an immense power of joy in the Lord. Whither has fled the "joy unspeakable" of the early Christians? Why are Christians now without it but because they have not learned to give up the first Adam for the last Adam—because they have not learned to walk as the early Christians walked? Do we not know a want of the HOLY GHOST in *power*? a want of walking with the soul *full of heaven*? Is it not because we have not learnt that all that is of self is to be set aside?

Oh! do not be satisfied with ordinary Christianity; but be saying, If nobody else is heavenly-minded, why not I? If others are not full of the HOLY GHOST, why not I? I would beseech you not to trifle with your own mercies. God has provided you with joy that might fill your souls to overflowing if you walk in the spirit and not in the flesh. He would have your *happiness* complete. There is no dimness in CHRIST's joy—not a cloud rests on Him; our blessing is not short of His. Oh, that the power of the HOLY GHOST may work in our hearts, so that we may know the fulness of the spring of blessing in Him, looking to God to bring us into the enjoyment of the rivers of refreshing in the Sox of His love!

G. V. W.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. What is meant by the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew v. 19 and 20? Can it refer to the same thing in both verses? and if so, in what sense? What is the general scope of the whole passage?

What is meant by the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew xi. 11? and in what sense is he who is least in it, greater than John the Baptist?

A. In all the passages referred to, the Kingdom of Heaven is the same, *i. e.* the sphere on earth over which Heaven reigns, CHRIST being the King in Heaven. The Kingdom of Heaven began when CHRIST took His seat at the right hand of the Majesty in the Heavens, and was set up actually, though in a hidden way, by the presence and power of the HOLY GHOST at Pentecost. The Apostles were to tarry at Jerusalem, after the LORD'S ascension, till they were endued with *power* from on high. (Luke xxiv. 49.) The authority of the law is established, as that which should regulate the conduct of the faithful until the Kingdom should be set up, and relatively their *dignity* in the Kingdom, when manifested, would depend upon their obedience. To despise the law, as the Scribes and Pharisees were really doing, would exclude who ever was thus guilty. The least in the Kingdom of Heaven would be greater than John the Baptist, because though he stood prominent among those born of women, as having been the one to announce the coming of the Kingdom, and as being the immediate forerunner of the Lord, still he was not *in* the Kingdom, and to enjoy the presence of Christ in His Kingdom according to His power in glory, would be better than all that preceded it.

Q. Who was Melchisedec?

A. Melchisedec, though a mysterious and typical personage, was an actual man, of high and pre-eminent dignity. He was king of Salem, *i. e.*, peace, and called the king of righteousness. His reign was characterised by peace and righteousness. Beside this, he was priest of the most high God. As a priest he had no father nor mother—had no genealogy like the sons of Aaron; and no limit was assigned to his priesthood as in their case. His priesthood was not like that of Aaron's, but resembled that of the SOX of God's. All that is testified of him is that he lived, but the name of his father and mother are not given, nor when he was born or when he died.

THE TWO DISCOVERIES.

It had not been long since it had "pleased God to reveal His Son in me." No slave, however ill-treated, could ever feel more delight at being set free, than I had felt upon finding out that a man is "*justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*" (Rom. iii., 24.) Ambitious purposes henceforth gave way to a burning desire of seeing others get in the same deliverance, and I began to go about telling people what I had found, and was daily finding in the word of God.

On one occasion, I had read the third chapter of Romans to a company of six or seven young men, who had come, and I had tried to draw their attention particularly to some of the passages which show the condition of the sinner in the sight of God, and then to some others which show the way God has provided for the salvation of such sinners.

One especially dear to me was there, and on the way from meeting, after having walked side by side a long while in silence, he said: "If what you said to-night is true, I am no Christian at all."

"What have I said which led you to such a discovery?" I said.

"Well," he replied rather angrily "you said there was *none good, not one righteous.* You said it made no difference whether a man had sinned much or little, all alike were lost sinners before God; and then to finish it up, you said that a lost man could do nothing to save himself, that it made no difference how much good he tried to do, it could neither save him nor help him to salvation. I say, if all this is true, I am no Christian at all, for I thought that a Christian is a man who tries to be good, and does all the good he can so as to find favor with God.

"My very dear," I said, "the things I said are not mine; they are God's. The chapter we read, says, *there is none good; it says, there is none righteous, no, not one; it says, there is no difference, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. It says, by the deed of the law (that is what you call good works) there shall no flesh be justified.* Ah! my dear, it is the *Word of God* which has just been showing you the darkness you are in, and I am sure if the *Word of God* has led you to discover you are not a Christian, your discovery is true. May God help you!"

But all that man loves to boast in could not be given up so

easily. A year before he had passed through a series of meetings where night after night, he had wept and mourned, asked the church to pray for him, humbled himself down as low as he could; after all this, finding no rest, yet he had asked in despair what he could do now to find God's favor and the answer had been: be faithful, pray much, strive on, work untiringly for JESUS, and some day you'll get what you are seeking for. He *had* prayed much, he *had* worked with unbounded energy, he *had* done all the good it was in his power to do, and now was all this useless? Was he going to get nothing for it all? Was he no better off than if he had sat still?

Ah! the conflict had begun. The SAVIOUR-GOD receiving sinners and eating with them, had roused to anger the righteous Pharisee. He could not yet bear to hear his righteousness called "filthy rags."

"Has GOD been reached, by nothing of all this?" he exclaimed.

"The *cries* of your earnest heart, my dear, *have* reached God" I said, "but *you* have never reached Him yet and never will in the way you have been following. It is a way which the natural heart loves, because there is some praise for self in it; it is the way the Pharisees were wont to bind on the backs of other people, but it is not '*the way*.' You have been both deceiving yourself and being deceived. Before you can be saved, you must stop '*trying*;' you must stop '*resolving*;' you must stop '*working*;' you must find out that *you are lost*, that you are *dead in trespasses and sins*. That verse in our chapter, '*There is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*, puts you on the same level with the thief, the murderer, the fornicator. You are *a condemned man*, and until your heart owns this to God, you need turn to God for nothing; He has nothing for you. Be sure of this, He will never come down to your terms, you must come down to His. But as soon as you find out that you are lost you will rejoice to hear God telling you that you are '*justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation THROUGH FAITH IN HIS BLOOD!*' This puts an end to your idea of being brought to God by anything from you. It teaches you what the second chapter of Ephesians says: '*But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, ARE MADE NIGH BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST!*' When you know yourself a saved man by the Blood of CHRIST, God will talk to you about working for Him, but until then He Has nothing to say to you save about His SON'S work for you."

By this time we had to separate and I retired to my room assured that "the Sword of the Spirit which is the word of God," had begun to prove itself indeed "a discerner of the thoughts and intents" of that proud, self-righteous heart.

For nearly a year he continued in that strange state of mind which is seen in people who know what the Truth is but refuse to bow to it implicitly. His feelings toward me often bordered on hatred, because I seldom failed, when he spoke of *doing*, to bring him before the Cross of CHRIST with the solemn question: *what was that for?* What meant that cry of agony: "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" At times he seemed purposely to act less conscientiously than before, as if to make himself believe that the idea of salvation by grace was dangerous and would lead to evil. Seeing clearly he was unable to lead others into the truth as it is in JESUS he ceased pursuing the religious operations he had been engaged in and as a consequence he was warned from all sides against the danger of believing that salvation is by the blood of JESUS alone.

Surely, I thought, many a time as I watched the struggle, Rome could be no darker in the days when Martin Luther was slowly groping towards the blessed truth of salvation by grace, than all this boasted Protestantism is now.

One day he told me he was so miserable he didn't know what to do with himself. Well knowing the cause of this misery and what the end would be I could not but be glad, and as my face told what was in my heart, he went away with the thought that salvation by grace made one hard-hearted, since I seemed to have no sympathy for him in his sorrow.

A few days after he asked me to pray for him; his misery was becoming intolerable. I told him my prayers could not make the work of CHRIST more perfect, nor His blood more availing. The supper was ready, complete, wanting nothing more. It was God's supper and man's prayers could add nothing to it; yea, anything man would add would spoil it altogether. Moreover my prayers could not make God more willing to accept him since God Himself had taken the attitude of one who *briseeches* sinners to come to Him, as the last three verses of ii. Cor. v. clearly show. The trouble was nowhere on God's side but all on his side. God told him all was finished, he had only to accept Eternal Life which is *the gift of God* through JESUS CHRIST our LORD, and his misery was the consequence of his refusing to have salvation simply on the ground of what JESUS had done. If therefore I prayed

for him, all I could ask of GOD was that He would please make him miserable enough to give up his own way and accept 'the way.'

Two days after, while he sat driving on the front seat of a sleigh, conversing with a dear one who knew the LORD JESUS, about the one all-engrossing subject to him, he suddenly exclaimed with a loud voice: "I see it, I see it now! Neither prayers, nor tears, nor good works, nor anything from me can satisfy GOD for sin; it is the blood, the blood of CHRIST alone can, and it *has* satisfied Him. Thank GOD, thank GOD! I am satisfied too and my soul has peace!"

For a while he was so overcome with joy at having discovered the perfect satisfaction which GOD has found in the blood of JESUS that he appeared to us as if he had partly lost his mind, but we soon found he had just received "the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (Tim. ii. 1, 7.)

CHRIST THE DOOR.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS.

"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." *John* x. 9.

The occasion on which our blessed LORD brought out this wonderful truth, was that of opening the eyes of one who had been born blind, as recorded in the preceeding chapter where we find he was cast out of the synagogue because of his confession of CHRIST. This was a great offence, and *still* nothing is more offensive to a proud man than a true and hearty confession of the LORD JESUS. The apostle's word is not less true now than it ever was, that "they who will live godly in CHRIST JESUS shall suffer persecution."

The LORD had met the man who had been cast out, and blessedly revealed Himself to him. Then the LORD turned the conversation to that of spiritual blindness, so that some of the Pharisees deeply roused by what they had heard, asked Him, are we blind also? For JESUS had said, "For judgment I am come into the world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." A very important testimony; for if a man takes the place of being blind, GOD is able to make him see; but if he says, I see, and have always been able to discern the things of GOD, he will have to learn sooner or later, that he *is*, and always *has been* blind. "The *natural* man receiveth not the things of the spirit of GOD . . . neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1. Cor. ii. 14).

This searching testimony of our LORD, as I have observed, so sorely touched the Pharisees, that they said, "Are we blind also?" They felt doubtless, that they had all the learning of the day, and were the most intelligent people as to Scripture knowledge. Is it possible, then, that such as they could be blind? What was our LORD's reply? "Jesus said unto them, if ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, we see; therefore your sin remaineth." That is, if they had really known their dark condition, and taken the place of being spiritually blind before God, they would have known God's grace and power to forgive sins; but saying, "we see" implies self-complacency, and the absence of felt need; and it is the sick who need the physician. There must be a sense of blindness for any to desire their eyes to be opened; a sense of guilt to lead any one to desire forgiveness. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The LORD is still speaking to the Pharisees in the tenth chapter. They not only professed to see, but to guide and shepherd God's sheep. The question is, how came they thus in the place of shepherds? Had they a Divine or human qualification? Had they gone in by the door? for if they had climbed up some other way, they were only thieves and robbers. A very solemn, searching announcement. The true Shepherd enters by the door; the porter opens to Him; the sheep hear His voice; they are His own sheep, and *He leadeth them out*. Yes, He leads them out from former ways and associations; outside everything that dishonours God—outside the path of sight, because into the path of faith and love.

The blessed LORD, the true and good Shepherd, declares that He is *the door*, the only way of access to God, the ONLY door, for any who desire salvation. He said, "I am the door; by Me if any man enter in he shall be saved." Thus we see that JESUS not only sought to convict these Pharisees of their blindness and falseness, but throws wide open the door to any who had a desire to enter in. There was not a single soul who heard CHRIST's ministry that could go away and say, "There is no salvation for me;" for JESUS said: "By Me if any man"—no matter who he is—"if any man enter in, he shall be saved." How simple this is! A door is not a long, dreary passage. A person only takes a single step to enter a door. My unconverted hearers, you are outside the door. It is simply entering into God's presence through JESUS CHRIST, His SON, Who was crucified for sinners, but is now at God's

right, and you are all saved, and saved forever. "It is by Me," said JESUS; not by feelings, nor by experiences, nor by good resolutions, nor even by good works, but by CHRIST, "By ME, if any man enter in, he shall be saved." Oh! the blessedness of having the LORD's authority for the assertion, that those of us who have entered into GOD's presence by CHRIST are saved! Can anything be more simple? I remember hearing of a poor sick woman who was told by some ladies that visited her, that JESUS was the door into GOD's presence, and there was no other way, and that all who entered in by Him were saved. She replied: "May I enter in that way?" She was told, "Yes." "Then why not now?" said she; and turning on her side, she simply looked up toward heaven, and taking GOD at His word, entered in by JESUS, and was filled with joy and peace.

Mark again, I say, the simplicity and the preciousness of the words: "By Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved." It is no use saying you are too great a sinner, too old, too young, or anything else; it is, "if *any* man." GOD is no respecter of persons. All have sinned. Every man is guilty before GOD. He that believeth not is condemned already. *Now*, it is true, that if *any man* enter in by CHRIST, he will be saved; but *in a little while* it will be said: "If *any man* love not our LORD JESUS CHRIST, let him be accursed when the LORD cometh." *Now*, "whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life;" but *by and by*, whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, will be cast into the Lake of Fire.

Have you known, dear friends, what it is to receive this great salvation? Have *you* entered in by the door? Do you know what it is to find yourself in GOD's presence, through the death, resurrection and ascension of the LORD JESUS CHRIST? A believer is one who has accepted CHRIST for his SAVIOUR, who has entered in through the door. A person may *know* that CHRIST is the door, and yet have never entered in. This is the difference between *knowledge* and *faith*. Faith takes CHRIST simply at His word, and enters in. "By Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved." This is the testimony of JESUS. Is there any room for doubt or fear, when you know that you have entered in by CHRIST? Surely He delights to save. He casts out none that come to Him. Resting on His word we have perfect peace; we find ourselves at rest in GOD's presence.

The posture that JESUS now takes toward a guilty world

is that of *Saviour*, but in a little while it will be that of *Judge*. How, then, can any escape who neglect this great salvation? He will judge both the living and the dead; but now He is calling, in richest love and mercy, to sinners to enter in and be saved. His arms are still thrown wide open. His almighty power is still snatching brands from the burning. He yet calls, in tenderest love, "Come unto Me, *all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" All He asks of you is to "come." He wants nothing more of you than to submit to be wholly saved by Him; to "enter in" on the ground of an already accomplished redemption; to refuse not Him that speaketh, but to rest in His finished work. Can you, will you, any longer, then, be taken up with the unsatisfying pleasures of sin, and by your own hand of unbelief close the *only* door of escape from the wrath to come?

Thank GOD! the door is still wide open, and CHRIST saves to the uttermost all them that come unto GOD by Him; but soon the door will be shut. Many will knock then, but the door is closed upon them for ever. Many will be in earnest about their eternal welfare then, but it will be too late. In their anxiety for a mess of pottage, they counted eternal blessings unworthy of their interest; but now they feel themselves close on the precipice of outer darkness and despair, their distress is awakened, and never to be relieved; they knock, and call, and shriek, "LORD, LORD, open to us." But the reply from within, "I know you not," will forever plunge them into the despondency of an eternal gloom. Oh! once more think of those sweet words of JESUS: "I AM THE DOOR; BY ME, IF ANY MAN ENTER IN, HE SHALL BE SAVED."

THE SYRIAN LEPER.

WHAT do we see in Naaman? A man with all sorts of earthly good; captain of the hosts of the King of Syria—a great man with his master—honorable, too, because that by him the LORD had given victory and deliverance to Syria. Was not his cup full? Had not he all that heart could wish? Was he not satisfied with all this profusion of earthly good? No; "*he was a leper.*" There was that in his lot which spoiled all the rest. He had this, and that, and the other; but—ah! there was a "but" at the end of all, and such an one as to hinder him from enjoying anything he did possess. "But he was a leper." What a poor,

unsatisfactory portion is this world, where those "ifs" and "buts" have the power of spoiling all! So it must be where sin is; where the curse rests. The very ground is cursed for man's sin; and how can happiness be expected from anything which appertains to a creation lying under the curse. Naaman had almost everything to minister to his enjoyment; "but he was a leper."

There is deeper instruction for us here, however, than this. Leprosy in Scripture, is typical of sin. It is not that the fruit of sin, some mishap or calamity, prevents your happiness; there is sin itself. Man is a sinner. And observe, it was not that Naaman had a spot here and a spot there; a boil in one part, and a scab on another. He was a leper; that was his condition. The disease was inherent in his system, in his constitution. The physicians could not cure him; there was no human remedy for his disease. And such is our condition spiritually before God. Sin is not a boil or a wound which may cause a little derangement for the time, and then pass away. It is inherent in our nature, and cleaves to, and infects, and defiles our whole being. We are sinners by nature. Adam, when he had fallen, begat a son in his own likeness, and he again in his, and so it has continued to the present time. We are all by nature, children of wrath.

What was the effect of leprosy? In Israel, where God dwelt, and where His presence in holy government constituted the basis of the whole social structure, leprosy (type of sin) excluded the person defiled by it, from all the ordinances of the sanctuary, and from all fellowship with God's people. To come in contact with a leper was to be defiled. In consequence, the leper was excluded from among the habitations of his brethren. If it was in the wilderness, he was put outside the camp, if in the land, he was put outside the city; and so completely was all communication with him forbidden, that, if any one chanced to approach, he had to proclaim his own shame and warn the other, by crying, "Unclean, Unclean," and everything he touched, even to the garments he wore, the seat he sat upon, and the vessel he drank out of, was unclean. What a picture of man's condition as a sinner! Whatever the sinner may think of himself, he is in God's sight, a loathsome mass of corruption, utterly unfit for His presence or for any place among His people. Would that we saw ourselves as God sees us! Then surely, we should welcome the tidings of deliverance by His grace. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that CHRIST JESUS came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. i. 15.)

THE FATHER'S LOVE.

WHAT I want to press on you, my brethren, is the distinct present blessing, which it is our privilege to enjoy, resulting from the knowledge of the love wherewith the FATHER loves the SON. Well might it make the soul stagger, to hear that the love wherewith the saints are loved of GOD is according to that with which He loves JESUS—"as Thou hast loved Me." Our companionship with the LORD in glory, will be the manifestation of this; then even the world shall know it; but without waiting for that day of manifestation, JESUS speaks here of ministering to us by the SPIRIT, the present joy and comfort of it.

How is the love of the FATHER towards us shown, my brethren? In giving His SON to be "the propitiation for our sins"—who amongst us does not know this? But it is quite true that we can go further, and speak of the SPIRIT'S enabling us to believe on and prize the SON. Who is there would set so little value on the power of believing in the SON, as to say that it could arise from the human heart? It is not in the capacity that at all belongs to the "spirit of a man" to appreciate that best and blessed gift of GOD—"the SON."

We little prize as we ought the *grace* which has led us to believe. But let us go on further still. All of us know that this was not of human origin, that it came from whence JESUS came, it followed the gift; but are we not accustomed to stop there? I would speak to you of that love of the FATHER to the SON in which we partake through the SON. My brethren, let us recollect that the grace which led us to receive the SON has only put us on ground where we have to learn more of the fulness and depth of love. The special love of the FATHER is ours. I am not speaking now of CHRIST being ours, but of that which is CHRIST'S being ours.

Observe John xvii. 25, 26. Is there not here a love spoken of as resting upon us because we have believed on and love, JESUS? We all acknowledge, of course, that we could not love the LORD JESUS but by the SPIRIT; but when we have met Him as our SAVIOUR, when we see that beauty in Him in which the FATHER can rest with delight and favor—the heart that thus rests on JESUS meets the full love of the FATHER. My brethren, have you thought of this?—that resting on the LORD JESUS, you are to expect a fuller manifestation of the FATHER'S love.

We read (John xvi.): "I say not that I will pray the

FATHER for you, for the FATHER Himself loveth you because ye have loved me, and believe that I came out from God." What is the meaning of this? Is it to take from us the comfort of the intercession of JESUS on our behalf? No; but it is intended to remove from the heart the feeling that the LORD JESUS is the originating cause of the FATHER'S love. He has only given liberty to that love, made the way for it to flow out. It is a most mistaken, a most mischievous notion, that the standing of the LORD JESUS towards us is that of averting the judgment of an angry God. The love of God could not, it is true, flow out fully till the work of the SON was perfected; but the *gift* of the SON originated in the love of GOD.

Again—"If a man love Me, he will keep My words; and My FATHER will love him, and We will come unto him and make Our abode with him. (John xiv. 23.) Here we see *communion* with the FATHER and the SON connected with *obedience*; a further joy of the FATHER'S love, consequent upon obedience. Obedience itself must be the result of love, but, then, it introduces into a fuller sense of the FATHER'S love. Now, was not this the particular kind of love in which JESUS Himself dwelt when here? He says: "*I have kept My FATHER'S commandments, and abide in His love.*" (John xv. 10.) What is this, but the plainest announcement that we likewise, may so walk, as to enjoy this full *manifestation* of the FATHER'S love?

But then the question might naturally arise in the mind, what amount of disobedience will hinder? and I would say, that I believe this *manifestation* of the FATHER and the SON unto our souls will be just in proportion to our obedience. The *realization* of our union with CHRIST JESUS at the right hand of GOD, will work obedience in us. Thus every step that we take, every act of love, every expression of love in intercession for others, makes way for this further *manifestation* of the FATHER'S love. The soul urged forward by love to Him who has loved it with such a love is introduced into a further enjoyment of love. It is one act of GOD'S grace to *urge forward* the soul to obedience, another act of the same grace to *meet*, and *bless* it, in obedience.

We see that the whole burden of the commandments of JESUS, is that we should love one another. What then is the character of that love which we are now to manifest towards one another?—that of the love of JESUS,—self denial,—self sacrifice,—becoming poor to enrich others,—forsaking things,

not merely that are criminal, but, it may be even in themselves most innocent. The happy, holy course of a christian, is to forsake anything and everything, if, by the denial of it to himself, he can minister life, or strength, or obedience, or blessing to another;—this is the course in which alone he can expect that which met JESUS (the manifested love of the FATHER) to meet *him*. You will not mistake when I say, that it was here, that the blessed SON of GOD learned, what He never could have learned so fully elsewhere, the love of the FATHER. It was here, in circumstances of weakness, and trial, and suffering, He learned it so as He could never have done at the right hand of the throne of GOD. And it is here, too, in the midst of the storm and trial, that *we* are called upon to learn the peculiar character of the FATHER'S love.

Do you think that a man that is studying alone, who judges the course of a saint to be one, merely, of uprightness, and blamelessness, and not of self sacrifice, do you think he will be learning the love of the FATHER? No! it was in the death, the sorrow of heart, the self sacrifice of the LORD JESUS, that He learned this peculiar love of the FATHER; and it is only as we, through grace, are led along in His path, that the soul can understand, and know experimentally, the peculiarity of the love which rested upon Him. It is just so long as we forget ourselves, speak not of ourselves, are willing to be weak that others may be strong, to die for others, to be despised for others, that the way to the deeper understanding of the FATHER'S love opens to us.

But how is it possible that our souls can be happy in trial, if not along with CHRIST in trial? and do not our trials, beloved, often arise from the lack of that which should result from communion with CHRIST? If so they are not those in which we shall be enabled to look up and expect the FATHER'S approval of love.

My brethren, the amount of the joy which our souls should crave, is nothing short of the full shining of the FATHER'S love which rested on CHRIST.

IS CHRIST PRECIOUS ?

(AN EXTRACT.)

Is CHRIST precious to you? If CHRIST is not precious to you, you are at war with GOD. If He is not more precious to you than everything beside, then you are in a bad state as a saint. If you are tired of hearing of Him, then what GOD

delights in wearies you, and heaven could have no charm for you. For heaven itself would not make you happy, if you have no delight in CHRIST. Is it still true of you, that you see no beauty in CHRIST that you should desire Him? In God's sight He is perfect beauty—all loveliness; and when there is anything of God in the soul, He is the desired one: to see Him, not that we may be charmed for a moment as with a beautiful picture, but to know Him, to love Him. He has laid hold of the affections. We may not have the answer yet, but there is the desire, there is the thirst in the soul after Him, which He alone can answer. If you have no desire after CHRIST, and can do without Him, then your heart is still alienated from God, who delights in Him alone, and there is not a common thought between you and God; for when He is saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," you have no delight in Him, and do not know Him as the desire of your heart. I am not speaking of duties, nor of victory over this and that; but I ask whether day by day CHRIST is the desire of your heart?

SOME CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF THE INSPIRED BOOKS.

EXODUS.

The characteristic feature of the book of Exodus is, doubtless, "Redemption." It divides itself naturally into two parts: the first part embracing chaps. i. xviii, and giving *from what* we are redeemed; the second, being the remainder of the book, giving *to what* we are redeemed—the relationship with God into which we are brought by redemption. This is not however, here, that of *children*, but as the "house of God, the assembly of the living God," of which the tabernacle is a recognized figure.

The prominency assigned by Scripture itself to the typical teaching of this book, may help to settle in our souls the importance of types in general, as well as prepare us for this being the chief feature of those historic books. For we are now in the midst of things which are expressly declared to have "*happened* to them for types," and thus to be "written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come," (1 Cor. x. 11.)

Let us now try and read what we may of the first division of the book.

We have first the scene in which God finds the people He delivers. Egypt is the type, not of the world in its wicked lusts—that is Sodom, as on the other hand the *religious* world is Babylon. Sodom and Babylon are objects of God's judgment seemingly, and perish under it. Egypt, though judged, on the other hand, does *not* perish but survives for blessing at a future day (See Isa. xix 20-25). Yet is it a "land of bondage" to the elect of God. It is the world of nature now fallen, divorced from God, a land drinking no water of the rain of heaven (as Canaan does) but watered by itself. Striking picture it is of the great self-reliant world, boasting "our river is our own," confident in its own resources, but utterly without God. When he heals it, no wonder that He smites its "river" first (Isa. xi. 15 xix. 5,) that men, in dearth of all they trusted in, may learn their real poverty, and cease to glory in their shame. Meanwhile it is a land of science, not divine, given over to idolatry, over which sin reigns unto death, as Pharaoh did for the Egyptians.

Into this land the children of Israel came with *Jacob*, as we with our first father, and then they had, as all we, their time of prosperity, and forgetfulness of God.

But this was not to last. Over *that* time the Spirit of God spends but few words. Sin's bondage must be felt, before there is deliverance. At last they cry out. But before ever they cry at all, the Deliverer is prepared.

It is plain that Moses, whom the history now turns aside to introduce is a type of CHRIST Himself. True Levite He is, "joined" to the LORD on the one hand, and to the people in heart and affection on the other, the "mediator between God and man, the man CHRIST JESUS," born on the day of adversity, which he shares from the first, exposed (upon the cross) to the death which sin had brought in, then delivered from it; "refusing to be called the Son of Pharaoh's daughter"—to enjoy the honours of the world as one of its own (comp. John xi. 15); rejected by those He came to serve, and finding in a strange land a Gentile bride, and fruitfulness when still in heart he was a stranger (ch. ii. 22). Thus we are brought to recognize our Leader and Deliverer, the Great Shepherd to whom God entrusts the bringing of His people out of Egypt.

They are taken up upon the ground of God's absolute promise, which as the Ever-present He fulfils. "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," He declares to be His "memorial name." Unconditionally He pledges Himself now to be with a people who had no personal claim but that of their

need, felt in His heart who beheld all they suffered. The glorious "I wills" of God are freely spoken; and then Moses' own call as the Deliverer is certified to the unbelieving heart of the people. (Ch. iv.)

Of the three signs given, the first is that of complete power over the power of the enemy; the second, of the cleansing of sin: these two powers belong to the Divine Antitype; they are the certificates of His mission as the SAVIOUR of those lying under this double bondage. The third sign, not to be given except in case of obstinate unbelief, is that of the power of judgment, which is also His. Thus all turns, for the salvation of the people, on their reception of the God-sent SAVIOUR, just as faith in CHRIST Himself precedes the knowledge of the value and application of His work, and is the true beginning of eternal life in the soul.

The association of Aaron with Moses in the work follows (iv. 10-11) Aaron is not yet the priest, but the prophet only. The office of priesthood is exercised only on behalf of those already redeemed, to maintain them according to God in view of their infirmities. There is no priesthood at all, nor could be, through all this part of Exodus. What we have here, it seems to me, is the dependence of the prophet upon the mediator, of all revelation from God to man—for all Scripture is "prophetic;* upon the mediation of CHRIST.

I pass on now to the actual deliverance. It is not at once accomplished. The people who have believed Moses find as the first effect, instead of freedom, heavier bondage. It is the common history of the beginning of Divine life in the soul. GOD'S children come forth from the womb with a cry. The Gospel itself seems a sword put in Pharaoh's hand to slay us. (Ch. v. 21.) The promises and assurances of God are met in our eyes by the felt misery of our condition. "They hearkened not to Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage." (Ch. vi. 9.) Those who have believed in the Deliverer will not believe in the deliverance.

And now ensues what in a general way we know full well, while yet the details may be hard to follow. That smiting down of nature's pride and glory, that struggle of the "old man" who rules us with a living God of judgment, those gleams of hope before deliverance is yet attained, (viii. 8, ix. 27, 28, x. 16, 17), those attempts at compromise with our convictions, (viii. 25, x. 8-24), all this is not unknown to any of

* Rom. xvi. 26, should be "by the prophetic Scriptures."

GOD'S redeemed, slow as we may be to mark distinctly the steps towards deliverance, when yet we have it not.

But at the twelfth chapter we must pause, for there indeed we do emerge (as it were) into the light, and begin to realize whereabouts we have arrived.

The Passover is the first part of the deliverance itself, to which all before, however needful, has been only preparatory. It is moreover the foundation of the full ultimate deliverance. The full deliverance it is not. *That* take place only at the Red Sea. There, and there alone, it is, that Moses says, "Stand still, and see the salvation of God," and after it do we find (ch. xv.) salvation in the mouths, and as the song of, the people. The Red Sea is thus, what the full Gospel is to the soul now, "the power of GOD unto salvation." (Rom. i. 16.) Yet the Passover is in its character, as I have said, the deeper thing of the two. It was that which justified and necessitated the Red Sea deliverance. The two thus stand related to one another (to speak broadly—the more precise statement will be given presently) as the Cross of CHRIST does to the Resurrection. The Cross was "weakness" ("He was crucified through weakness," 2 Cor. xiii. 4); the Resurrection was the "power of GOD." The questions raised in the two events were different, as well as the character in which (as suited to them) GOD appeared.

The question raised at the Passover was between *God and the people*. How could He who was displaying His power in Egypt, in judgments which covered the length and breadth of the land, be with those who had shared in all Egypt's abominations? "Death" had "passed," not upon Egypt merely, but "upon all men, for that *all* had sinned." (Rom. v. 12.) And now death was there. He who was "no respecter of persons" was to pass through the land, dread and rightly dreaded visitant of every house and family therein. Could Israel's houses bear, any more than others, His inspection? Could they claim exemption from that which was the common due of sin?

Thus at the Passover, as at the Cross, GOD'S aspect was that of a Judge. He was stretching out His arm, but to smite and not to save. He teaches them indeed, how to anticipate the judgment, writing up upon their doors confession of what they were, even in that blood of the Lamb upon which the Divine Eye rested, and which shielded the occupants of the houses where it was. But there was no communion thus with GOD. The very promise was, He would "*pass over*." It was not

power acting on their behalf, but shelter from a power which otherwise must have been against them.

Yet very sweet and safe that shelter was, and they could not but know that God had provided it. Let the storm sweep through Egypt now, no woman's heart need quail. To doubt were to dishonour the spoken word, and the provision God's own hand had made for their security. He saw not *them* whoever, *whatever*, they might be. He saw but the blood which told of sin put upon another, and judgment *for them* already passed. Just so is it now for him who with the feeblest faith owns the righteous sentence passed upon him on the Cross, borne for him by Him who hung on it.

And with this, a new chapter in man's history opens: "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first year of the month to you." The lamb too is eaten: the preciousness of Christ is known; a lamb "roast with fire," exposed to the full and holy wrath of God upon sin, which nothing (it was not to be sodden with water) no, not the holiness of His perfect life, could avail to modify. With this the "bitter herbs" of repentance (in its full character) are eaten, and the "unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (1 Cor. v. 8. comp. Ps. xxxii. 1, 2.)

Now, too, the people put on their pilgrim character, for now they are to leave Egypt. There is not a move in that direction until they know that judgment was their due, and is past, the blood having sheltered them. Immediately upon that, "that very night," they began to go out.

In the close of chapter xii., we find the regulations to be observed in *after* celebrations of the Passover. It is not here the question of who might take refuge under atoning blood, but who might "eat" the Passover as a memorial. No "stranger," uncircumcised, might do so, and "no hired servant." On the one hand, devotedness; on the other, such as does not pretend to make God a debtor to it, is insisted on. We cannot keep the feast in Corinthian lawlessness, or Galatian legality.

In chapter xiii., sanctification is first spoken of. The first born, "the chief of all their strength," are set apart to God. As first-born, just as in the parallel instance of the "first-fruits," they represent the whole people, and we are distinctly taught here that there could be no sanctification, except upon the ground of redemption.

The LORD now Himself also takes His place with the people as their Leader, and the Shechinah of His presence, always

the exact opposite of earth's day or night, fire in the latter, cloud in the former, guides them by day and night. Thus by day or night they go, independent of circumstances, because dependent upon the Lord.

But full deliverance they do not even yet know; and they are yet to learn to ask, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

THE FATHER'S DISCIPLINE.

As the children of God, we are admitted to all the privileges of His house, and the discipline of the house is as much a *privilege* as anything else. It is on the ground of the relationship in which God has set us, that He acts in discipline towards us. A father disciplines his children, because they *are* his. If I see a strange child doing wrong, I am not called upon to chastise him. I am not in the the relationship of a father to him, and, as a consequence, I neither know the affection nor the responsibilities of that relationship. I must be in a relationship in order to know the affections which belong to it. Now, as our FATHER, GOD, in His grace and faithfulness, looks after us in all our ways, He will not suffer aught upon us, or about us, which would be unworthy of Him, and subversive of our real peace and blessedness. "Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the FATHER of spirits, and live? For they verily, for a few days, chastened us after their own pleasure; but He, for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness." (Heb. xii., 9, 10.) Thus, the discipline is a positive privilege, inasmuch as it is a proof of our FATHER's care, and has for its object our participation in the Divine holiness.

But, then, we must ever bear in mind that the discipline of our FATHER's hand is to be interpreted in the light of our FATHER's countenance, and the deep mysteries of His moral government to be contemplated through the medium of His tender love. If we lose sight of this, we shall be sure to get into a spirit of bondage as respects ourselves, and a spirit of judgment, as respects others, both of which are in direct opposition to the spirit of CHRIST. All our FATHER's dealings with us are in perfect love. When He furnishes us with bread it is in love; and when He takes down the rod, it is in love also. "*God is love.*" It may frequently happen that we are at a loss to know the why and the wherefore of some special

dispensation of our FATHER'S hand. It seems dark and inexplicable. The mist, which enwraps our spirits, is so dark and heavy as to prevent our catching the bright and cheering beams from our FATHER'S countenance. This is a trying moment—a solemn crisis in the soul's history. We are in great danger of losing the sense of Divine love, through inability to understand the profound secrets of Divine government. Satan, too, is sure to be busy at such a time. He will ply his fiery darts, and throw in his dark and diabolical suggestions. Thus, between the filthy reasonings which spring up within, and the horrid suggestions which come from without, the soul is in danger of losing its balance, and of getting away from the precious attitude of artless repose in Divine love, let the Divine government be what it may.

Thus much, with reference to our own souls, while under any special visitation of the hand of God. The effect as to others, is equally bad. How often may we have detected ourselves in the habit of cherishing a spirit of judgment, in reference to a child of God, whom we found in circumstances of trial, either of "mind, body or estate." This should be carefully guarded against. We ought not to imagine that every visitation of the hand of God must necessarily be on account of some special sin in the person. This would be an entirely false principle. The dealings of God are preventive as well as corrective.

Take a case in point. My child may be in the room with me, enjoying all the sweet intimacies which belong to our relationship. A person enters, whom I know will utter things which I do not wish my child to hear, I, therefore, without assigning any reason, tell my child to go to his room. Now, if he has not the fullest confidence in my love, he may entertain all manner of false notions about my act. He may reason about the why and wherefore to such a degree as almost to question my affection. However, directly the visitor takes his leave, I call my child into my presence and explain the whole matter to him: and, in the renewed experience of a father's love, he gets rid of the unhappy suspicions of a few dark moments.

Thus, it is often with our poor hearts, in the matter of the Divine dealings both with ourselves and others. We reason when we ought to repose: we doubt when we ought to depend. Confidence in our FATHER'S love is the true corrective in all things.

We should ever hold fast the assurance of that changeless,

infinite and everlasting love, which has taken us up in our low estate, made us "sons of God," and will never fail us, nor let us go, until we enter upon the unbroken and eternal communion of our FATHER'S house above.

C. H. M.

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES.

IN James you get the perfect law of liberty applied to the Christian's path; looking for patience, so that the will should not act, and confidence in God so that wisdom and strength should be acquired. If there is evil it comes from man—if good, from the unchangeable God, who of His own will beget us by the word of truth. He thus, as he does afterwards, introduced sweeping denunciations against the spirit of the world and of riches. He speaks of three laws—the law of God, as to which if we offend in one point, we are guilty of all—the royal law, love your neighbour as yourself—and the law of liberty, by which our conduct is to be judged, and where the will of God and the nature we have received were in one channel together. Mere faith of the head is treated as worthless, and a faith producing works is the test *for man* of its being living faith. But the works are only viewed as *works of faith*. Those he refers to would have been bad works, except upon that principle.

Redemption is not adverted to in James; but self-subjection is insisted on specially as regards the *tongue*. Hence, warning against being many teachers, and the true character of heavenly wisdom. The fruits of righteousness are sown in peace.

The Epistle closes with a strong exhibition of the power of the prayer of faith. It is addressed to the twelve tribes; but faith in CHRIST and the existence of the assembly are distinctly recognized, although the synagogue, he also recognized as still in existence.

J. N. D.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. "Between the resurrection of the Saints at the coming of CHRIST, and the resurrection of the wicked dead after the millennium, what becomes of such as are born? Do they die, and are they translated? If they die, when are they raised again; are they resurrected with the wicked dead?"

A. From Isaiah lxxv., 20, it would seem that during the mil-

lennium, there would be death in no case before the age of 100 years was reached, and such a one would be *then* only a child; but if still a sinner, as being unregenerate, would then be cut off accursed as a sinner, consequently at the end of the millennium, when the second resurrection takes place, *only* the wicked will be in question. How the earthly saints of the millennial period will pass from the old earth to the new earth, we are not told. Certainly not by death and resurrection in connection with the great white throne, where alone the wicked are found. They will be translated somehow, but Scripture is silent as to this.

Q. Who are "the ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance" in Luke xv. 7?

A. The LORD is showing here the difference between the principle of law and grace, with the delight that God has in the exercise of the latter. Among men no such class as "the ninety and nine" of course, exists, the parable only supposes them to show the contrast between two actions.

"FRAGMENTS GATHERED UP."

It is better to be thinking of what God is than of what we are. This looking at ourselves, at the bottom is really pride, a want of the thorough consciousness that we are *good for nothing*. Till we see this, we never look quite away from *self* to *God*. Sometimes, perhaps, the looking at our evil may be a partial instrument in teaching us it, but still even that is not all that is needed. In looking at CHRIST, it is our privilege to *forget* ourselves. True humility does not so much consist in thinking badly of ourselves, as in not thinking of *ourselevs* at all. I am too bad to be worth thinking about. What I want, is to forget myself and to look at God, Who is indeed worth *all* my thoughts. Is there need of being humbled about ourselves, we may be quite sure that this will do it. If we can say (as in Rom. vii.) that "in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing," we have had thoughts quite long enough about ourselves, let us then think about Him Who thought about us with "thoughts of good, and not of evil," long before we had thoughts about ourselves at all. Let us see what His thoughts of *grace* about us are, and take up the words of faith: "If God be for us, who can be against us."

THE LEPER.

LEV. xiv., 1-7.

THE disease of leprosy is a marked and impressive type of sin in the **flesh**. Of all diseases it is the most loathsome, and is utterly incurable by man's art or device. The leper, too, was perfectly helpless in himself to remove his disease. He was in so sad a condition, that contact with him only partook of his defilement. Whosoever touched him, or whatsoever touched him, or whatsoever he touched, partook of his uncleanness. His unhappy state is described in Lev. xiii., 44-46: "He is a leprous man, he is unclean; the priest shall pronounce him *utterly* unclean; his plague is in his head, and the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, unclean, unclean. All the days wherein the plague shall be in him, he shall be defiled; he is unclean; he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be." Nothing can be more sad and pitiable than the state of the leper.

Reader, does it not typify your case, if you are a sinner, unreconciled to God? Divest yourself of the garb of "profession" for a moment, and look upon your sad condition in God's sight. Behold in yourself a sinner from your heart's core, helpless to do anything for your cleansing; and in such a state that you can only pronounce those words of the leper of old, "Unclean, unclean."

In the Scripture before us, we find a precious figure of the work of the SAVIOUR JESUS for the unclean sinner. We read, "And the priest shall *go forth* out of the camp." (Ver. 3.) How our poor legal hearts reverse the order. Our thought is that the sinner must first come to God; and if he does his best, God will meet him and help him to do the remainder; all the while forgetting that all this doing on the sinner's part for salvation, is but the servile toil of a sinner; and that he is *not yet in the position* to be a "doer," but is still a sinner who needs to be cleansed from his sins ere he can "do" anything aright. No, the leper was outside the camp—the sinner is unreconciled to God. He is not yet in the place for the exercise of these "doings" all good and right in their place. The question for the sinner is not what he is to occupy himself with outside of God's presence? but, How is he to get in? His proper occupation outside is to confess his true state as "unclean." Now, God's most blessed answer to this

is revealed here, "The priest shall go forth *out* of the camp." Hearken, dear sinner, to this precious revelation of God's grace in sending His Son to *seek* and to *save* that which was lost. "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 John iv., 9, 10.) Wondrous love of God! wondrous journey of His Son, from the bosom of the Father to a sin-stained world! Nothing was here to draw forth His love but need; and with all this He came to the place where the sinner was!

We read in verse 4, etc., "Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet and hyssop; and the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water; as for the living bird, he shall take it and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water; and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field." This is very precious. The little clean birds tell us of the cleanness and spotlessness of God's spotless Lamb—the death of one of them, of Christ offering Himself through the Eternal Spirit, "without spot to God," (Heb. xi., 14); and the other, soaring aloft into the Heavens, of Jesus risen from the dead, bearing the tokens of his blood-shedding up into the Heavenly Sanctuary—entering into the Holiest by his own blood (Heb. ix., 12.) All this was done by him who acted for God in the poor leper's view. What had he been doing all the while? He had been "standing still, to see the salvation of God;" gazing in silence at all this wonderful ceremony being performed for him; further than this he could not go; till the work was complete, and his person sprinkled with the blood, and his eye had followed the little bird as it ascended towards the Heavens, bearing on its wings the blood that had been shed and sprinkled upon him, he had but to stand still and behold! But what a tale it told his poor heart, as he saw the vanishing form of the little live bird!—a tale of joy and peace, of days of solitude and banishment from the camp being over—of communion with the Lord's people within about to begin. How his heart must have rejoiced to hear the priest who spake for God, de-

clare that he was *clean, through the seven-fold sprinkled blood!*

My reader, are you one of the moral lepers—the sinners of the world—who wants to be cleansed; one who is conscious that **Y**our sins shut you out from the presence of God? Look, then, I beseech you, on the spotless Substitute whom God has provided, working out on His cross that which cleanses your soul before God. Remember that He who did this work for you has risen again—has passed from the earth, where he suffered “outside the camp,” into the presence of the living God, bearing in His body the marks of His perfect work, which cleanses your soul, and gives you a title to be there *with Him*; and that He who thus wrought for you has Himself, as speaking for God, “pronounced you clean,” with a cleanness which befits the presence of God! The leper of old had but to behold the work for him, to hear his sentence pronounced, to believe it, and at once to enter upon all his blessedness. What more is demanded of you? Just to “stand still and behold the salvation of the Lord.” It is to him that *worketh not, but believeth* on Him, that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (Rom. iv. 5.)

Such, then, is somewhat of what we learn here. The leper *was sought* outside the camp—the work *was done by Him who acted for God!* The blood was sprinkled *by Him* on the leper. He who spake for God pronounced upon the value and efficacy of the ceremony, “clean every whit,” and fit for the camp of God! He had not to raise a finger in the work; he was not called upon to “feel,” or “hope,” or “realize,” or any of those things which often stumble the poor, anxious, soul, before he believed. These were all quite right in their place, but he had to do none of these things; and the sinner who gazes upon the cross of CHRIST has to do none of these *before* he believes. What he wants is cleansing—a cleansing in the sight of God—such a cleansing as is worthy of Him; and his satisfaction of heart surely would depend upon the satisfaction of God in the work which had cleansed his soul. God Himself sent His Son to seek you, dear sinner. God Himself provided a sacrifice to put away your sins. His own word has pronounced upon its efficacy and your consequent cleanness; and surely your heart may rest in the satisfaction of God in this, and never raise a question when God has pronounced you clean. “*The blood of JESUS CHRIST, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.*”

"THE GOD OF PEACE."

"Now the God of Peace that brought again from the dead our Lord JESUS, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant."—*Heb.* xiii. 20.

THE title under which the HOLY GHOST, in this passage, introduces GOD to our thoughts is peculiarly expressive. He calls Him "the God of Peace." That is what He is to us, in connection with the opening grave of the "great Shepherd of the sheep," and on the foundation of "the blood of the everlasting covenant." In short, we have in this most comprehensive passage two Persons and two things. We have the GOD of Peace and the LORD JESUS; the blood of the everlasting covenant and the resurrection from the dead. All of these we have under the pen of the HOLY GHOST.

But there is another title under which GOD must be seen before the soul can really enjoy Him as "the God of Peace," and that is as "the God of Judgment." To speak of peace while the claims of GOD, in this latter character, lie unanswered, is the very height of presumptuous folly. GOD can have no peace with sin, in any shape or form. If sin be not put away, there can be no peace with GOD, so long as sin remains unjudged. Hence, therefore, it becomes us to inquire on what ground can the inspired Apostle speak of GOD as "the God of Peace."

The ground is this—may the anxious reader understand it! "The God of Judgment" met the sin-bearer at the cross, and there went into the entire question of sin, and settled it once and forever. The Divine Substitute made peace, by the cross, in order that "the God of Peace" might meet us *without* judgment, at the opening grave. All the GOD of Judgment had against my sins He laid on the head of my Substitute, on the cross, in order that I might know and enjoy Him as the God of Peace. This is the grand fundamental truth of the Gospel, which must, when simply believed, give settled peace to the conscience. The justice of GOD has been perfectly satisfied about sin by the death of CHRIST. Nay, more, GOD has been glorified, in reference to sin, by the blood of the cross. This must give peace to every one who simply believes it.

It is truly wonderful to think of the meagre view we take of the Gospel, notwithstanding its moral grandeur, as it shines before us in the pages of the Book of GOD. From the way in which one sometimes hears the Gospel put, it would

seem as though forgiveness of sins were the fruit of an exercise of mercy at the expense of justice, or as though justice consented to stand aside while mercy pardons and saves. How different is this from that stupendous scheme of redemption which had its origin in the bosom of GOD; which was laid in the eternal counsels of the Trinity before the foundation of the world; which was ratified by the blood of the everlasting covenant; which is revealed by the HOLY GHOST in the Scriptures of truth, and received by faith into the hearts of all those who, through grace, "set to their seal that God is true"! In that glorious scheme we behold mercy and truth, righteousness and peace, blessedly combined; so that the sinner is as positively saved by righteousness and truth as by mercy and peace. The latter are not more favorable to him than the former. Justice and judgment are the pillars of that blood-sprinkled throne of grace to which the sinner approaches in worship and adoration.

Is my reader anxious about salvation? Is he desirous of knowing the pardon of his sins? Does he sigh after the peace of the Gospel? If so, let him only pause and think of this: "The God of Judgment" met CHRIST on the cross, and then entered into and definitely settled the great question of sin. How is this to be known? Is it by some feeling in my own mind? Is it by my passing through some mental process? Is it aught that I can do, or say, or think, or feel? Nay. How, then? "The God of Peace brought again from the dead our LORD JESUS." This is the way I am to know that the question of sin has been eternally settled. If it had not been settled, we should never have heard aught of "the God of Peace," or seen aught of "the great Shepherd's" opening grave, or known aught of the changeless efficacy of the blood of "the everlasting covenant." The God of Peace could never have appeared on the scene if all the claims of the God of Judgment had not been divinely answered. How were they answered? By the blood of JESUS—nothing less—nothing more—nothing different. Nought else could avail. If I had all the good works that were ever performed beneath the canopy of heaven; if I had all the morality, all the fleshly pietism, all the legal righteousness that ever man could boast of; if I had all the alms that ever were distributed by the hand of benevolence: if I had all these, and ten thousand times ten thousand more besides, placed to my credit, it would not answer the claims of the God of Judgment with respect to my sins. But the death of CHRIST *has* answered for me.

its solitary grandeur, in all its divine sufficiency. It needs no addition. It has met all. What more do I want as the ground of my peace? Nothing more. GOD is satisfied; so am I; the matter is settled forever, nor can anyone or anything unsettle it.

Reader, are you satisfied? Is CHRIST sufficient for you? Has He done enough to meet the claims of your conscience? Do you want to add something of your own doings or feelings to His all-sufficient atonement? If not, what are you waiting for? You say "I do not *feel*." I reply we are not saved by feeling, but by faith. "The just shall live by faith," not by *feeling*, but "by faith." Do you not see that while you talk of not feeling, you are still on legal ground—on the ground of works. You have, it may be, abandoned the idea of *manual* labour, but you are still looking to your *mental* labour. The one is as worthless as is the other. Give up both, as a ground of salvation, and take CHRIST. This is what you want in order to be happy. If you were to hear a person say, "I am happy, now. I have peace with God because I have given a hundred dollars in charity," would you not pronounce him self-deceived? doubtless; and yet you say, "If I could *feel* I should be happy." Where lies the difference between "do" and "feel"? Is not the one as stable a foundation for a sinner's peace as the other? Would it not be better to let CHRIST supplant both? Is there not enough in Him without your feelings as well as without your works? If your feelings or your works had been necessary then why did "The God of peace bring again from the dead our LORD JESUS?" Is it not evident that you are seeking something more, as a ground of peace, than that which is presented to you in the Gospel?

Dear friend, do think of this. My heart's desire is that you may rest now and evermore, in a full CHRIST; that He may be sufficient for you, as He is sufficient for GOD. Then feelings and works of the right kind will be forthcoming, not as a ground of peace, but as the fragrant fruits of an enjoyed salvation—not as a title to life, but as the outflow of a life possessed through faith in CHRIST. May the blessing of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST rest abundantly upon you.

NOTE.—It is interesting to observe the three titles applied to our blessed LORD JESUS CHRIST as Shepherd. In John x. He is called "The *good* Shepherd" in *death*. In Heb. xiii. He is called "the *great* Shepherd," in *resurrection*; and in 1 Pet. v. He is called "the *chief* Shepherd" in *glory*. Each title has its own specific meaning, and its own appropriate place.

WHERE OUR ALTAR IS.

Heb. xiii. 8-15.

THE privileges and responsibilities of the believer depend alike upon the place which the LORD JESUS has taken for him. This is the argument of the apostle here. I desire to follow it out a little, being assured of the blessedness of being occupied with CHRIST Himself; with Him "yesterday, to-day, and for ever the same," and who yet has occupied two places so far apart as those two, characteristic, as many have noticed, of the Epistle to the Hebrews—the one "outside the camp"—the other, "inside the veil." It is the connection between those two places, in themselves so different, that the apostle traces in the verses immediately before us. The place, inside the veil, as taken for us, is the result of the place, outside the camp, in like manner taken. In our case, also, as going forth to Him, the one place precedes the other. To find our altar whereof we have a right to eat, we must "go forth to Him without the camp;" for "the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought *into the sanctuary* by the high priest for sin, are burned *without the camp.*" The *track of the blood* from the sin-offered victim is thus our high road within the veil; "we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of JESUS, by a new and living way, which He has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh."

Following, then, this order, let us look first of all at the SAVIOUR

"OUTSIDE THE CAMP,"

and let us seek to apprehend what it is to "go forth to Him" there.

"Wherefore JESUS," we read, "that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate."

Perfect MASTER He, little as they recked it, of those in whose hands He was, the unresisting victim of their causeless enmity. The place outside the gate they gave Him as one cast out of their midst, unfit to live. They little knew that He who had come to do His FATHER'S will, came voluntarily to take that place of outcast. Or that in that cross which they gave Him there, their whole condition, and the whole condition of the world, was judged. But so it was. There, upon that cross, "if One died for all, then *all died*" (2 Cor. v. 14 Greek). If in grace He died, still it was the declaration of the necessity of death in the case of all in behalf of whom He died. That death was thus *their* death, not in saving efficacy

indeed, unless *us* for them they accepted it, but before God the end of man's history and of his trial—his death in judgment. The grace of it does not alter the fact, but rather enforces and gives power to the condemnation. And make the "all" for whom He died world-wide, you have there the judgment of the "all." The place He took in grace, as needed for them, was their place. Because it was *death* He died.

But we have not yet penetrated the depth of man's condition, or seen the full reality of the place that JESUS took. For that the apostle here refers us to the types of the Old Testament. It was not every sacrifice which had the efficacy to open the Holy place. It was not alone the death of the victim that was needed, however spotless. The peace-offering and the burnt-offering were as spotless as the sin-offering—the victim as truly suffered death, and (in the case of the burnt-offering) was as wholly consumed by the fire, as ever the sin-offering was, yet the blood of these never went into the sanctuary. No, it was neither the death, nor the burning simply, that gave the efficacy. It was along with that, as the apostle points out, the *place* of the burning. Even of the sin-offering there were lower grades which were not "burned without the camp," but their "blood was *not*" brought into the sanctuary: so that it is plain the significance of the *place* where the sacrifice was burned is of all importance for the understanding why the blood of this sacrifice alone could enter the sanctuary.

Now the camp of Israel was the place of the people at large, and thus represented the whole body of those with whom as come out of Egypt God entered into relationship. In the midst of it He tabernacled. By those belonging to it alone could He be approached. The leper, whose place was outside the camp, was thus "cut off from the house of the LORD." (2 Chr. xxvi. 21.) It was the judicial "cutting off from the congregation of Israel," so often threatened to the offender. And it was as thus cut off the sentence of death was executed upon the blasphemer, (Lev. xxiv. 14) and the Sabbath-breaker (Numb. xv. 36).

The place outside the camp was thus in the most distinct way the place of one cast out from God. But we must go back yet a little in Israel's history, if we would learn who really occupied that place of outcast. The *character* of the place is all we have at present seen.

In the 19th chapter of Exodus, the LORD speaks unto Moses out of Mount Sinai, saying (3-5) "Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen

what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now, therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people, for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."

Thus the whole people are put distinctly upon the ground of their responsibility to God. Upon that ground, could they maintain it, they should be *all* holy, and as such, have free approach to God, as indicated by the term "a kingdom of priests."

All this the people took upon themselves, "and all the people answered together, and said, 'all that the Lord hath spoken we will do.'"

Thus they were fairly upon trial, and never were circumstances so favorable as those in which they were now placed. The wonders of their deliverance still fresh in their mind; their daily sustenance at the very time a daily miracle; Mount Sinai towering before their eyes, crowned with the glory of Jehovah, and manifesting in smoke and flame the presence of the One who had so marvellously and so graciously dealt with them, as he said.

Yet, alas, they failed. The glorious Mount itself before their eyes—forty days scarce passed—the tables of the law which God had spoken in their ears, are cast out of Moses' hands in token of the total breach of the covenant they had made. Judgment falls heavily upon them. Worst of all, and most decisive of their utter ruin, *the tabernacle leaves their midst*. "And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it *without the camp*, AFAR OFF FROM THE CAMP," (Ch. xxxiii., 7). "Holy nation" they are *not*, and "kingdom of priests" they cannot be.

Thus is "the camp" itself, cut off from the house of the Lord, and, reader, we are not simply looking at the bygone history of another race. The moral of the history is yours and mine. Israel, when they made the golden calf, were just what you and I in nature are. "There is no difference." "As in water face answereth to face, so the *heart* of man to man." The *heart*, mine and yours, answers to what in another may have come out in such revolting shape we turn away with loathing from it. The *life* may not answer, but the *heart* does. So He who only knows it perfectly declares.

And thus Israel's law, under which they lay condemned, brings us in guilty too. If of them it had to say, "There is

none righteous, no, not one," "we know that whatsoever the law saith it saith (indeed) to them that are under the law," (that is Israel) but for what purpose? Why, "that *every* mouth may be stopped, and *all the world* (not alone Israel) may become guilty before God" (Rom. iii., 19). And if "there is no difference" thus, but "all have sinned"—what then? they "come short of (or 'lack,' 'are destitute of') the glory of God" (Rom. iii., 23).

Like Israel, then, when the tabernacle was removed, and pitched "without the camp, afar off from the camp," such is the natural condition of every one of us, of the whole race of man. The whole world lies thus in moral ruin, under judgment.

And when once more Israel was restored to the blessedness of the LORD's presence in their midst, it was distinctly upon ground which owned the ruin, but testified of a provision made (not by the people, but by the LORD) in view of it. The sin-suffering of the day of atonement (Lev. xvi., 16) was God's justification in that His "tabernacle remained among them *in the midst of their uncleanness.*" Their place the victim took. "Outside the camp," where virtually *all* had been—away from the presence of the LORD—in the place of "cutting off" and judgment from God—*there* was the offering made which alone could provide blood so precious in the sight of God, as to open the holy place, and sprinkle the mercy-seat. "Day of atonement" above all it was, and worthily the grand theme of the writer of the "Hebrews," that day which brought out, as no other did, what the *essence of atonement* is. That, while it is true and remains ever true, that "it is the *blood* that maketh atonement for the soul," still the *only* blood that could go in into the holy place, into the presence of God, was the blood of a victim "burned without the camp." Upon that all hung for Israel; upon that of which it is the Divinely appointed figure, all hangs for man at large."

And now let us turn then from the figure to the fact. JESUS our LORD accomplished this. The place "outside the camp" *He* took, and therein lay the essence of the atonement that He made. This is the truth of what sin-bearing involved. This is the meaning of that cry out of that darkness that fell upon the agonized Sufferer, "My God, my God, why hast *Thou* forsaken me?" It was not that He was in the hands of men to bear all that human malice could inflict. Many of His people, heirs of that promise none the less, "I

will *never* leave thee nor forsake thee," have been left, before and since, to all the malice of those who were but willing tools in Satan's hands. Yet had they, according to His promise, "*never* been forsaken. Even thus had He "inhabited the praises of Israel," who had learned, in scenes the darkest, the faithfulness of his promises. That *holy* God remains, and Him the Sufferer justifies (Ps. xxii. 3) but yet is forsaken. The sin-offering is without the camp; the cross that bears Him is the awful witness of the place He is taking. God Himself hath said, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." In that place of curse he hangs, "made a curse for us." God has hid His face from the Bearer of sin; and He who can say, "*My* God,"—He who knows, as none other, the full meaning of that; He to whom GOD was *all*—is forsaken.

It is the blood of JESUS, then, that "cleanseth from all sin;" but the blood of One who took the place foreshadowed by the sin-offering "burned without the camp."

(*To be Concluded in our Next.*)

Strong's Concordance 213-214.

THE PRIEST'S PLACE AND PORTION.

(Lev. vi. 14—18.)

THESE verses present three things to our notice, in connection with "the law of the meat offering," namely: the priest, his place, and his portion.

1. *The Priest.* All the sons of Aaron were priests. They became such by *birth*. They were born into this highly-privileged position. They did not reach it by effort, but simply by birth. Being sons of Aaron, they were of necessity priests. They might be disqualified for the discharge of the functions of their position, through bodily blemish or ceremonial defilement (See Lev. xxi, xxii.); but as to the position itself, it was a necessary result of their being sons of Aaron. Position is one thing; ability to discharge the functions, or capacity to enjoy the privileges thereof, is quite another. A dwarf among the sons of Aaron was deprived of many of the higher priestly dignities; but even a dwarf was to "eat the bread of his God, of the most holy, and of the holy." GOD would not leave the feeblest or most diminutive member of the priestly household without a holy portion. "Only he shall not go in unto the veil, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish, that he profane not my sanctuaries: for I, the LORD, do sanctify them." A dwarf could not attend upon the altar of GOD; but the GOD of the altar

took care of the dwarf. The two things are divinely perfect. God's claims have been perfectly answered, and the need of His priestly family perfectly met.

II. *The Place.* The place where the priest was to partake of his portion teaches us a most valuable lesson of practical holiness. "With unleavened bread shall it be eaten in the holy place, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they shall eat it." That is to say, it is only in the power of personal holiness, and in the immediate presence of God, that we can really partake of our priestly portion. The way in which we get the place exhibits absolute grace. The place which we get demands personal holiness. To speak of effort in reaching the place is the fallacy of legalism. To think of unholiness in the place is the blasphemy of antimonianism. I reach the position *only* by grace. I occupy the position *only* in holiness. The pathway to the sanctuary of God has been thrown open by free grace; but it is to the *sanctuary* of God that grace has opened the pathway. These things must never be forgotten. We want to have them graven on the tablets of the conscience, and hidden in the chambers of the heart.

III. *The Portion.* And now as to the portion. "This is the law of the meat offering: the sons of Aaron shall offer it before the LORD, before the altar. And he shall take of it his handful of the flour of the meat offering, and of the oil thereof, and *all* the frankincense thereof, and shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savour, even the memorial of it unto the LORD. And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat." The fine flour and oil typify CHRIST'S perfect manhood, conceived and anointed by the HOLY GHOST. This is the portion of God's priests, to be enjoyed in the sanctuary of the Divine Presence, in separation of heart to God. It is utterly impossible that we can enjoy CHRIST anywhere else but in the presence of God; or in any other way than personal holiness. To speak of enjoying CHRIST while living in worldliness, indulging in pride, gratifying our lusts, giving a loose rein to our temper and passions, is a fatal delusion. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." (1 John, 1. 6.) The two things are wholly incompatible. "Fellowship with God" and walking in darkness are as diametrically opposed as Heaven and hell.

Thus, then, the place of all true priests—all believers—all members of the priestly household, is to be within the sacred

precincts of the sanctuary, in the immediate presence of God, feeding upon CHRIST in the power of personal holiness. All this we are taught in "the law of the meat offering."

But, let my reader note particularly that "all the frankincense" was consumed on the altar. Why was this? Because that frankincense typified the fragrance of CHRIST's manhood, as enjoyed exclusively by God Himself. There was that in CHRIST, as a man, down here, which only God could duly appreciate. Every thought, every look, every word, every movement, every act of "the Man CHRIST JESUS," emitted a fragrance which went up directly to the throne of God, and refreshed the heart of Him who sat thereon. Not a single atom of CHRIST's perfectness or preciousness was ever lost. It might be lost on a cold, heartless world, and even upon carnal and earthly-minded disciples, but it was not lost upon God. It all went up to Him according to its true value.

This is a spring of joy and comfort to the spiritual mind. When we think of how the blessed LORD JESUS was depreciated in this world, how little even his own disciples understood or valued Him, how the rarest and most exquisite touches and traits of His perfect humanity were lost upon a rude and unbelieving world, and even upon His own people, what comfort to remember that He was perfectly understood and appreciated by the One Who sat on the throne! There was an unbroken line of communication kept up between the heart of JESUS and the heart of God—the cloud of incense was continually ascending to the throne from the only perfect Man that ever trod this cursed and groaning earth. Not a grain of the incense was lost, because not a grain was entrusted even into the hands of the priests. All went up to God; nothing was lost. The world might despise and hate; the disciples might fail to understand or appreciate; what then? Was a single ray of CHRIST's moral glory to go for nought? Surely not: all was duly estimated by Him for whom it was designated, and Who alone could value it aright. This was true in every stage of CHRIST's precious life down here; and when we reach the end and see the climax, when one disciple sold Him for thirty pieces of silver, another cursed and swore he knew Him not, all forsook Him and fled, the world nailed him to an ignominious cross, between two thieves, God showed to the universe how much He differed from all the thoughts of men by placing the crucified One on the throne of the majesty in the heavens.

Thus much as to the primary application of the incense which, unquestionably, is to CHRIST. We may also observe that it has a secondary application to the believer, which he should seek to understand. *True Christianity* is the outflow of the life of CHRIST in the believer's practical ways, and this is most precious to God, though it may be lost upon an unbelieving world, and even upon a professing Church. There is not a movement of the life of CHRIST in the believer, not an expression of what He is, not the smallest manifestation of His grace, that does not ascend directly, as sweet incense, to the throne of God. It may not attract the notice or elicit the applause of this world. It may not get a place in the records of men; but it goes up to God, and this is enough for the faithful heart. God values all that is of CHRIST, nothing more, nothing else. There may be much that looks like service—much show, much noise, much that men make a great ado about; but nothing goes up to the throne; nothing is entered in the imperishable records of eternity but that which is the fruit of the life of CHRIST in the soul.

May God the HOLY GHOST lead us into the experimental understanding of these things, and bring forth in us, day by day, a brighter manifestation of CHRIST to the glory of God the FATHER.



PSALM LXIX.

THERE are three states of suffering in which souls may be. First, that which is their portion as sinners under judgment; second, the sufferings of a saint for righteousness, or love's sake; third, suffering as the consequence of sin under the government of God.

This last is not judgment and condemnation for sin, nor is it properly the chastening of a saint, though it may be used as such, and brings exercise of soul in such an one. Thus the consequence of Adam's transgression was to eat bread in the sweat of his brow, and the woman was to have sorrow in child-bearing, both connected with the government of God. The suffering of the Jews in the latter day will be connected with this kind of suffering, though it will seem as chastening too. It is more difficult to get hold of this third kind of suffering. In it God is dealing with a man about his sins without his coming under condemnation. No doubt the LORD JESUS went through all these kinds of sufferings; of course,

the first and last as saving or sympathizing with others. In representing God, bearing His reproaches, He suffered for righteousness' sake. For His love He had hatred. This was one character of His suffering. The next was that of suffering for the **Exp**iation of our sins. Of this, though it is not my purpose now to speak, we can never think enough. We can never get peace until we know it. "He was bruised for our iniquities." "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree."

The third class of suffering He did not go through except *anticipatively* just at the close of His life, when He said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished." If He had been in it all the time, He would not have spoken of going through it afterwards. At the close, He enters into a new scene, not only in the way of expiation, but Satan comes back after he had departed for a season. (Luke iv. 13.) He said, "Henceforth I will not talk much with you, for the prince of this world cometh." That character of suffering is not the present forsaking of God. However, as from Him, Satan stirred up the whole world against Him; but besides that, he brought the terrible-ness of distress from a broken law, the power of death, and an angry God to distress His soul.

We get the same character of suffering in the remnant. They go through all the consequences of their conduct in the government of God, though the condemnation they have deserved will not come upon them. Satan will come down, knowing that he has but a little time. (Rev. xii. 12.) All his violence will be directed against Israel in that day. We have a picture of it in Job. Satan was let loose against him; his friends were against him, and what was worse, the terrors of God were drinking up his spirit; so with them. Satan will use all his power to bring his terrible-ness into their hearts. To Peter the Lord said, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not," when the same occasion for exercise was coming upon him. The remnant will be sustained by the High Priest during all the exercises and trials they will go through.

All through the life of CHRIST, He never calls God, *God*. We never find Him do so in the Gospels until the cross. It would not have been walking in the power of the relationship which was *always* unhindered. When on the Cross, which was expiation, He does not say, "FATHER," until all being over, He was commending His spirit to Him, but "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" All that was against us was

there coming out against Him. The favour of God was hidden from Him. Righteousness was coming forth in execution of judgment for sin. Never was there a moment of the *Father's* more perfect delight in Him: but God was dealing according to His nature and being, it must be against sin, and therefore all was against Him, for He was made sin for us. As soon as He has gone through it, He uses both terms, "FATHER" and "God." He comes out as having done the work, and when He has wrought the atonement, He can bring us into the blessed fruit of it. Not only are we brought to the *Father* but to *God*, and all that was against us before is for us now. Righteousness, love, &c., are all made for us. The very same things He is in His nature that were against the sinner are for the saint. CHRIST, risen out of death, and having *entered* (sin being put away) into the unclouded joy of God His FATHER's countenance where He had perfectly glorified Him, says to His disciples, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to My FATHER and your FATHER, to My God and your God." All that is connected with these names of God and FATHER flow out to us. We are holy and without blame before Him in love. "I have manifested Thy name," He says of the FATHER: but now He could reveal *God* to them.

This would have been condemnation except through the cross. This is the effect of expiation on our position before God, besides bringing us into the place of children through adoption. CHRIST then never addressed God as God during His life. When CHRIST is made sin, then this relationship comes out directly: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" God in His nature was there dealing with that which was contrary to it—that is with *sin*. The sin is fully dealt with there, according to the nature of God: CHRIST has revealed God to us, after He has gone through it. All the revelation of God against sin was wrath: God's face was hidden. In this suffering, then, CHRIST was quite alone. It stood by itself, it was expiation. *Chastening* for sin is quite another thing. There is *love* in that: in the other it was *wrath*, and the effect of it is not a single cloud is left between us and God.

The suffering of CHRIST for righteousness' sake is intelligible enough in its nature, though its depth be hard to fathom. Our place in connection with it is also simple, filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of CHRIST, suffering for love's sake: and this may go very deep into the soul too: still there is joy with it if not in it, as we find CHRIST Himself having "meat

to eat" (John iv.) Going through the world, His heart was refreshed by the thought of souls getting blessing, and yet there was suffering with it. He had consolation from His FATHER according to His perfect faithfulness, and we may feel with Him as well as He feel with us. When souls reject the Gospel, or the Church is going on badly, or saints are losing their own blessing, all this will affect us if we are not insensible, but we shall have balm in suffering in this way.

This 69th Psalm expresses this kind of suffering. CHRIST says, "I am the song of the drunkard," "In the multitude of Thy mercy hear me." He has access to His Father, getting refreshment from Him. "My prayer is unto Thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time." These sufferings of CHRIST were deeper, I believe, than we have any idea of. He had all kinds of sufferings on the cross; still, that from man disappeared in comparison with that for sin from GOD.

There is often in GOD's ways with men suffering for righteousness' sake and suffering for sin, or to prevent it, at the same time (see 1 Cor. xii. and Heb. xii.) This often causes perplexity. For the Jews, under a sense of a broken law, there will be terrible trial of faith. They will see the ungodly in prosperity, while it is promised to the godly: "they shall flourish like the palm tree." The consequence of following in the way of righteousness brings dreadful trial on them, and yet what they go through is *also* in consequence of their sins, yet *not* condemnation. The nation has received anti-CHRIST, because they would not have the LORD JESUS. At the same time the terrors of the law enter the soul of the *righteous*, and Satan uses it all against them, urging that they have broken the law. Death is the judgment of GOD for sin. Who has the power of death? Satan. They cry out in their distress, and GOD delivers them; but Satan presents death as a terror, and as the judgment of GOD, to bring their sins to remembrance. They suffer from their sins, but yet have integrity. They are brought so low, that though faith is not extinct they scarcely have any. "Shall He find faith on the earth?" They cry, "How long?" There is faith in the world, but it is near coming to an end. They are like a tree in winter, with no signs of life in it, their leaves all cast. Yet this remnant is the sap of life in the midst of death, and the prophet says, "How long?" The expression how long implies some faith left. They are as though they were cast off, yet hold to GOD's promise. It cannot be for ever. There is the integrity of heart which will not willfully break the

law, and a terror of judgment knowing what sin has deserved. The weapon Satan will use in that day is the *truth of God*, not the grace, but the truth. Many souls are in this state now, because of integrity of heart, and their sins are all brought up to the conscience. Satan is there, and the LORD allows him to sift the soul because He has to lay the sins on the conscience and it is a very terrible exercise when the grace that meets the need is not known.

The *sorrow* of this CHRIST went through, when he was going indeed to bear their sins. He went through it for them. If they feel the terror of judgment for their own sins, which they will ultimately escape, that they may morally learn their state and need, and God display his righteous government, CHRIST went through the wrath, and did not escape, and at the close of his path went through the *anticipation* of it, which Satan, as the prince of darkness, pressed upon His soul, perfect in looking to God there as everywhere, and the spring by His spirit to them for right feelings, where they pass through the shadow of it as an exercise of heart. This suffering of the remnant is not suffering *with* CHRIST. They get a little comfort by the influx of hope, and they are down again in the mire. It is an alternation of almost despairing and hoping. CHRIST never went through this in His life, but He did go through it in death, Gethsemane, and drawing near to it, only that He was perfect in His feelings in it.

A redeemed soul may be going through many exercises of conflict between self and Satan to learn there is no good in itself. We are cast on a good out of ourselves. There must be practically the knowledge of good and evil in the conscience. Different characters need different experiences. If there be pride of nature, where there is much levity of soul, or where dangers and temptations are before us, great exercise may be needed to make the value of CHRIST known. You cannot prescribe to God a form of experience, but the soul must learn from CHRIST good and evil; all the good as coming from Him, and evil as in our will and nature where it lives. Some often go through great exercises that they may be used to others. But this solemn question of what good and evil is must be learned under the government of God and with Satan against us.

CHRIST went through the trial of this. No evil indeed was in Him and perfect good was; but His perfect obedience as a man was put to the test, and He was tempted in all points, like as we are, except sin. Would He stop in obedience be-

cause of what it cost? Would he allow the entrance of evil into his soul? Blessed be God! we know His obedience was perfect even unto death and the drinking of that bitter cup, and not the smallest thought of evil, could ever find an entrance into His soul. The question of good and evil was tried to the uttermost, but only to show the utter exclusion of all evil by one who was always good, and walking in perfect good kept evil *always* at a distance as such; that is, was perfect as man, perfect with God.

In us the conflict and trials end in the full acknowledgment of evil in ourselves, and of perfect good in Him, and the victory too of good received from him in life, and maintained by Him in grace in our hearts. His soul then was to go through the *conflict*, not as though He had the evil, but as tested by Satan, and doing it for God's glory and our sakes, whether in the presence of good and evil, He will go through all and glorify God; and He says, "As My FATHER gave Me commandment, even so I do." Then He was to go through it as a real man. He says to His disciples, "Tarry ye here"; but all that is in man was used by Satan. There His own forsake Him. He is left without comfort, which yet His soul would seek and did, and left exposed to Satan without any, and alone. "This is your hour and the power of darkness." Angels indeed came and ministered unto Him. This loneliness the remnant will not be tried by. "They that feared the LORD spake often one to another." No sorrow was like His. All that *man* was, is turned against Him. He looked for comforters, but found none. Then He goes through death. (I am not speaking of expiation now, but of death as an evil pressing on man, and Satan's power in it, yet as terror looking forward.) Was he to give way? Was He to take it from Satan and so enter into the temptation and shrink from or fall into despair, or go through in obedience and drink this cup of wrath, taking all this evil and bearing the judgment of God for it? He went through "with strong crying and tears." He went through it as none other could.

The remnant will, in their measure, go through this exercise as an exercise of heart. CHRIST takes up language for *them*. "Thou knowest my foolishness," &c. That was not His own; He takes up the language with Israel that He may go through with them and sympathize with them, (not in the way of working out expiation.) He will come to them in it, but not take them out of it, because they must learn what *sin* is—learn it in integrity and in the presence of Satan, fearing lest they

should not get from under it, though indeed they will be delivered.

He can come and sustain the soul under the trial and inspire faith under it, and show them how to bear it. They are to be sifted as wheat, the grain not falling through, though the chaff does. He can minister faith to them, as to Peter, with a look at the right moment. They will see then something to hope for. They may say, after all there is grace for a poor sinner, and then be sinking down in the mire again as bad as ever, while learning what sin is morally before God and under the power of Satan, appealing to God against the thing He has pronounced judgment upon. Thus they will learn the evil of Satan and the flesh, and bless God for deliverance. They will be walking in darkness while hearing the word. There is no praise nor liberty in that state. (See Isaiah L. 10.)

In CHRIST there was no *inward* darkness, but the whole power of it, as He says, was pressed upon His soul. "This is your hour and the power of darkness," and He was sorrowful even unto death. We should not be in that condition. The path of obedience is not the path of darkness to us, though there may be darkness in getting into it. They are told to trust. There is something for faith to lay hold of, a rope to cling to in the waters, until they come to know the full redemption accomplished.

It is important for us not to miss a perception of all these different sufferings of CHRIST. We should not go into it merely critically—that is ruinous—but with the heart. It is most important to remember that in expiation He was *alone*, without a ray of comfort, all light was hidden. Besides men being all against, He has the power of Satan to meet, and then the wrath of God. Perfect, absolute obedience came out when put to the test. He went through everything. He was left alone in His own perfectness with evil, there made sin—and wrath came upon it, for God to be glorified. What the sufferings of CHRIST were, none can fathom. What this grand solution of the question of good and evil was who can comprehend. We shall reap the blessedness in perfect good, blessed be the name of God! where no evil *can* enter.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Do you know the value of the blood of CHRIST? As a matter of faith, do you know the value of the blood of CHRIST? Do you know it as *the vital truth* of the Gospel, without which the Gospel is not the Gospel, but is another which Paul never preached. The glad tidings which the Apostle preached were, redemption by the blood. See 1 Cor. xv. 2-4. Ah! say you, It is not the blood here, but the death, “CHRIST died for our sins.” True, but why did he die? Because “in the blood is the life of the flesh.” Lev. xvii. 11. “For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul,” and, without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sins. Heb. ix. 22. Death, the penalty due to our sins, He must take upon Himself. 1 Pet. ii. 24. “Who His own self bear our sins in His own body on the tree.” So that the pouring out of His life blood was the chief point of significance, and indeed the central truth of all. But there is not only death but suffering also, spoken of as *for us*. Heb. ii. 9, 10. “But we see JESUS who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” 1 Pet. iii. 18. “For CHRIST also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.”

Let me ask again, Have you ever had your conscience exercised before God, in regard to the suffering, the blood, and the death of the cross, as that which meets all God's demand against you as a sinner? So that whenever it is a question of sin, now, the past, or future, you know that the blood of CHRIST is the perfect answer to God, and the complete satisfaction for every believer for ever?—“By Him all that believe are justified from all things.” Acts xiii. 39. “Much more, then, being now justified by His blood we shall be saved from wrath through Him.” Rom. v. 9. “Whom God hath set forth a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare his righteousness—that He might be just and the justifier of Him that believeth in JESUS.” Rom. iii. 25-26.

So you see that justification is more than forgiveness: it is a state before God, and not a feeling in my heart, at all. A

state which is mine the moment I believe in the efficacy of that blood, as the ground of my peace. A standing which belongs to every dear child of God, every believer, however weak and trembling. So that none, no, not one, who really believes in the blood of CHRIST, as shed for sin, need fear or doubt their standing before God in completeness of justification. It is more than forgiveness, because it pertains to character, which forgiveness could not change. A boy steals; he may be forgiven, but he is a thief still, and forgiveness, ever so free and bountiful, does not change his character at all. This is the great question of Job (9th chap. 2nd and 3rd verses), and many others who have not discerned God's thoughts about the blood of His Son. God could, out of love, forgive sins, but how could He justify the sinner? On no other ground than that the judgment, the wrath, the penalty due for sin, have been fully met by another—CHRIST. "He suffered, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."

It is not that He has thus prepared merely a way whereby the sinner can come to God. The atonement is not a ladder by which men may climb into Heaven; it is more. It is a ransom paid, which secures a power, which brings the sinner into glory, when he sees himself "*without strength*" and not able to climb at all. "All things are of God, Who hath reconciled us to Himself by JESUS CHRIST." 2 Cor. v. 18. "And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled. In the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unprovable in His sight." Col. i. 21-22.

The truth is, the sinner had gone away from God, and was "*without strength*" to return. "He could not answer for one of a thousand;" and more, his mouth was stopped. Rom. v. 6. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time CHRIST died for the ungodly." Rom. iii. 19. "That every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God." And thus he was speechless and powerless as regards the question of sin. What could he do? Nothing but sin. What could he speak? Nothing but wickedness. Hence, help was laid upon One who was *mighty and able*. The Holy One. The Just One. The Perfect One. The Obedient One. He Who had never erred from His Father's will could take up this terrible question of sin, enter into all its detail, drink the full cup of wrath due to sin, and thus glorify God in putting away sin by "the sacrifice of Himself." Heb. ix, 26. So it was, that when sin was on Him, God with-

drew His face, because he could not look upon sin with allowance. Hence the cry, "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me!" (And how fully does the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah bring out this truth which we are considering.)

This is the only refuge from the judgment due to sin. He is our blessed substitute, our sin bearer, our scapegoat forever, glorious and ever blessed truth. Do you not, then, see the value of the blood? The sinner's perfect plea? His only answer to God? His hiding place from the coming storm of judgment and the wrath of God? So that when the believer comes into judgment, he has not a question of sin to meet, because he has believed in the blood which has put away sin, and now the very One Who bore his sin on the cross is his Judge. How can he fear?

I repeat, the believer has not a question of sin to be settled, for his faith has reckoned on a settlement of the whole question of sin on the cross, a settlement which fully satisfied God, and more, a final one; so that the question of sin cannot come up between him and God, since Jesus is his Judge, and He has settled the whole question once for all, for every believer.

But you say, I am sinning every day. That may be true, but how many of your sins had you committed when Jesus went to the cross? And if your sins were all in the future to Him, yet all in remembrance there, why not your daily sins and shortcomings? Yes, even your future sins were present with Him, as much as your past, and with Him it was "*once for all.*" Hence, "the resurrection of the just" is the "first resurrection;" that in which the *saved ones only* have part, and to which Paul refers in the 9th chapter of Heb. 28th verse. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin (apart from sin), unto salvation."

But you will ask, do not the saved ones have to give an account, and are not they judged according to their works? Most certainly. But you will find that their account is given, and their works judged, not with respect to sin, but with respect to reward. As in 1 Cor. 3, 8, and in 2 Cor. 5, 10—"Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor." "For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the *things in body*, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad." A question of good or bad work since we believed is clearly indicated here. For Paul is here speaking to believers, saved ones. The *we* refers to the saints, not to the world.

How solemn the thought, that while this is true with regard to believers, the opposite is true with regard to unbelievers. That is, it is a question of sin to be settled, and how can they meet it? You see, there can be but one result for those who have sin to meet at the judgment: and that is hell. "The lake of fire." Rev. xx. 11, 15. O, I tremble for you, if you still reject the Crucified One. "The judgment seat of CHRIST;" "the first resurrection;" "the resurrection of the just," is the place where all the saved ones will be gathered, to receive their reward; while all who are not saved by faith in the *blood* of a once crucified but now ascended and glorified CHRIST, will be gathered at the judgment of the "great white throne," where the blood of the cross will be no protection, because they have despised it, and they must answer to God for their own sins, "and who then shall stand?"

Yours affectionately,

C. E. H.

CONFESSION.

(1 John i.)

It is not God's will that His creatures should be left in uncertainty about anything which concerns their spiritual welfare. In clear and simple terms He has defined the moral condition of every man by nature: he is a child of wrath, dead in trespasses and sins. Equally clear and simple is His language when, in His grace, He sets before us the way of salvation. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the LORD JESUS, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Rom. x. 3, 9.) And this salvation is immediate and complete, for "he that heareth My words," says the LORD JESUS, "and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death to life." (John v. 24.) He has been brought out of that sphere in which death reigns, and in which judgment is in question.

But the knowledge of salvation is not all that we should desire. God would have His redeemed people to hold communion with Himself. For any of the fallen children of Adam to have fellowship with God, two things are requisite: the ground must be prepared on which it can be based: the capacity must be imparted by which it can be enjoyed. By

the Atonement, the ground has been prepared: by the new birth, the being begotten of God, the capacity is imparted. The ground once laid, nothing can change it: the new nature once bestowed, none can deprive us of it. Yet, in point of fact, every saint does not experimentally enjoy unbroken communion with God. Set before God in grace, as a child, the relationship remains unchanged; but the enjoyment of it is another thing. Defective teaching as to the work of CHRIST, and the place of nearness into which all who believe on Him are brought, may, and often does, hinder it.

But communion is often interrupted by failure in walk. For He with Whom we are allowed this intercourse is a holy God—He is light. He cannot act contrary to His nature by having fellowship with evil, so neither can He admit to communion with Him those who do. “In Him is no darkness at all.” At the same time, John could write, “Our fellowship is with the FATHER, and with His SON JESUS CHRIST.” It was not with him a possibility, but a reality. And knowing what it was, he desired for all believers that they also should enter into it. “That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you that ye also may have fellowship with us: and these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.” (1st John i. 3, 4.) Then follows the condition of walk needful for the desire of the Evangelist, and surely of God also, for those to whom he wrote to be fulfilled. The nature of God, what He is, being concisely stated (verse 5), the walk of the saint must be in accordance with it. Pretension here will not avail. However others may be deceived, God sees all, and judges all. “If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of JESUS CHRIST His SON cleanseth us from all sin.”

At this juncture another question comes up. If we have sinned, what are we to do? How can we be restored to communion? To the Word we must go to learn this, for it is God's prerogative to prescribe the terms: it is ours to observe the conditions.

Here what grace meets us? We find He has already anticipated our failure. He cannot allow it: yet He has foreseen it. “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not” (chap. ii. 1), is the Word of God to every pardoned sinner. Possessed of a nature which cannot sin because born of God, indwelt by the same HOLY GHOST who descended

and rested on the LORD when here on earth, there is no excuse, and should be no license for sin. Yet we do sin. So in language, as clear and simple as that which tells us of our condition by nature, and the way of salvation by faith through grace, the Word sets forth the provision God has made for our failure, and the directions He has laid down for our observance. The provision is the advocacy of His SON JESUS CHRIST, the Righteous One, the propitiation for our sins; the direction for His saints is to confess their sins. (1st John ii. 1, 2; i. 9.) It is the blood of CHRIST which procures forgiveness of sins. It is by the advocacy of the Righteous One the failing saint is restored to the privileges of communion. But the child must acknowledge his fault, for the holiness of God must be maintained. How simple are God's ways, and yet how grossly perverted have been His directions about confession! What confusion still prevails in the Church of God on this point! How have men, by their misunderstanding and misuse of simple directions, clouded the truth, till the way of salvation by faith in CHRIST has been forgotten, and the finished character of His work practically denied.

Confession, it is clear, is God's own institution. The children of Israel (Lev. v. 5; Num. v. 7.) were commanded to practice it. The godly in Israel were baptized of John, confessing their sins. The believer in the LORD JESUS is told to confess. But for what are we to confess? What should we confess? To whom must we confess? These questions, answered from God's word, will set the matter clear, and will help souls in a day when doctrinal error abounds, and the teaching of so many is sadly confused.

I. Confession is not salvation. It is for those who have been saved. For, remark, the Apostle includes himself among the number of those who might need it. "If *we* confess:" yet he wrote when in actual enjoyment of communion with the Father and with the Son. He knew he had eternal life Himself, and wrote to assure others of it (ver. 15.); and because their sins were forgiven for CHRIST's sake. (Chap. ii. 12.) It is for the saint who has fallen, not for the sinner yet unconverted, that he here speaks. It is for the restoration of fellowship with God, not for salvation, that he writes. Did not David know something of the difference here pointed out, when in Psalm xxxii., after describing the result of his confession to the LORD, he adds: "For this shall every one that is *Godly* make his prayer unto Thee in a time when Thou mayest be found?" His experience would encourage them.

II. What should we confess? Our sins. Before God in CHRIST, new creatures, we are told not to sin. From the old nature we never can be free till death, or the change which takes place at the coming of the Lord into the air for His saints. But the "old man has been crucified with CHRIST, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Rom. vi. 6.) It is yielding to this nature we have to confess. "If we confess our sins." It is one thing to speak of ourselves as sinful creatures, the common condition by nature of all the human race; it is another to confess acts of sin, when the efficacy of the blood of JESUS CHRIST has been known—a new nature has been received, and the individual has become a temple of the HOLY GHOST. If I confess myself a sinner, I am only speaking of what I cannot help. If I confess my sins, of what I ought to abstain from, I have yielded to that to which I had no right to yield. I have done that which I ought not to have done.

III. To whom must we confess? Though not here expressly stated, it is plain it is to God. For against Him have we offended. Acting according to His nature, He must make us feel that the link of communion has been sundered. To Him we must confess, that he may righteously, when the acts have been judged by us according to His judgment of them, receive us again into fellowship with Himself. Saved once and forever, we have not to ask for an atonement to be made, or to be washed in the blood of CHRIST. Our standing before Him is perfect. His children before we failed, we are still His children when we have failed. Our relations will remain unaltered and unalterable. We need not then an earthly Priest to come between us and God—that implies imperfection of standing. It assumes that the individual acting as Priest has a nearer place with God than we have. This was the case dispensationally with Israel; there the people could not go where the Priest could—they had no place of Service at the altar, no ministry in the sanctuary.

Our relationship with God is the closest that can be: children of the Father—the undoubted position of every believer in the LORD JESUS CHRIST—our standing too is in Him before God. If this is forgotten, the thought of confession to an official person is easily taken up, to the grievous dishonour of the LORD, and the great loss of the soul; for confession to an official, call him priest or anything else, is really a relinquishment of the right of access for the saint who has sinned, to the presence of the FATHER; a denial of the all-sufficiency of

the advocacy of our blessed Lord; and practically an affirmation that man must supply a link which he has not, between the soul and God. It is a return to the position of Israel before the death of the Lord; it is Jewish, not Christian ground. We have only to look around to see the darkness, ignorance, want of peace and intelligence in the things of God which characterize the professing Church, where this is practiced, to learn its true tendency, and to understand its real origin. The Christian standing has been well nigh forgotten in the Church of God.

On the other hand, confession to our fellow creatures we should practise. When we have sinned against them, we must confess it to them ere looking for restoration from God. Have we not this expressed in principle in Matthew v. 23, 24; Luke xvii. 4? If we have not injured them, we may confess our faults to them, according to James v. 16, that prayer being made by them, for us who have sinned, we may be healed. To be anointed with oil, the elders were to be called: for confession of our faults it is to one another we may resort. How carefully does the word of God guard us against the introduction of an elder, or priest, or any other official, when confession is spoken of!

Confession made, forgiveness follows. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Need we any man to assure us of it when God has so graciously promised it us in His word? Will any word of man make the word of God more sure? Can man's announcement of it give greater confidence to the heart of God's children? His own character is pledged to accord it: He is faithful, He cannot deny Himself—He is just, He cannot act unjustly. What He is, as here set forth, should surely give confidence to the heart, which no word of man can strengthen—no authoritative declaration of a priest can make more sure; on His word we may surely rely. When we confess our sins, He forgives.

If we would rest here God would not. He not only forgives, but cleanses from all unrighteousness. Pure Himself, He cleanses His saints from all unrighteousness, that the joy of fellowship with Himself may be restored, and we again be before him as happy, free rejoicing children.

Mark how God here does it all. We confess: He forgives and He cleanses. What room is there for man to come in? Who needs an official person on earth to re-admit his soul to communion with God? There is indeed the power of binding and loosing, but the sphere for its exercise is earth. It is given

to the assembly to put away from their midst a wicked person, to forgive him, and receive him again to fellowship at the LORD's table when assured of his repentance. (Compare I. Cor. v. 1-5 with II. Cor. ii. 6. 7.) Discipline in the Church of God must be maintained: yet even in this the Word of God lays the responsibility of action on the whole local assembly, not any person or persons of it. But the subject in John is not discipline on earth, but the restoration of the soul to individual fellowship with God. This is God's own work. Often may we need it where no case for the exercise of discipline by the assembly has arisen. But as often as we need it we find God ready to do it, if only we confess our sins before Him. How unfailing is His grace! How inexhaustible His love!

C. H. M.

THE WELL AND THE RIVER.

IN the 4th of John, the LORD tells the Samaritan woman, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a *well* of water springing up into everlasting life." In a previous verse, He had said to her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and Who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." A poor, dark, polluted sinner, and a Samaritan, she knew absolutely nothing of God's true character, or of Him Who sat beside her on the well. She knew not that the GOD Who had made her was a Giver who wanted nothing of His creatures, save that they should ask and receive. Sunk in sin and ignorance, her poor heart was an utter stranger to such a God. Dead in trespasses and blinded by Satan, she had no consciousness that He, Whose gracious words had roused her prejudices and excited her curiosity, was God Himself come down in grace to bless a sinner, one whose title to blessing was that she was a sinner, and only a sinner. It is the lesson we all have to learn in coming to God. But it is not our purpose to dwell now upon the touching way in which the blessed LORD draws this poor sinner into blessing and manifests Himself to her, but to take up the *peculiar* blessing of which He speaks in the first of the verses we have quoted.

It is not only that man is a sinner under judgment, so that he needs the blood of CHRIST to save him, and give his conscience peace before God, but as a creature he is far removed

from all true and lasting sources of happiness. He is away from God, and thus from all that is divine and truly living. He is morally dead, and the scene around is under the curse. The streams of nature can never satisfy, for they have death in them. They themselves, with the nature that enjoys them, pass away, and even in this life do but produce thirst rather than satisfy it. The heart that drinks into them is ever wearily seeking them again. There is no rest, for satisfaction is never reached; and, worse than this, sin only takes the heart more and more captive in the service of Satan, so that outwardly the sinner travels in pursuit of them farther and farther from God, even in what is naturally right.

Such was the woman of Samaria. Her ardent nature had pursued pleasure heedless of God or man. Her very sin had isolated her. Alone in the misery of a life, simply sinful and joyless, Jesus meets her at the well of Sychar, and offers her living water, that should once and forever quench her burning thirst. It had not to be toiled for. It was freely offered, without money and without price. It had only to be drunk. And more, *whosoever* would could have it. He Who offered it made no distinctions. It flowed in all its fulness for sinners; for all poor, needy creatures, without exception. All had an equal claim to its life-giving and gladdening streams. It was only to drink and never thirst again; for the water given should become a well *in* him that drank it, springing up into everlasting life. Instead of coming constantly to sources of refreshment outside the person, the supply should be within, and that in inexhaustible fulness, not only living water, but a well of living water springing up in everlasting freshness *in* herself. Such was the gift that Jesus offered to the woman of Samaria. Such is the gift He still offers any poor thirsty one.

We have three things here: living water, that which is outside the scene of death in which we are by creation. A well—supplies that are inexhaustible, everlasting—that which is in nature and endurance divine. All this one gift, and to be *in* the receiver, making him that had it entirely and forever independent of the scene around him.

It is not the gift of eternal life for a poor *dead* sinner that we have in the 3d of John; it is the gift of the HOLY GHOST to a poor *believing* one. It is not so much a thing as a person. A divine person in all the plenitude of what He is Himself, and that as *dwelling in* the believer. It is not creation as a scene of happiness outside the creature, but the Creator in the

creature, filling him with Himself. It is not merely water, but the living GOD Himself as water refreshing the soul; not merely a well, but the fulness of GOD by the indwelling of One Who is GOD; not merely everlasting, but the eternal Spirit, filling up life in His own eternal freshness: so thus it pours itself forth in joy and worship towards One Who, as a Father, seeketh such to worship Him.

It is thus the HOLY GHOST Himself, dwelling in the believer as the source of joy and power of worship, that the Well brings before us. He fills the soul with what delights GOD—*i.e.*, with CHRIST—the truth, and, setting GOD before the heart in the perfectness of His love and grace thus revealed, He leads the believer out in worship to GOD, revealed in His essential nature and character, but known, also, in the relationship of FATHER. This is worship in spirit and in truth. Such worship can only be offered as abiding in CHRIST in communion, and being filled with the Spirit. This is the present deep, abiding blessing of the believer. What CHRIST Himself enjoyed as Man on earth, filled with the Spirit, and ever dwelling in the FATHER'S love through the Spirit in a path of obedience.

There is no thought here of going constantly to CHRIST for the water. He gives the HOLY GHOST *once*, and He ever abides in all His fulness in the believer. Nothing like getting more water. That cannot be. The Well itself has been given, and the water has only to flow up in the soul to be enjoyed in all its freshness and abundance. As well might we think of going a second time to CHRIST for eternal life or salvation, as if we either did not possess these blessings, or that they, as gifts, were incomplete. It is impossible to think of having the HOLY GHOST given to us a second time. There is but one Holy Spirit, and He *abides* in us. Neither can we imagine His being added to. He is GOD in personal fulness, and dwells in us as such. A well may get choked, but the water is at the bottom in its own living depths: so we may lose our joy in the HOLY GHOST, by getting out of communion with the LORD through carelessness in walk. Hence we are exhorted "not to grieve that Holy Spirit of Promise." But He is thus as GOD to be grieved. What we want is, not to go to CHRIST to get more water to make us happy, but to confess our failures to GOD, and so get restored to communion, when the well will gush up again in all its abundance.

We are told not to be "drunk with wine wherein is excess, but to be filled with the spirit." Not to allow the pleasures

of this life, which the wine represents, to occupy our hearts, but to let the divine joy, which the spirit ministers, fill up our souls. The idea here, is not that of having the Spirit fill us from *without*, but of letting the Spirit, already *in* the believer, spring up freely and fully from within. The consequence will be, "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts to the LORD: Giving thanks always for all things unto GOD and the FATHER in the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST." (Eph. v. 19, 20.) GOD and CHRIST ever before the soul, and all is joy and worship at once. This is exactly what we have in the 4th of John. It is the "well of water *springing up* into everlasting life."

In the 7th of John we read, "JESUS stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow *rivers* of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the HOLY GHOST was not yet given; because that JESUS was not yet glorified." Here again we have the gift of the HOLY GHOST as living water, and promised by CHRIST to *any* thirsty that one who would come to Him and drink. The circumstances that surrounded the LORD when here, were externally very different, but the grace is the same, and the result the same for the one who drinks. Full, complete and abiding satisfaction of heart characterize the gift, and the supply of living water, in all its inexhaustibleness is *in* the person, but the outflow is different. It is towards man in blessing. "Out of his belly shall flow *rivers* of living water," that shall enrich others with the happiness that fills himself. Not only shall the believer draw nothing from the scene around him, but he shall minister to it of the fulness that abides in himself.

It is the aspect of the HOLY GHOST dwelling in the believer as the source of fruitfulness in service. The believer is not merely a river, or the channel through which the water flows, but he is also the one in whom the ocean, so to speak, out of which the rivers flow, dwells. It is "out of his belly," as the "inner man," that the living water flows, and runs into others. Again we have the Creator dwelling in the creature, filling the one in whom He dwells with Himself, and flowing over to the thirsty scene around him. All outside is death and a "thirsty land where no water is." Such was CHRIST on earth as filled by the Spirit, and such is the believer, as united to CHRIST in glory, and from Him there, filled with the Spirit'

It is consequent upon accomplished redemption, and the glorifying of CHRIST in glory, as we learn from this passage, that man can now be brought, through believing in CHRIST, into such wondrous depths of blessing. One in whom God the Spirit Himself dwells, as He did in CHRIST on earth, and as He now dwells in CHRIST in glory. Let me here say, that CHRIST was not only as man the temple of the HOLY GHOST, and thus the One in whom God dwelt, but He was God Himself personally, apart from all He was as man. Not merely a manifestation of God in man, but God himself manifest in man. The believer has as truly God dwelling in him as CHRIST had, but it is only as having the HOLY GHOST dwelling in Him, who is God. CHRIST too was anointed by the HOLY GHOST as the seal of His own personal purity, and He walked before God in His own name. The believer, be it observed, alone has the HOLY GHOST in him as the seal of redemption, and in virtue of the blood sprinkled on him, he walks before God, not in his own name, but in the name of JESUS.

The historical fulfilment of the promise made in the 7th of John, we have at Pentecost, and distinctively in connection with CHRIST'S exaltation to the right hand of God as the glorified man. At the well of Sychar, the gift of the Spirit stands in connection rather with His own personal glory as He then was—"Who *it is* that saith to thee." But the fulness of blessing for man, flows from CHRIST in glory; "therefore," says Peter, "being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the FATHER the promise of the HOLY GHOST, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." The rivers began to flow as the effect of the HOLY GHOST on earth in the disciples, as the latter part of the 2d of Acts shows us. There is no thought here of the HOLY GHOST being given a second time from Heaven, any more than there is of a believer going a second time to CHRIST Himself for the Spirit.

As regenerate and believing, any one going to CHRIST gets the Spirit from Him in glory, once and forever, in all the fulness of which He speaks in the 7th of John. The rivers may not flow, and the fruitfulness may cease, but the fulness of the Spirit remains behind. That the Spirit may act through us, we must walk in communion with the LORD, in entire dependence on Himself, which is just what the LORD teaches us in John xv. "Apart from Me, ye can do nothing," says He. The Spirit remains in the Church and in the believer unfaillingly, but His blessed living stream may be arrested. Hence we are told "not to quench the Spirit." (1. Thes. v. 19.) It

is here the danger lies. It is the forgetfulness of Himself and of what is due to Him as the *abiding* power of all blessing in the Church and in the believer.

What we have endeavoured to set forth is not only the fullness and freshness of the present blessing of the believer, which the idea of the Well and the River bring before us, but the abiding and Divine nature of these blessings as resulting from the personal indwelling of God the Spirit, in the believer.

What a mighty and soul subduing thought it is, that wherever we go, we carry this Divine Person with us, as a "well" to flow up in constant worship to God; and as a "river" to pour itself forth in unceasing blessing for others. This can alone be as we exercise faith in His abiding presence in us, and walk in simple prayerful subjection to the will of the Lord, so that God the FATHER is ever before our hearts, to be glorified through us. "Herein is My FATHER glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be My disciples."

The Lord give us all to enter fully into the enjoyment of the blessing He *has bestowed* on us, in having made us Wells and Rivers, through "the gift of the HOLY GHOST."

SOME CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF THE INSPIRED BOOKS.

EXODUS.

(Continued from page 137.)

THE question at the Red Sea is no longer between God and the people. That had been once and forever answered by the blood of the Paschal Lamb; and God was now with them, not at all upon the ground of finding anything *in them* that could satisfy Him, but on the ground of judgment borne for them by His own appointed Substitute. No, the question is now between them and Pharaoh, the master from whom they had so lately escaped, and, as it seemed, forever. The old enemy had revived, and meant to reassert his power over his former slaves, who on their part had no means of resistance, nor yet understood the reality and meaning of His presence with them, Who had undertaken to deliver them.

For it was really, therefore, now no question of their power or resources, any more than at the Passover it had been of their goodness or their righteousness. They were now as

helpless before Pharaoh as when it had been a question of averting judgment, they were guilty before God.

It is a lesson we all must learn. Not by might nor by power is the sin that reigns over us naturally met and conquered. Not by effort, *even of the renewed and believing soul*, do we escape the bondage of Egypt, or master the sin that we have learned to loathe.

We expect it. In the first joy of "righteousness imputed without works," we think, it may be, we have found what we expect. "The children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt. . . . And the children of Israel went out with a high hand." But in the presence of the enemy all this strength withers. Sore afraid, they cry out to the LORD; but even so, they find no power. "And they said unto Moses . . . hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?"

It is a terrible thing to be brought thus face to face with the power of sin in us, even after the knowledge of CHRIST dying for our sins; to find a nature in us that even grace will never change. To find, too, after crying to God about it, still that it is no better, and we have no more power than we had. What unbelieving thoughts come in as we look at our misery, evil present with us when we would do good. Pharaoh coming up in all his strength; "I see a law of sin in my members warring against the law of my mind, and *bringing me into captivity* to the law of sin which is in my members.

How comes deliverance? Does God use Israel's arm to break the arm of Pharaoh? Not at all. "Fear ye not, *stand still*, and see the salvation of the LORD which He will shew to 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.*"

Now we find the fulness and extent of Salvation. Just as Jordan lies between Canaan and the wilderness, the Red Sea lies between the wilderness and Egypt. The limit of the wilderness is death. The limit of Egypt is death also. Through this the power of God opens a pathway. The people pass dry-shod to the other shore. Then the divided sea returns to its strength, and the hosts of Egypt perish in its waters.

Even so with God's redeemed ones now. It is true that with "a *law* of sin in our members," Redemption is not complete. But how are we set free? Scripture answers, "by the *law* of the Spirit of *life* in CHRIST JESUS." (Rom. viii. 2.)

CHRIST died for me, my Substitute. *I* have died then with Him. But since it is "*with Him*," He, not I, met the power of it, divided its floods, and I pass through it dry-shod. That is the path the Spirit leads me in. But then He who died *liveth*. If I die with Him, with Him also I live, and as in Him I got my death upon the Cross, so in Him before God I am accepted now. *I live in CHRIST JESUS.*

But does nothing perish in the waters? Oh, yes! for God,—for *faith*,—not for experience,—my "old man" is gone, "crucified with CHRIST." *I live in CHRIST.* I look no more *in* to find *myself*: an "Egyptian carcase" I may find there, but then I raise my song of Salvation, and sing unto Him who hath triumphed gloriously. It need not frighten me to look in the face of a dead enemy, though his corruption may and should be loathsome. CHRIST now is "*I*," no need to better Him! I drop my vain efforts to be something. "CHRIST lives in me." His beauty absorbs me, and is mine! I live to think of Him and to enjoy Him.

Thus Pharaoh perishes—*self* in every form,—and the Song of Salvation is sung the other side of the sea. (Ch. xv.)

In this song we may mark these features. "Strength" is found but in "the LORD,"—and joy, and salvation. The God thus joyed in is owned as *their* God (comp. Rom. vi., 13). *Him* they will exalt. His presence among them they recognize, and will "prepare Him a habitation," for He is come to abide. His judgment upon Egypt they greatly rejoice in. Moreover they speak as if it were a present thing, of being guided to God's *own* house, not what *they* prepare, but what *He* has prepared, in glory, and where His hand shall finally and triumphantly bring in His purchased people.

These are the materials which we have now for our song of praise. May we ponder them till our hearts learn fully what they are, for surely to obey the gospel is to catch the gladness of it.

But now the wilderness and its trials begin. The world becomes really such when we have sung in our hearts the salvation-song. It is gladness in CHRIST, and only that; that introduces into the realization of the barrenness and desolation of all here. But it is here, too, that, if the world be barren, we find God's resources, His daily care, and almightiness, and love. And it is only that these following chapters speak of; no doubt the failure of the people, just now so jubilant in God, is soon seen also. But the *history* of the wilderness properly belongs to Numbers, and not here. Here it is the love of

that God who has redeemed us, taking occasion to show itself in the necessities and difficulties of the way. And what a display, both of power and of love, it was!

Yet the responsibility of the people comes out also, and at once. They are tested at Marah. The springs of the wilderness are found bitter, and the people cannot drink. It is the lesson we have to learn, the reality of a scene into which death has entered: "in the world ye shall have tribulation." God would have us know what sin has wrought in a world once so fair, and enter practically into the apprehension of the circumstances of CHRIST'S path, in which I follow Him. Bitter to nature, that which makes the waters sweet, the antitype of the tree which the Lord showed Moses, is the Cross of CHRIST. That which has saved me has crucified me to the world. Yea, and that which I am delivered to, is death. But if death work in me, it makes but more real that life in CHRIST which death can never touch. And the *sting* of death is gone, for that is sin, and CHRIST has borne it for me.

But here is the test: Have I so known CHRIST that, when tribulation comes, I shall not be offended? Shall His path, who "pleased not Himself," be of set purpose mine? "There He made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there He proved them, and said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God . . . I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that *healeth* thee." We force him to judge who is a healer, when we take up with a world which lies under judgment. (Comp. I. Cor. xi. 29, 32.)

The order and connection of the truth is very simple here. The trial at Marah passed, they come to Elim, type of the spiritual refreshment ministered by the HOLY GHOST down here, and then on to the wilderness of sin, where for the first time they taste of the "bread from heaven." (ch. xvi.)

The manna is wilderness-food, the type of CHRIST in humiliation, made known to and enjoyed by those walking in the path of CHRIST: the experience of His preciousness in a world of sorrow, where grace made Him a "Man of Sorrows." Necessarily, the giving of the manna follows the testing of Marah, for it is just in proportion to my personal devotedness to Him in His path of separation from the world through which I pass that I learn His perfection in that path, and the grace and goodness that sustain my heart amid all I may pass through. A "heavenly" man in the world: true man, with all the sweetness of human affection answering to the

taste of honey in the manna, but *not* mere honey—not that which, under Divine trial (by fire), would spoil. The fire here rather brought out its perfectness. (Com. Num. xi. 8; Lev. ii. 11.)

The manna was provided for the people day by day. It never failed: God's thoughtful love took care of that. But the people had to use diligence in gathering it, for if the sun waxed hot it melted. Every day, too, they must gather it (save the Sabbath), otherwise it bred worms and stank. God's way was not to minister to idleness, nor to lead them to practical independence of Himself. What they gathered was for use, not hoarding.

The mention of the Sabbath here is significant not of *conscience*, but of *heart-rest*. It is as *learning* of the "Meek and Lowly" One we find "rest to our souls." (Matt. xi. 29.) The manna and the Sabbath are thus connected in Matthew just as they are in Exodus.

Finally, the manna was to be laid up as a memorial before the Lord—a precious thought, which Rev. ii. 17 helps us to apply. We shall find again in glory the self-same lowly Man whom we have known down here—the object of Divine complacency ("laid up *before the Lord*," verse 33), and where all our experience of Him here shall meet us again unto eternal joy.

The smiting of the Rock in Horeb follows (ch. xvii.), the vivid picture of the death of CHRIST, from which the streams of living water flow, a type, as John vii. 38, 39, teaches, of the gift of the HOLY GHOST. And here we find the first conflict in which the people themselves take part. Amalek is the grandson of Edom, and figures the "fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (1 Pet. ii., 11.) It is unbelief which brings on the actual conflict: "they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not? *Then came Amalek*," (vs. 7, 8.) But the gift of the Spirit alone makes conflict possible. We are not *called* to fight the lusts of the flesh, but to "abstain from them." We may have to fight, and do, but it is not, as many think, the path of progress. We gain no step of ground. The word for us is "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." There is no struggle there. But let unbelief take us out of simple confidence in the Lord's presence and His love, *then* up comes Amalek.

How shall we conquer! Joshua—CHRIST in us—is the Leader in the fight. But the victory depends nevertheless, upon the lifting up of the "rod of God"—the rod which *had*

smitten the rock. "They that are Christ's *have* crucified the flesh, with the affections and *lusts.*" The rod is the sign of a power which wrought for me on the cross where my old man was crucified. I have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine delivered me,—have been with God in what He has done; and thus *I* have crucified the flesh. "How shall we that are **dead** to sin, live any longer therein?"

Chapt. xviii closes the first part of the book. It is most evidently a sort of sequel to the preceding chapters, showing us, in contrast with that which applies to the saints now, a redeemed *earthly* people in millennial days. The Gentile draws near and worships rejoicing in the deliverance of Israel. Zipporah, too, Moses' wife, takes her place with him, as the Bride of Christ with Him on another day. And judges are appointed over the people under Moses, "King in Jeshurun," as under Christ in the age to come, the saints shall judge the world.

Thus while these things happened unto them for types, and are written for *our* admonition, they tell us of purposes of God reaching out beyond us to a people who, if enemies for our sake, are beloved for the FATHER'S sake, because the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.



A NOTE ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

THERE is a Divine wisdom stamped on every page of the precious Word of God, which only requires light, and a heart subject to God, in order to its being perceived and enjoyed. But in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the rays of this wisdom are concentrated, making the ever-interesting subjects on which it treats glow with its heavenly brightness.

Sacrifice, priesthood, and religious ordinances are elements for which there appears to be a *natural affinity* in the human mind, almost independently of the adventitious circumstances of rudeness or intellectual culture—the possession of a Divine revelation, or the glimmerings of traditional notices of truth and the immense practical importance of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in such a day as this, is found in its object being to define the character of these elements, to show their necessity and bearing in regard to a sinner's intercourse and relationship with God; and, above all, to give them their just place and force, according to the light of the Gospel of the grace of God.

Everything in the shape of a divinely-appointed ordinance that ever had a claim upon the conscience and the soul, is in

this Epistle taken up, and the limit of its continuance marked, and the manner of its abrogation indicated with a wisdom that proclaims itself to be Divine.

It is shown especially that in the original constitution of these ordinances, whether relating to sacrifice or priesthood, or ritual service, no latitude was allowed to the mind and thoughts of man. "For see" (said He to Moses) "that thou make all things according to the pattern showed thee in the Mount." But, in the next place, it is as plainly shown that, in their original constitution, they were but the "shadows of good things to come," which had their verification in the perfected work and offices of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and not, as many imagine, by an arrangement of *mere spiritual* ordinances, but in these ordinances having their whole meaning and harmony and force in the Person, work and present position and offices of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Now, when it is considered that all which is ordinarily called *religion* in these days is but an imperfect, humanly-devised compound of these ordinances, it will easily be conceived how unspeakable is the importance of a right understanding of this Epistle, that men may not blindly imagine they are serving God by attending to what are called "meats and drinks and divers ordinances, imposed until the times of reformation"; and in another Scripture, called even "beggarly elements" by the HOLY GHOST.

The express object of this Divine treatise is to take up the whole means of God's own appointment, by which man *was* to have to do with God, and to show that in their abrogation the believer is brought through the very means of their putting away into the nearest possible connection with God, and into an entire dissociation from the world, in which these ordinances had their place; so that now a believer's position is (toward God) "boldness by the blood of JESUS to enter into the holiest of all," and (toward the world and all the religion of the world) "going without the camp, bearing CHRIST's reproach."

To live in the sight of God, is, morally, what Heaven will be, the eternal presence of God. Do nothing you would not like God to see. Say nothing you would not like Him to hear. Write nothing you would not like Him to read. Read no book of which you would not like God to say, shew it Me. Go no place where you would not like God to find you. Never spend your time in such a way that you would not like God to say, what art thou doing?

“GOD SAYS I AM SAVED.”

Not long since, I was asked to visit a young girl, about seventeen years of age, who had injured herself, and was thought to be dying. I had known her for some time, and was aware she was very delicate, but, on calling, learned she had fallen out of bed, and received an injury to the back of her head, which would eventually prove fatal, it was judged. Being under the care of another surgeon, I had nothing to do with her treatment; so after making a few inquiries as to her bodily suffering, which was great (specially when moved by others, for she was almost completely paralyzed), I began to speak to her about the state of her soul.

“Are you quite happy?” I said.

“No, sir.”

“Why? Are you not saved?”

“I am not sure.”

“But why are you not sure; do you believe in the LORD JESUS CHRIST?”

“Yes; but I don't *feel* saved.”

“Do you feel *lost*?”

“Yes, I do;” and she now began to weep.

“Why do you know you are lost?”

“Because I am a sinner, and God's Word says so.”

“Then you believe His Word, do you?”

“Oh! yes, sir; indeed I do.”

“Well, then, His Word says, ‘Look unto Me, and be ye saved;’ do you believe that?”

“Yes.”

“But are you looking to JESUS?”

“Yes, sir; but I don't *feel* as I should like to.”

“Granted; but does it say, ‘Look unto Me and *feel* saved’?”

“No.”

“What then?”

“Be ye saved.”

“What?”

“Be ye saved.”

“When is that, to-day or to-morrow?”

“When I *look*.”

“But are you looking?”

“Yes, I am really looking to JESUS?”

“Then, are you saved?”

She paused a moment, and then firmly replied :

"I don't *feel* it; but *GOD says I am saved*. I see it now."

The next moment, her eye lit up, and her pallid face told the tale of a new spring of joy having been opened to her.

"Well," I said, "if any one were to come in and ask you now if you were saved, what would you say?"

"I would say 'Yes.'"

"And if they asked you how you knew it and were sure of it, what would you say?"

"I would say that I do believe in *JESUS*; and *GOD says*, in His Word, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but *have* everlasting life; and though I don't *feel* it, I do believe what *GOD says*."

"Then you rest your soul on *JESUS* and on *GOD's Word*?"

"Yes, sir, I do; and I could die happy now. I'd like to go at once to *JESUS*."

"You have no fears?"

"No; none."

"No doubts?"

"No; why should I? I see it all clearly. I'm only a poor sinner—and *JESUS died for me*—and *I believe in Him*—and *GOD says I'm saved*—and so *I know I am*."

I had a little more conversation, and called two days after to find her truly filled with joy and peace in believing. Her face shone with the joy the knowledge of *GOD* alone can impart. Leaving town for a few weeks, I found, on my return, that she had lingered about a month, giving a constant bright testimony of *CHRIST* to all about her, and, full of quiet, calm rest and joy in *CHRIST* until the end, had at length passed to be for ever with Him.

And now, dear reader, a word with you about the state of *your soul*. Are you *saved*—or *lost*? Which? Don't evade the question. It must be answered soon. The longest life has its end. Who has given you a lease of long life? A long eternity you shall have. Where will you spend it? Another day may find you in it. Gone for ever from earth, where *CHRIST* died, "suffered for sins once, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to *GOD*." Gone where? With *CHRIST*? Or without Him? Would it be without Him? You tremble to say "Yes." Stop—listen. Your future is awful. *Forgotten* by man—*forsaken* by *GOD*—*for ever* in hell. Oh! pause a moment in your downward course. Listen to the voice of love speaking to *you*—speaking from heaven—"Come unto Me"—"Look unto Me"—"I am *JESUS*"—"By Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

You have naught to do but take your true place as a *lost sinner now* before GOD. Acknowledge *your sin*. Justify Him—He'll justify you. It is all summed up in the sweet confession of the dying girl. May you this day be able to say, like her: "*I am only a poor sinner—Jesus died for me—I believe in Him—God says I'm saved, and so I know I am.*"

W. W.

THE STRAIT GATE.

"Strive to enter in at *the strait gate*, for many I say unto you will seek to enter in and shall not be able."—LUKE xiii., 24.

THE strait gate is clearly conversion, as it is a question of being saved. But at the same time, the LORD associates it with the relationship of the Kingdom, because He was talking to Jews, and the teaching of the passage was especially applicable then, for they were looking for the Kingdom and desiring it; and yet, in their zeal for the law (verse 14) opposing themselves and the law of GOD, to GOD among them. That is, they, in their zeal, used the law of GOD to oppose GOD among them.

GOD was acting in grace. Everything must be subservient to that in the purposes of GOD; and yet, they would honor Moses and the Fathers. Hence, grace that could heal a poor woman was despised, and GOD not discerned at all, simply because done on the Sabbath. It would have been very well to have the poor invalid healed on a week day, and especially if she had been brought to bow at the Synagogue on Sabbath morning. That is religion which does not know grace, but does know its way to the Synagogue. Hence, the LORD being rejected and on His way to the Cross, deals with the consciences of His hearers in the light of grace despised, with the moral relations to come out thereby.

The Jews were "in the way" to the Judge, according to verse 58 of chap. 12. It was the last year of the pruning the barren fig-tree (verse 8, chap. 13). They, on the ground of law, were seeking to enter in. He stood on the ground of grace, where none can enter but "BY GRACE," a new creation by the power of GOD. This they do not understand, and they ask: "Are there few that be saved?" His answer puts them upon the ground of their own work, and then shows them how surely they will fail (verse 25). CHRIST being rejected, grace despised, how vain for them to say, "We have

eaten and drunk in Thy presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets." How solemn is this.

If the conscientious zeal and scrupulous devotion of the Jews could not enter into the Kingdom of Grace on earth, how shall the religious zeal and worldly devotion of what is now called the Church enter into heavenly glory?

If religion, then, claiming God for its author, and God's law for its defence, did not know grace or understand God at all, how can those who occupy the same ground, morally, to-day preach the Gospel? "*The Law* came by Moses," this they understood. "*Grace and truth* by Jesus Christ," this they did not understand. Do I?—do you? Which do you hear preached, and which do you believe? A gospel of salvation by the deeds of the law, or of our good works, which is the same thing morally, is not a gospel at all; because man has always been willing to work to be saved. And this is almost always the first question asked by the convicted sinner. What shall I do? Ready and willing to do anything in order to be saved.

The Gospel is the message of God's love to sinners—to the world as such. "God so loved the world" and to sinners who were lost and who had no power to find themselves, because "without strength," "dead in trespasses and sins." Neither does it ask a man to work in order to being saved, because if it is work, "then it is no more grace," otherwise "work is no more work;" "but to him that *worketh not*, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly," his faith is "counted for righteousness." If a man is called upon to work, either by law or tradition, before he believes, he will, of course, be led to have faith in the work which *he* has done, and will just so surely be deceived as to the true ground of his hope.

The Gospel message is not to a sinner about himself, but about Christ; not about *his work*, but about Christ's work. It is not the sinner's work which redeems him, however much, or good, his work may be; but it is the blood-stained work of the Cross. And if I tell a sinner that he must pray and cry to God, for God alone can save him, though I tell him the truth, yet I lead him astray from *the truth*, which is, to believe, in order to be saved. 'Tis true he ought to pray and cry to God, 'tis true that God alone can save him. But all this, so blessedly true as it is, still is not the point for him to consider, because it will surely lead him to think that his praying has some place in the work of his soul's redemption;

and also that something must be done on his part first, and then on God's part, before he can be saved. Neither of which is true.

The work of redemption is the work of the Cross; nothing more, nothing less. Complete and perfect in itself, wrought eighteen hundred years ago. I had no part in that work, and never ~~can~~ have, only that my sins were then foreseen and imputed to CHRIST; *there borne*, and now my faith reaps the blessed fruits of sins already judged and punished on the Cross. And this is the truth which the Gospel presents to the sinner—to the world. (1 Cor. xv. 1-4, 2 Cor. v. 21, Gal. iii. 13, 1 Pet. ii. 24, 1 John iii. 5, also Isaiah liii. 4-12.) *Whosoever believeth in THAT WORK*, in that Crucified CHRIST, crucified for my sin, crucified for your sin, yea, for the sin of the world—whosoever believeth in *that CHRIST and His work*, is redeemed; has got eternal life, and is saved *now*.

The moment the sinner has thus believed, and is thus saved, the call of duty comes in in its proper place. He is now to work, not that he may be saved, but because he is saved; not that he may be redeemed, but because he is redeemed. And as a saved and redeemed one, he would honor that Blessed One who has suffered in his stead, and for him, and thus has reconciled and brought him to God, as a son and heir of God and eternal glory.

I repeat, the work of redemption is the work of the Cross. It is not the work of the Holy Spirit, but of JESUS CHRIST Himself. And here is where many of God's dear saints are troubled—by confounding these two things: CHRIST'S *work on the cross for them*, and the work of the HOLY SPIRIT in THEM. You will find that the Scripture never confounds them, and we never should but for the errors subsequent upon human teaching, by those who were never taught of God. *Faith* in the Blood of the LAMB of GOD "foreordained before the foundation of the world," is the basis upon which Abel, though only there in type, was accepted. The faith is the fruit of the Spirit's work in us, which leads us to see and to believe in the Blood which has been offered to God for sin.

If CHRIST had not "suffered, the just for the unjust," we should never have been brought to God. The HOLY SPIRIT would not have been given to work in us. "If I go not away the Comforter will not come." There never could have been any work of the SPIRIT *in us*, if there had not been a work of CHRIST *for us*; first, JESUS was down here, not to speak of Himself, not to have His own will, not to glorify

Himself; but to speak of the FATHER, do His will, and glorify Him.

The HOLY SPIRIT is come, not to speak from Himself, not to glorify Himself, but to take of the things of CHRIST and show them unto us—to glorify Him. “Howbeit, when the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth, for He shall not speak from Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak, and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the FATHER hath are mine; therefore said I that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.” (John xvi. 13-15.)

To illustrate: Suppose I owe one thousand dollars, the note is due and I have been called upon repeatedly, but have nothing to pay, and no strength to earn anything to pay. I am burdened and sick and ashamed. That is my state. Now a friend of mine, out of love to me, goes and pays the debt, and takes up the note. That is what He has done. I am relieved as to my state but not as to my feelings; my feelings are the same, and must always be the same unless something else is done. Now he sends a messenger with the glad tidings (the Gospel) of my deliverance and the name of my deliverer. This is the work which relieves my feelings. *If I believe the message* I am happy, I am free. I am redeemed from my State of debt and I know it. And now a new responsibility comes up towards the friend who has done all this for me.

Thus the HOLY SPIRIT is the messenger come with the message of deliverance and the name of our Blessed Deliverer. Who believes it? And who will answer to the new responsibility? Who will enter in at Mercy's strait gate and thus be saved and blessed eternally? C. E. H.

LIFE THROUGH DEATH.

It is deeply interesting to note the place which “death,” or the “shedding of blood,” occupies in the word of God. It forms the *only* foundation of man's approach to, his standing before, or his relationship with God. It is the only means whereby sin can be put away—the only ground on which Divine life and Divine righteousness can be imparted. “Without shedding of blood is no remission.” (Hebrews, ix. 22.)

This is a truth which the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments do most fully and clearly unfold and establish.

No sooner had "sin" made its appearance—no sooner had its dark shadows settled down upon this lower world—than this great truth began to break through the twilight; and as we turn over page after page of the sacred volume, as the dispensations of God unfold themselves to our view, it gathers clearness and fulness, until, at length, it shines out in unclouded effulgence, in connexion with the LAMB slain "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," to be the channel of peace and pardon, life and righteousness to all who should, by the grace of the HOLY GHOST, believe in His Name.

Thus, in the third chapter of Genesis, when "the LORD God" made His appearance amid the mighty ruin which "the one disobedience" had wrought in His fair creation, we hear Him making mention of "the Seed of the Woman" as the One who was to *bruise* the serpent's head. But how was this to be accomplished? "Thou shalt bruise his heel." This word "*bruise*" contains in it the germ of THE GLORIOUS DOCTRINE OF THE BLOOD. The serpent who had introduced the mischief was yet to have his head bruised by the seed of the woman; but, ere that could be accomplished, "the Seed" should Himself be "bruised."

Now, some may say, "this was a very shadowy representation of the doctrine of the blood." Granted: but though shadowy, it was real. It was just such a representation as suited the moment in which it was given. Life must be introduced by death. The mighty Bruiser must Himself be bruised. Such was the truth contained in the earliest accents which fell from the lips of the LORD God in the midst of a scene of ruin, and in the audience of ruined and guilty sinners. Adam heard all this. He saw there was a controversy between "the LORD God" and "the serpent." He learnt that this controversy was to be brought to an issue—a victorious issue—by "the Seed of the Woman." He was taught that he should himself be a debtor to another for deliverance, for alas! how could he—himself the serpent's slave—ever be the bruiser of the serpent's head? No: this was to be the solitary work of another, and that other was to achieve the victory by having His heel bruised, that is to say, by death.

But does this fact in the least interfere with the value of the *life* of "the Seed of the Woman"? Assuredly not. Who could attempt to reckon up in order all the rich and rare re-

sults of that life? God was to be glorified—the mind of heaven to be refreshed—the human heart perfectly tested—Satan foiled—all by the exhibition of a perfect life here below. Moreover, God's redeemed were to be furnished with an example as to how they ought to walk. These things are just referred to here in order that the reader may not, by any means, lose the sense of the infinite preciousness of the life of "the Man CHRIST JESUS." "The Seed of the Woman" should live to die; He should have a heel to be bruised ere the serpent could bruise it; incarnation forms the base of "the great mystery of godliness." This is a well known truth, the value of which is beyond all conception.

Yet, notwithstanding the infinite value of incarnation, it could have been of no avail, either for Satan's eternal defeat or man's eternal salvation, save on the ground of accomplished death. It was "the Seed of the Woman" who was to bruise the serpent's head; but how was He to do so? By having His own heel bruised. "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same, that THROUGH DEATH He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. ii. 14, 15.)

But ere we retire, in company with our first parents, from the Garden of Eden, we must glean some further evidence of the truth that all our blessings, our privileges and our dignities—all that God could bestow upon us as fallen and ruined sinners—must depend upon death. "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them." (Gen. iii. 21.) In the faith of these utterances which had just fallen upon Adam's ear, he called his wife's name "the mother of all *living*." He believed that he was in some way or other to get life through death. But in "the coats of skins" we have something more than life. If the Seed of the Woman should be bruised to give life, the blood of the animals should be shed to furnish clothing. In other words, life and righteousness are both founded upon death. The very first words which the LORD God uttered in the sinner's ear, the very first act which He performed in the sinner's view, shadowed forth the foundation truth of the Gospel, that *life and righteousness are both founded upon death*—that "without shedding of blood is no remission."

This truth was set forth in the Garden of Eden. It broke through the clouds which gathered thickly over the heads of

our first parents. They were taught that their need could only be met by death. They had yielded to the serpent's power, and that power could only be broken by death. They were naked in consequence, and that nakedness could only be divinely clothed through death. They had tried a covering which was *not* founded on death, but it had proved worthless and vain. ● A covering not flowing out of blood-shedding must leave the sinner naked. The cattle upon a thousand hills, all the living animals in creation, could not have yielded a coat for a *sinner*. A poured-out life was absolutely essential. Without it, man could neither have life nor righteousness. Through it, he has both the one and the other.

Such, then, my reader, is the striking testimony yielded to the doctrine of the Blood in the Garden of Eden. The *bruised heel* and the *coats of skins* do both alike announce in the sinner's ear the glorious truth that his title to full deliverance from the enemy's power, and from all the consequences of guilt, is founded in blood, and in blood *alone*. By it he has *all*; without it, *nothing*. The bruised heel and the coats of skins enabled Adam and Eve to retreat from the precincts of Eden with a degree and a character of happiness and security which they had never known in the midst of all its fruits and flowers. An unfallen creation could never have told out in a sinner's ear the deep mystery of a bruised heel. Nor could it ever have unfolded in his view aught so profoundly interesting, so deeply touching, as the LORD God stooping to provide by blood-shedding a covering for a naked sinner. Ah! no; it was in the midst of a ruined creation, and by ruined sinners, that such wondrous things were seen and heard. The serpent had introduced death, and by death he must be destroyed. His own sword must slay him. "His violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate." By death we have a deathless life, a deathless righteousness, a deathless hope, a deathless inheritance.

"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." (I. John iv., 9, 10.)

WHERE OUR ALTAR IS.

(Concluded from p. 151.)

AND this connects itself with the position of the Christian Altar. "We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat." The peace-offering of the law is what the Apostle glances at here, for in it the offerer partook with the altar of the offering he brought. Part of the offering went up to God upon the altar, while another part feasted the worshipper. Thus God and man were at one, as the prodigal fed upon the fatted calf at his father's table. So in this passage the partaking with the altar signifies our joy and satisfaction in Him who as the Sinless One gave Himself an offering for sin, and communion therefore with the FATHER in His thoughts about His SON.

But to partake there we must have gone out to where our altar stands. "We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle." That is, of course, those identified with the Jewish system. Outside it all the Lord went when to be a SAVIOUR He "suffered without the gate." The equivalent the Apostle states this to be with the "outside the camp" of the type of the sin-offering. And while it was on the one-hand, as we have seen, the place of wrath and curse, it was on the other the place where "the law of commandments in ordinances" was put away (Eph. ii.): that law which had proposed, if possible, to set up man in righteousness before God, upon the principle that "the man that doth these things shall live by them." The trial of the possibility of this had been already fully made before the Cross. The law itself had declared, years before, "there is none righteous." It had thus stopped every mouth, and brought the whole world in guilty before God. And JESUS dying in the place of curse, and dying there for all, confirmed that judgment while providing a way of escape for those under it. Hope under the Jewish system of law, then, there was none. To abide there was to perish. And hence the first step, not merely for joy and blessing, but for salvation itself, was to go forth outside the camp, without the gate, to the place of curse, owning there the sentence passed on all, but to find there in the Cross the sentence owned borne by another. Oh the joy of going forth unto Him!

But thus the connection with the law was over. "Through the law," we are "dead to the law," but only by the execution of the sentence upon us in our Substitute. CHRIST being

crucified, "I," too, "am crucified with CHRIST." My child of Adam life there ended, my place in the world ceased; I am *dead*, and my life is hid with CHRIST in GOD. Whatever would set up the first Adam state, whatever would imply my still belonging to the old creation—all this I renounce therefore in going forth to Him who "suffered without the gate." If I would enjoy my communion with the FATHER—if I would have practically my "altar whereof to eat," I must cease to attend the "worldly sanctuary," and refuse the "carnal ordinances" which still make up to many who are called Christians, a tabernacle-service, and I must "go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach."

Aye, "bearing His reproach." Do you doubt, Christian reader, if that is still involved? Be sure it is. Be sure that to give up the world as hopeless, to give up the flesh as worthless, and to go forth to Him, as one by His Cross crucified to the world, involves still His reproach. But you shall learn nevertheless how to "glory" in that Cross which has for you such results. O consider this outside place a little, and see only what is involved. A scene of death, a scene of labour and sorrow, a scene of sin, of unsatisfied lust, of abiding judgment—the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. Outside it is the bright and blessed place which we call our own, where it is not sin to let out the heart. What we covet there we may enjoy to the full, and find no excess in it—above all, His presence for whom the world had neither home nor heart, but who has proved well His love in that place of death He took, from which for us He has taken all the shadow and the sting.

We may go forth then surely unto Him, to Calvary the world's end, and judgment. Beyond lies all that is fair, and is our own. From the place of the Cross the way lies not back to the world we have left, but onward and upward in the track of the Risen Heir of all things. He has "with His own blood entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." The sanctifying blood has sprinkled the mercy-seat, and consecrated for us the approach unto Him who dwells in heaven. We have "boldness to enter

"INTO THE HOLIEST"

through the blood of JESUS, by a new and living way, which He has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh." "Therefore," says the Apostle, "*let us draw near.*"

There need be no fear, indeed, if we have learnt what the Cross teaches,—if we have left self where God put it, crucified upon the Cross. If there we got our judgment—if there we died—then there is nothing to condemn even where the light of the glory of God shines fullest; for it shines upon the precious blood which is the proof of our judgment completely borne,—and it shines “in the face of JESUS CHRIST” of Him who shed it! O Christian, do we want more than the glory of Heaven, than the fulness of CHRIST? These are ours. Upon all else death puts its mark. “For here,” passing through the world, “we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.” Yet, mark how full of triumphant joy that soul that is in the *reality* of what we have been considering. “By Him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually.” There is the perennial flow of the springing well of living water in our souls—that is, “the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name.” That is, the GOD-ward side, the sacrifice, living, not dead, we may offer to Him. Then, *if this be real*, the manward side is seen also. “But to do good, and to *communicate* forget not, for with such *sacrifices* God is well pleased.”

Wondrous abundance and permanence of blessing in the soul, is this! Continual praise! well-doing towards man, as a sacrifice to Him! how full the heart of joy, in a scene of sorrow, that can be expected to do this! But such is the result of the simple apprehension of CHRIST’s work and love. To follow Him in His path down here, we must have followed Him, in spirit, in His path on high. To follow Him there we must have gone out to the place of wrath and curse, to the place of the Cross where we as sinners suffered and died!

But that Cross is empty; He who filled it is gone, not back to Jerusalem, not yet to take His throne in Israel, but to the FATHER’S house, to prepare a place for us.

O fuller of reproach to us than when once uttered, Christian, for us now, if to us the question has to come:

“Why seek ye the living among the dead?
He is not HERE, HE IS RISEN.”

And, beloved, if ye then be risen with CHRIST, seek those things that are above, where CHRIST sitteth, at the right hand of God.

ON CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE. *Vt. 3, p. 123-5.*

I BELIEVE that there should be much more of simple Divine experience in our souls than there is. Some have been rather turned from this by certain abused methods of speaking on Christian experience, arising, I judge, from misapprehension on the subject. "Come ye that fear God, and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul." I might take that passage as expressive of what I understand by *experience*—it is what God has done for our souls. Experiences are the sensible fruits of the Spirit's presence in us, leading us into communion. But conflicts have been confounded with *experience*. This has obscured the subject I believe. Conflicts are the results of the renewed mind meeting the old lusts—meeting them in any form, whether as occurring to bring in bondage and fear, or as tempting to stir up sin, and thus to blot the conscience. Rom. 7th may be read as a place of conflict, but *experiences* are not *conflicts*. Experiences are the results of the blessed operation and grace of the HOLY GHOST upon the renewed mind—awakening its *hopes*—strengthening its *faith*—enlarging its *understanding*, or helping its *intercessions*. Rom. 8th may be read as a place of experience. This is the difference, I judge, between these two chapters, and accordingly the HOLY GHOST is not named as in action in the 7th of Romans; but the parties there, are, as I have observed, the *renewed conscience* (of course I know the fruit of the Spirit,) and *the lusts*. The one meeting the other, *conflict* as the result is raised between them. But when we meditate on the character of that Spirit who dwells in us, the forms in which He is revealed as acting in our souls, we may then see how much more rich our experiences should be than they are. He is the blessed *living* power within, giving efficacy to what we have in CHRIST, if not hindered. God is said to have *sealed* us with the HOLY GHOST. He has in that way, and by that gift, appropriated us individually to Himself. But this seal has a large and a glorious character on it, the impressions of which we should know, *and that is our experience*. This *Seal* or *Spirit* thus given to us is an *unction*. (1 John ii.) As such, He is the power and light of all knowledge in us, in the mystery of Christ. (Col. ii.) But the Spirit as the *unction* is in us, to give those materials their *real* and *due* power, that they may not lie as cold inert masses in the *mere understanding*, but affect us as they should, being so Divine and glorious. This Spirit is also a *witness*. (1 John v.) As such He is the assur-

ance, and rest, and liberty of faith in us. We have the grounds or materials of the *full assurance of faith* in the person and work of CHRIST (Heb. x.); but the HOLY GHOST is in us as the *witness*, to give those materials their power, so that our souls may indeed enjoy the *rest and liberty*, and the *blessed stability of heart* with which such strong ground of confidence in God should fill us. This Spirit is also an *earnest*. (Eph. i.) As such He is in us *the joy of hope*. We have in our JESUS all that can animate hope, and draw forth the *longings and boundings* of the soul towards the future glories—*promise and revelation* largely furnishing this. But the HOLY GHOST is in us as an *earnest*, to give these *promises and revelations* their due attractions, so that they may not merely be looked at, or *understood*, but may lead the heart to gladness or other affections, worthy of the hope of *such inheritance*. Now if the HOLY GHOST be *in us* in such characters as these, what rich experiences in our souls might we not reckon upon—what strength of faith when the witness is in us!—what joy of hope when the earnest is in us!—what light, and *largeness of knowledge* when the unction is in us! No doubt there is *another kingdom*, the power of which sadly hinders and defiles; but still this kingdom of God, and the presence of the Spirit in such form of life and power is ALSO A REALITY, and we may count on great things; but it is but little that we either *know in ourselves* or generally *see in others*. We want the more due culture of this new kingdom, which is "*Righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.*" We want the power to *watch and pray*—the power to let the fire kindle by meditation—the power of *simply believing* all the rich and glorious things that are spoken, and the power to refuse the risings of that *rival and other kingdom* in us, which is ever watchful of its own interests. I have observed before on the difference between conflict and experience. It is, I judge, well to note this: Conflict arises from the *renewed mind* dealing with, or getting into collision with the lusts of the *old nature*, and the power of the enemy. Experience arises from the renewed mind dwelling in its proper element, and dealing with the truth or the *precious things of CHRIST* in the power of the HOLY GHOST who dwells there. Conflict comes from this mind being dragged downward, and out of its due place. Experience comes from its being drawn upwards, towards its own proper place; and these two chapters to which I referred—Rom. vii. and viii.—give us the Divine, though different provision for these two conditions. "O wretched man that I am,"

cries out the renewed or quickened soul under pressure of conflict, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death. The relief comes through JESUS: "I thank God, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD." In its communion, or experiences, the same renewed or quickened soul is conscious of "infirmities"—it knows **not** how or what to pray for as it ought. The relief comes through the Spirit: "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered, and He that searcheth the heart, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of GOD," This is Divine teaching of the greatest comfort. JESUS *ends* the conflict—The HOLY GHOST perfects the communion of the poor saint; and in this 8th of Romans I must suggest one other thing; it shows us the Holy Spirit's presence and grace with the saint in two respects. First. When the saint is strong, being in that communion which the dispensation calls us to, and is crying "Abba Father," then the Spirit joins in this, and by his testimony. Second. When the saint is *weak*, unable to conduct the communion in full intelligence or power, not knowing what to pray for as he ought, then the Spirit helps the infirmity, and puts His perfect communication with the mind of GOD in the place of our imperfect communion. (See ver. 16, 26.) This is the two-fold office of the gracious Spirit noticed here, so that whether we be *strong* or *weak*, He is for the saint, warranting our confidence—helping our weakness.

O for simple faith to *know* and *enjoy* His love.

J. G. B.

"PRAYER AND FASTING."

MATT. XVII. 21.

It is well when these words express the habit of the soul, and not merely acts resorted to upon some sudden and pressing emergency. They characterize respectively a *weak* and *chastened* soul; and in such case, whatever may be the strength of the enemy, or the difficulty of the circumstances, there is certain victory, for the battle is not ours, but the LORD'S.

The tone and habit of the soul are of the greatest moment practically and with GOD. It is *recorded* of Daniel that he prayed three times a day, contrary to the king's decree, it was '*as he did aforetime*' (Dan. vi. 10).

SERVICE.

True service begins with CHRIST, who is the Head, and when CHRIST is forgotten, then the service is defective; it has lost connection with the spring and fountain of all service, because it is from the Head that *all* the body, by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, increaseth. The Body is CHRIST, and He loves it as He loves Himself, and every one who would serve it, will best learn to do so, by knowing His heart and purposes towards it. In a word, it is CHRIST who serves, though it may be through us, we are but "joints and bands." If we are not *derivative and communicative from Christ*, we are useless.

To be *useful* my eye and heart must be on CHRIST, and not on the issue of my service; though if true to Him, the end will vindicate me too, however disheartening the interval. He who judges of his service by present appearances will judge by the blossom, and not by the fruit; and after all, the service is not for the sake of the Church, but for the sake of CHRIST; and if He be served in the Church, though the Church own it not, yet, CHRIST being served, He will own it. Now the constant effort of Satan is to disconnect, in our minds, CHRIST from our service; and this, much more than any of us, perhaps, have fully discovered. Whether in reading, or praying, or speaking, how seldom, if we judge ourselves, do we find that we act simply as towards CHRIST, and Him *alone*! How often may sentimentality, and natural feeling affect us in our service, instead of simple love to Him! "The *love of Christ* constraineth us" Paul says.

"WHAT IF IT BE TRUE AFTER ALL?"

Some years ago, a young man was walking thoughtfully along a crowded thoroughfare in Manchester. For some time he had been a sceptic in religious matters. In the society of young men of a similar class, he had been led first to doubt the truth of the Gospel and then to reject it as "a cunningly devised fable." But a change had recently come over his thoughts. Circumstances had altered with him for the worse; his prospects had become clouded; and the vaunted friendship of former companions had proved utterly hollow and worthless. Fair-weather friends had forsaken him, while Christian friends evinced a deep sympathy in his trials, and a real anxiety both for his temporal and eternal welfare. By their advice he had

accompanied them the previous evening to "the place where prayer was wont to be made." He did not believe that the prayers to which he listened could be heard and answered; but he was constrained to contrast the happiness of those around him with his own misery. It was the following day that he was walking through the busy streets, thinking of what he had seen and heard the evening before, when, in the midst of all the roar of traffic, something seemed to whisper in his ear, "What if it be true after all?" It did not seem as if the thought merely had been suggested to his mind, but as if a spirit had whispered, with thrilling earnestness, "What if it be true after all?" Staggered for a moment, the young man soon tried to re-assure himself. He mingled with the crowd and endeavoured to forget the question, but in vain. He tried to laugh himself out of the impression it had made, but in vain; the words were indelibly fixed upon his mind. Wherever he went, whatever he did, the enquiry still seemed ringing in his ears, "What if it be true after all?" Soon he said that *if true*, eternal destruction awaited him. He was led to inquire, "what must I do to be saved?" and after a severe conflict was enabled to "behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world." Surely this was the work of the HOLY SPIRIT. It is recorded thus, by the subject as well as the writer of this brief sketch, that his brethren may be encouraged to pray for those who are still in darkness, and never be weary in well-doing. And should it meet the eye of a single sceptic, may the question be Divinely applied to his conscience also, "What if it be true after all?"

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. R. H. H. asks :

1. When, and under what circumstances, should prayer be addressed to GOD our FATHER? and, 2, when and under what circumstances to our LORD JESUS CHRIST?

The answer is to be found in the relationship in which we stand to each. Our relationship to the FATHER is that of children; our relationship to the LORD JESUS is that of members of His Body, and also as servants to Him Whom we call MASTER and LORD. A special place is His as the One Who has taken in hand the working-out of the Divine purposes, the bringing of man back to GOD, the setting up of new creation in perfection of blessing and stability, and (in and by all this) the manifestation of grace and goodness which before dwelt

in GOD unseen, matter of adoration, and praise, as well as the fullest blessing, of all His creatures.

As thus it is "the FATHER of Whom," so it is the "LORD JESUS CHRIST, by Whom are all things." (1 Cor. viii.) In the kingdom, even, which as SON of MAN He takes, He reigns until all is subdued under Him, and then delivers up the kingdom, that GOD may be all in all. So He teaches the disciples to pray, "Our *Father*, *Thy* kingdom come," which does not mean His own, but this ultimate state when GOD is all in all.

For the accomplishment of this, all things serve Him. Having glorified GOD as to sin in the work of the cross, He is exalted to His right hand, all authority being given to Him in heaven and in earth. He regulates all. We have His word, His commandments. While the Church is *GOD's* house, *GOD's* assembly, *GOD's* building, He is yet SON over the house, Head of the Church, His Body, and actual Builder. If He have not taken His *own* throne yet, still He has sat down with the FATHER upon *His* throne, and we are translated into the kingdom of GOD's dear SON. His proper Divine place, however, is not in question here: of course we cannot forget He is "GOD over all, blessed forever"; but I am speaking now of His mediatorial place and titles. Nor need I do more than refer to His advocacy and the priesthood either, because we do not come to Him as Advocate or Priest, but *by* Him to GOD.

But "*all* AUTHORITY" is His (wrongly translated "power" in Matt. xxviii. 18). Judgment is committed to Him. He is the Dispenser of rewards as well as punishments. He has the keys of death and of hades. His is the administrative control of the whole work which is to issue in the complete salvation and glorification of GOD's elect, and the display of the exceeding riches of His grace, and His manifold wisdom, in the ages to come. The *power* accomplishing everything is, of course, Divine—the power of the HOLY GHOST. *Lordship* is CHRIST's: "to us there is but one LORD, JESUS CHRIST." And the "seven Spirits"—the various energy of the one Spirit of GOD—are "*before*" that throne upon which not only GOD sits, but "the Lamb." (Rev. iv. 5.) And thus we read of the "power of CHRIST," though the Spirit be the worker.

Take a few further examples. "The Church is subject to CHRIST." Gift is of Him; ministers are "ministers of CHRIST." It is the LORD's cup, and the LORD's table; the Church's discipline is in the LORD's name. He ordains as to marriage; regulates as to meats and days. If GOD has a

revelation for His people, it is given by Him to **JESUS CHRIST**, Who sends and signifies it by His angel to His servant John. And He addresses the Churches as in their walk and doctrine and Service, directly responsible to Him.

Yet, it is simple to understand that by all this God is in no wise shut out, and could not be by One Who is Himself God. Thus "God sets the members in the body." It is "the kingdom of God," "the Word of God," "the commandments of God," etc.

Now as to prayer. The first distinctly recorded after the Ascension, as made to the **LORD**, is Stephen's, and is plainly addressed to Him as having the keys of hell (hades) and death. "LORD JESUS, receive my spirit." In 1 Cor. i. 2, the "calling upon the name of the **LORD JESUS**" is given as characteristic of all Christians. In the second epistle, we have an example in the case of Paul himself, who beseeches the **LORD** thrice for the removal of the thorn in the flesh. The connection of this with his service is plain by the context, as of the visions and revelations which preceded and necessitated it.

This indicates the character of prayer addressed to the **LORD JESUS**. I should be slow to systematize it too much, however, or to say that there was any kind of prayer which could be addressed to the **LORD JESUS** which could not be addressed to *God*, as such. Of course, He should have due recognition in the place he has taken, as the **FATHER** also in His own. But he who prays really in the **HOLY GHOST** will be guided aright more effectually, I believe, than by any system; nor do the prayers in 1 Thess. iii. 11, and 2 Thess. ii. 16, seem to indicate any incompatibility in addressing both or either in a very large class of petitions.

In general, then, I would say, that prayer to the **FATHER** would naturally be for what concerned us as His children, our spiritual state as individuals, or as belonging to the family of God, our moral relations with those who belong to it.

Prayer to our **LORD JESUS CHRIST** for what related to Service or Testimony, the ordering and discipline of the Church, the success of the Word, etc.

But that prayer to God, as such, might rightly embrace all (or nearly so) these petitions, although the prayers of Eph. i. and iii., may show what distinction exists again between our God and our **FATHER**, although He Who is one is the other also.

“THE DOOR OF FAITH.”

- “THE Cross of CHRIST: what untold *love*,
 What *grace* was there expressed;
 The only way to heaven above—
 To GOD's eternal rest.
- “The good-for-nothing, hopeless ones,
 Find mercy on the spot,
 For thus GOD's glorious message runs;
 ‘*To him that worketh not:*’
- “The work of CHRIST was so complete,
 Its glory nought can dim;
 The point where GOD and sinners meet—
 But have *you* met with HIM?
- “And are you *wretched, vile, undone*,
 Ay, *worse* than all beside?
 Why, 'twas for such a *hopeless one*
 That CHRIST Himself has died!
- “For Adam's fallen, guilty race,
 CHRIST bore the judgment due;
 And *sinners* now GOD meets in grace—
 But has He met with *you*?
- “Flee to the Cross, while mercy reigns;
 (The sinner's safe retreat,)
 Neglecting that, there but remains
 The dreaded judgment-seat.
- “The day of grace will soon be o'er,
 The closing hour is set,
 Still open stands *salvation's door*—
 But have *you* entered yet?
- “From judgment on destruction's road,
 There's not a sheltering tree;
Believe in Christ, the SON of GOD,
 And He will shelter thee!
- “Heed not the poor heart's questionings,
 Let *fears* and *feelings* cease;
 'TIS FAITH IN CHRIST above that brings
 Eternal *life* and *peace*!
- “*Believing* what the *Scripture* saith,
 Gives just the *peace* you crave;
 And sweeter *feelings* follow FAITH
 Than ever *nature* gave.”

THE GREAT SUPPER.

Luke xiv.

THE whole of this chapter is significant in no ordinary manner, I believe. The LORD visits man's world, and it does not suit Him, and then He shews that His world does not suit man.

The two feasts in this chapter are samples of the two worlds. That in the Pharisee's house is man's world. Guests are there after the fashion of the world, and the host is there after the same fashion. Pride marks the one, and selfishness the other—and such a world the SON of GOD can only rebuke. It does not suit. The feast in the parable, on the other hand, is CHRIST's world. It has been furnished entirely by Himself. It is just what GOD makes it. But this will not do for man—and all the guests that are seen at it are therefore *brought in* or *compelled*, otherwise the table would have been empty.

Thus, man's world does not suit the LORD, the LORD's world does not suit man. The pride and selfishness which are here will not do for Christ—and here, let me say, what a blessing it is, what eternal blessing is involved in it, that our world did not suit the LORD. What would have become of us sinners, had this been possible? Could pride suit Him who, though in the form of GOD, took on Him the form of a servant? Could selfishness suit Him who, when He was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich? Our very salvation is involved in the fact thus incidentally witnessed at the Pharisee's house, that man's world did not suit JESUS.

And, on the other hand, His kingdom is lightly esteemed by the heart of man, as this chapter goes to shew us.

The LORD, I believe, had the heart of man in his thoughts, when he framed this parable. He meant to expose it by shewing that, but for sovereign grace, none would ever be in the kingdom. This "certain man" prepares his "supper," and then he sends out his "servants" to tell the "bidden" ones, that "all was ready."

This is the invitation to man, that he may come and enjoy a portion of God's providing in a coming scene of glory. But man has no heart for the invitation. He is occupied with other delights of his own providing, "the piece of ground," the "yoke of oxen," or the "wife." These are more to man than all that God can give him.

The heart is thus *exposed*; but it is not *slandered*, if I may

so speak; for the parable does not go beyond man's history of himself. Man has been exposing himself in the very way in which this parable exposes him, all through his history, from the beginning to the end of it. In earliest days, a mess of pottage was more to man than the birthright. In latest days—at the very time, I may say, when the LORD was speaking this parable, a herd of swine was more value than the healing virtue of the SON OF GOD; and after that, thirty pieces of silver could purchase the heart of man from the company and the friendship of JESUS. And thus the parable does not go beyond the history. Nay, rather, the parable gives but a chastened and delicate disclosure of that which had already exposed itself in grosser forms.

But, this being so, man having no desire for God's good things, for the promised provision of the coming kingdom, the LORD in power must provide guests, as in grace He has provided the feast, for He cannot sit at it alone. "Some *must* enter therein." (Heb. iv.) It would be no feast without guests—but grace will have it to be a feast.

Accordingly, the servant is sent forth again and again to "bring in" and to "compel." *Bidding* has been found ineffective. There must be *compelling*, or the house would be empty; and accordingly, the compulsion is used, and then there are guests. But this is the surprising grace of God. He has found the heart of man utterly indifferent to His goodness, preferring gratified lust to the glories and provisions of His coming kingdom; and yet He waits on it; He puts forth the power of His SPIRIT to *draw* man, as He has given His CHRIST to *save and to bless* him.

This is the exposure of man, and the revelation of God; and these things are the purpose and object of this parable of the "Great Supper."

No merely *bidden* one will ever be found at that table. All must be *compelled*, brought there and drawn there, or they never would be there.

But, further, if chapter xiv. shews us the *need* of this compelling of which I have spoken, chapter xv. shews us the *mode* of it. We see this in the case of the prodigal. We read in the Psalms, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power." They are *made willing*. The hidden energy of the SPIRIT is used; but it acts in the way of making willing, not of *driving*; and this is illustrated in the prodigal.

The prodigal was "compelled to come in." But how? Against his will? No. It was in spite of himself, I know;

but still, it was not against his will; but by making him willing, "he came to himself." By the hidden power of the SPIRIT this was done. He saw his present misery in its just character; he saw it as the fruit and witness of his past ways. This was coming to himself. But this discovery was welcome to him. However humbling such knowledge may be, he willingly yields to it, and is convicted—and then he is made willing also to return, in thought and remembrance, to his father and his father's house. And he acts upon all this. He rises and goes to his father, convicted and confessing; but when his father lets him still further learn what a father he was, by falling on his neck and kissing him, he receives it all without an unbelieving word upon his lips. He sits at the table with the robe and the ring upon him, with the fatted calf before him, and the music and the merry-making of the house all around him, and in the spirit of faith he accepts it all—for as he had learnt himself for his humbling, he had learnt his father for his joy and blessing.

Thus is he made willing; thus is he "compelled" to come in. The energy of the SPIRIT thus "brings him in," as the parable in chapter xiv. speaks. The "Great Supper," the supper in his father's house is spread, and spread for him, but he takes his place at it as a returned child, and a most welcome guest.

Short Devotions, p. 101.

RICH IN GOD.

It is well for us to acquaint ourselves with the many and deep and wondrous interests we have in God—as, for instance, in His *affections*, His *counsels*, and His *doings*. These things are taught and illustrated in Scripture.

Divine affections, Divine counsels, Divine doings, make us their object. Blessed to tell it. God's eternity that is past took knowledge of us, having been then chosen, predestinated, and written in the Book of Life. Time, in God's hand, in all its stages or successions, has concerned itself with us. God's eternity that is to come will owe much of its joy and glory to our history, to that which has been done, in abounding grace, for the redemption of sinners.

Having chosen us ere the world was, He has been training us in the wisdom of His ways in all ages of the world; and when the world is rolled up like a scroll, we shall still be an object. Heaven acquaints itself with our history—angels gather

fresh light and joy from it; and the moral or result of it will be, the revelation and full display of the glory of God in his manifold and infinite perfections for ever. What interests in God are these!

His *righteousness* is ours, as His *love* is ours. We are made "the righteousness of God," and with the love wherewith CHRIST is loved, we are loved.

People speak of their large and varied interests, their properties here and there; and they range in thought over these wealthy places, marking them, and pleasing themselves with the clearness and sureness of their title to them. But do we survey, in like delight, our possessions in God, as we have said—such as, in His affections; His counsels; His eternity, whether past or to come; in time, as now, under His hand and ordering; in His righteousness; in His works for us, and His operations within us, through His SON and by His SPIRIT; in the sufferings He has accomplished, and the glories He has won—what riches! What a blessed truth this is for the soul to seize upon.

The epistle to the Romans and to the Ephesians among others, shew us largely our interests in Divine *counsels*; John's epistle shews us our interests in Divine *affections*. All Scripture tells us how God has been ministering to us in all His arrangements in the successive journeys that *time* has run, and the place we have already had, or shall have, in His *eternity*. And the gospel preaches to us our interest in His *sufferings*, His *glories*, His *righteousness*, and the *operations of His Spirit*.

We get illustrations, as we get direct teaching of these things. I would mark something of this, as we see it in Zechariah iii., and Luke xv., in the prophetic parable of Joshua the High Priest, and in the LORD's parable of the prodigal son. There is kindredness in these parables, and yet characteristic difference in each.

Joshua represents us as having our interests in Divine counsels; the Prodigal in Divine *affections*, though both of them are seen as in the presence of a friend and of an accuser, as also going through the process that changes them from degradation to honor and joy.

But in Joshua we see no personal exercise. There is nothing shown us of a work of the power of God in him; nor is there told us of any of the outgoings of the heart of the FATHER towards him. He is simply the object of election, and of the work of the grace of God for him, and in his behalf,

(and that to a bright and marvellous degree), while he himself has only to be passive, letting the LORD do for him and with him as seemeth Him good.

In the Prodigal we see the work of the SPIRIT; the hidden, effectual virtue of the operation of God visiting and moving his soul, and turning him home, where a welcome awaits him under every form that the dearest and most thorough affection could suggest.

Indeed, I might notice the narrative of John viii., in company with these parables—for there, the convicted one is in the presence of both an accuser and a friend, and is carried from the presence of shame and danger to one of liberty and safety. But she is not declared to have been the object of counsels, nor is she shown as the object of affection; but the way of CHRIST in the Gospel is very finely illustrated. Who is “blind” and “deaf” like the LORD, on this occasion?—thus taking his place in the service of the grace of God to sinners, not imputing to men their trespasses. (See Isa. xlii. 19; 2 Cor. v. 19.) These are illustrations of things taught us—our many and various interests in God. Divine counsels, Divine affections, Divine works and operations, make us their object. We are “rich in God.” Each of the saints of God shares *all* these; but it is thus the way of Divine wisdom to illustrate the different parts of this, our inheritance in God, in different portions of his Word.

The saints will be rich in *circumstances* by-and-bye, as now they are rich in *God Himself*. The kingdom will be established; the “world to come,” will shine in its glories, and the saints shall be there. And the saints ought now to be rich *towards* God, as they are rich *in* Him, laying out their energies and their advantages, their talents, whatever such be, in His service, as Luke xii. 21, speaks of.

SOME CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF THE INSPIRED BOOKS.

EXODUS.

(Continued from p. 179.)

The second part of the Book of Exodus begins with the people come to Sinai (ch. xix). It is important here to note the literal teaching of this section before we proceed to consider the typical.

The two are in many respects contrasted, but this is no

more than may be said of all the shadows of the former dispensation.

Literally the giving of the law formed part of that system of trial which from the beginning had been going on, and which was needed for the manifestation of man to himself. Thus Moses says (ch. xx. 20) to the people, "God is come to *prove* you." Of course, to Himself all was known before, and His judgment, too, had long ago, been given. Of the generations before the flood He had said, "Every imagination of the thought of man's heart is only evil, and that continually." And when He put upon the earth just emerged from the waters, the remnant preserved to fill it, He declares while doing so, "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Happy for him had he accepted God's judgment of his condition. But if proof were needed, proof should be given, and ample time afforded for it in the patience of One with whom one day is as a thousand years, and upon whom wait the ages of ages. Of this patient trial the law forms a very material part. It was indeed man's "proving" as to righteousness before God, but proving of one fully pronounced already to be a sinner—his manifestation, therefore, to himself, as I have said.

Of this trial there were two parts, as given in this book, answering to the giving of the law the first and second times.

The testimony as to man as now fully proved, in the New Testament, is that he is "ungodly" and "without strength." "When we were yet without strength, in due time CURIST died for the ungodly." (Rom. v. 6.) The due time for the death of CURIST was when the condition was fully declared—the hopeless condition which needed such a remedy. And that little word "yet,"—"yet without strength,"—intimates the patient waiting of God for that full declaration.

The first part of the trial was indeed soon over. "Ungodly," indeed, *he* was, who with the majesty of Sinai in full view could give the glory of Jehovah to the similitude of an ox that eateth hay. And this had been before ever the tables of the law had come down to him from the mount. It *found* a sinner the one to whom it was addressed. And indeed, except for such, a *moral* law could not have been needed. (comp. 1 Tim. 1. 9.) If I were to find you going into a store, and were to tell you not to steal, you would ask me quickly enough if I supposed you were a thief. But that is just what God says in the moral law, and what it supposes in those it speaks to. Under this first giving of the law then, they did not stand a

moment. The tables were broken under the mount, and the first trial of man was already over. (ch. xxxii.)

The second lasted much longer, for under it the people took possession of the land of promise, and held it for 800 years. But they held it, not as those who had kept the covenant, but in the long-suffering of a patient God whom day by day their sins provoked. And with the captivity in Babylon this also ended. They were then Lo-Ammi, not the people of Jehovah, and have never since been recognized as that.

The question in this trial was whether man had power of self-recovery, whether he had "strength." Hence the ground was no longer one of *pure* law which condemned for the first failure and gave no room for repentance. The law was indeed a second time given, but with such qualifications as the proclamation of Jehovah's Name and goodness now implied.

At the first giving of the law there was nothing of this sort. No "goodness" of Jehovah had in the same way been made known, and no glory shone as the result in the face of the mediator. Yet we must remark well that even here God was not seen face to face. He distinctly says, when Moses asks to be shown His glory, "Thou *canst not see My face*; for there shall no man see Me and live." Solemn preface to declarations of abounding, but not yet *over*-abounding, mercy! "And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by Me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock; and it shall come to pass, while My glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with My hand while I pass by: and I will take away My hand, and thou shalt see MY BACK PARTS; *but My face shall not be seen.*" What a distinct declaration of a glory yet unrevealed, which is the "excelling" glory of Christianity! (2 Cor. iii.) Long after this an apostle says as to this, "No man hath seen GOD at any time;" but then adds as looking at the glory of the Word made flesh, "the Only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, HE HAS declared Him."

And thus with CHRIST that *Father's* name is revealed. "I have declared unto them Thy name," He says Himself. In Exodus it is not the Father's but Jehovah's, an immense difference, and which left GOD indeed in His proper character unrevealed. And all the Old Testament names of GOD are similar. "Almighty," to Abraham was the declaration of His power, not His person. "Most High," His title as assuming His great power over the earth. "Lord," spoke of authority as His. And "Jehovah," here, speaks of the Eter-

nal, and it may be the Omnipresent, and thus Omniscient. But *Who* is He to whom all these titles of glory belong? Alas, poor man, that hast to ask it! *thy* GOD, and thou knowest Him not! thou canst not see His face! Blessed for us from whom the darkness is past and the true light now shineth; for whom the Father has been seen in One, "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person," a meek and lowly One on earth, and yet "the Son of man who is in heaven!"

The goodness of Jehovah, proclaimed in the 34th chapter of Exodus, is another thing. It is the goodness of a Lawgiver and Judge, the wise and gracious Governor of His creatures. "And the LORD (Jehovah) descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of Jehovah. And Jehovah passed by before him and proclaimed, 'Jehovah, Jehovah-GOD, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and *that will by no means clear the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children unto the third and to the fourth generation.'"

It is plain that that is not the announcement of the Gospel, of one who "justifieth the ungodly." It is the grace that can take up a wicked man indeed, but to bid him "turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, and he shall save his soul also. (Ezek. xviii., 27.) It is the putting man upon the ground of *self*-salvation, to see if he has "strength." The past may be forgiven, the future he must provide for, and after all there is a GOD who, if gracious, can "by no means clear the guilty," to be met at last. 2 Cor. iii. tells us plainly that the law, *so given*, when the glory of Jehovah reflected itself in Moses' face,—not simply as first given, when there was no glory there at all,—was still a "ministration of death" and "of condemnation." Man could not save himself, nor help, *nor be helped*, to do it. Law for him, however put, was curse and nothing else. Upon this ground the trial might be, and was, a long one, for the patience of the LORD would give ample time to let the result be seen. But that result, after long years of patient waiting, is still "There is none righteous." Man is without strength as well as ungodly. Put requirement in any way whatever, he cannot meet it. He has nothing to pay, and free forgiveness alone will suit him. But that is not here revealed.

And thus the glorious face of God is hidden, even when

the tabernacle becomes His habitation, and He dwells among the people of His choice. That tabernacle itself is the witness of the state of things. Underneath its types lay the reality of the justification of fuller grace than could at present be outspoken. The veil over Moses' face was the type itself of the hiding of that mercy in which the God who dwelt in the thick darkness really was acting toward those in whom He wrought, the men of faith in that and other generations. The veil is done away in CHRIST, and "hidden things" are now unsuited to the plain speech of Christianity. God Himself "is in the light."

We turn now then to the typical teaching of this section of this precious and important book.

THE SERVANT.

"The servant abideth not in the house for ever," the LORD said after telling the Jews that "he who committeth sin is the servant of sin." Ishmael, the child of the bond-woman or the servant, was cast out of the house, and so, any such child, or any one *in the flesh*, or *under the law*, for such law, never rise above the condition of "servants of sin." But the saints are "not under the law, but under grace;" sin, therefore, has not dominion over them; it is not their lord, or master. They are not servants, or in the flesh; but children born of the free-woman, and have the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry "ABBA, FATHER," and thus dwell in the house for ever. In the spirit of their minds, therefore, they are free. Grace has made them so; grace must act according to its nature and give us a standing not of us, but of itself; it therefore sets us free, and makes us not servants, but children. Such is the character of our standing—such is the spirit of our minds. Through faith in the gospel of God's grace, we are no longer servants but sons. We have been called unto liberty.

The law imparted the spirit of bondage and fear, the Gospel gives that of adoption. Thus it is, that in the spirit or mind which they severally dispose, the Gospel so excels the law—the one made servants, the other made sons. In this dispensational sense, a son or child is so much beyond a servant.

But there is another light in which to look at a servant, and in that light the servant excels the son, and that is a servant under the Gospel—not of course a servant under the law. And what is a servant under the Gospel that he should be thus more excellent than a son?

A servant in the labor and diligence of his hands, not a servant in the spirit of his mind. The servant under the Gospel is still a son in the spirit of his mind, but he is still a servant in the diligence and ways of his whole life, as it is written, "For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love *serve* one another."

The servant under the Gospel does not lay aside the spirit of his mind which he has attained to under the Gospel; he has been called unto liberty there, and by faith, he maintains liberty as the spirit of a son. But then in that spirit he goes forth to serve, to live—not for himself, but for others; to lay himself open to the claims of others, their necessities and sorrows, and not to be occupied with his own, which have been already provided for by the grace of the Gospel. And thus is the servant, under the Gospel, beyond the son; for he is indeed the son acting in the power of his calling, and enjoying his standing in so perfect a way, so fully entering into his liberty, holy independence and power of his calling, which grace has given him, that he can give himself up for others, as one who has no necessities of his own to hinder him, for that the GOD of all grace, who has made him His child, has provided for all.

This is a very glorious light in which to see a servant under the Gospel. It follows the son. A son is simply a believer in the Gospel; but such a servant as this is a son acting in the power and liberty of his sonship; and the more that the grace of the Gospel is really understood and enjoyed, the more will this service be fulfilled. Thus Paul, the most exalted witness of the grace of the Gospel, was a pattern of the fresh and most devoted service.

But there is more in this servant to be noticed still; he is one who eyes the glory in the kingdom, and is ready to be poor here that he might be rich there. A son discerns the FATHER'S house, with the provisions and rest of it. A servant looks beyond that to the FATHER'S kingdom, and the rewards of it. Of course he has not, as a son, forgotten *the house*, but he adds to that *the kingdom*. He is one who has not only fellowship with the FATHER in the present comfort of it, but with the LORD also, in the expectation of a share in his joy! His actings are truly blessed and GOD-LIKE; he forgets himself; ever ready with hand and foot, and eye and ear; giving himself to others; "spending and being spent;" not counting his life dear unto him; only for the sake of others he occupies his talents. The virgin only feeds her lamp; as

virgins, the saints regard their personal beauty, and hasten to keep it unsoiled in expectation of ONE who desires and loves them.

As servants they regard their MASTER, and their own share in the coming Kingdom; it thus over-reaches simple sonship; it is in addition to this. If it be made a substitution for it, all is spoiled. If the standing in liberty and adoption be lost sight of by the soul, all the service rendered is not service under the Gospel, but pertains to the old legal bondage of the law, and we should watch that service may ever be in the freshness of liberty towards God. Moses failed in service (Num. xi.), he complained of his burden; he was not prepared for all the results of the place GOD had put him into. But, withal, he was sweetly gracious. (Num. xxix.) It was easier to him to retain the savour of a gracious mind than the strength of a saving hand; and so it is commonly amongst us. We can retire and pray and exercise the weaker expressions of the mind of CHRIST more easily than undergo thus, in love and liberty, the wear and tear of the Church of GOD.

But Paul stood in service to the very end. (Acts xx., 2 Tim. iv.) Blessed sample of Divine power! He carried the sense of the everlasting love of CHRIST to him, in his soul, and that too in such vigor and freshness, that he could still spend himself for His glory and His people's blessing. But JESUS alone was perfect as a servant, as in everything that He filled. St. Mark gives Him to us especially in this perfection—the features of this character may well be looked for, and looked at, that we may know even something more of that cost, at the price of which He has undertaken to love and serve us; and let me observe one thought that has given itself to me with comfort and some assurance of its moral truth, that just as in this day of grace, the sense of having much forgiven carries its own blessing with it, for then we love much; so, in the coming day of glory, service will have its own joy with it, for the brighter the crown is, which we shall then have to cast at the REDEEMER'S feet, the richer will be the joy of the soul in doing so; for we all feel that the more we can give to the ONE whom we love, the happier we are; and so will it be in that day of glory, when the crowns, whether in more or less brightness, be all cast before Him; and, as the very brightest of them lies under the eye of him who cast it, the sweet breathing of his spirit will be, if it were a thousandfold brighter, He would be worthy of it all; and this will be the servants's joy—the joy of all the BRIDEGROOM'S friends, in their order and measure.

THE NAZARITE.

THE Nazarite was to drink no wine. Wine is the joy derived from the pleasures of society, which rejoice the heart of those who give themselves up to them. "Wine which cheers the heart of God and man." From the moment that CHRIST began His public service, He was separated from all that nature had its part in.

The Nazarite let his hair grow: it was neglecting self, in yielding one's self to the will of God, renouncing one's dignity and rights as a man; for long hair in a man marked on the one hand the neglect of his person, and on the other subjection—"Power on the head." (I. Cor. xi. 10.) It was consecration to God in giving up the dignity, the joy, and the natural rights of man, and that to be wholly God's.

Man has his place as the representative and the glory of God, and in that place he is encompassed by a multitude of affections, joys and rights, which have their centre in himself. He can give up this place for the special service of God, seeing that sin has entered into all these things, which, far from being bad in themselves, are, on the contrary, good in their proper place. This CHRIST has done. He did not take His place as man, but for the glory of God made Himself completely subject—identified Himself with the remnant of the sinful people whom He had loved, and became a stranger to His mother's children. He did nothing that was not prescribed to Him; He lived by the word that proceeded out of the mouth of God; He separated Himself from all the links of human life to devote Himself to the glory, the service of God, and obedience to Him.

The Church should have followed Him; but, alas! she has taken strong drink; she has eaten and drunk with the drunken, and begun to smite the servants of the house.

The believer may be called to deny himself—self-denial for the precious service of his SAVIOUR, in things which are not bad in themselves. But this act is accomplished *inwardly*. "Thy Nazarites were purer than snow."

Devotedness is inward. It is proper to consider here to what those who fail in this separation expose themselves.

If we have devoted ourselves to the LORD in a way which is pleasing in His sight, enjoyment follows this devotedness in the measure of the testimony which is rendered to Him. God is with His servant according to his call; but it is a *secret between His servant and Himself*, though the external effects

are seen by others. If we have failed in this separateness, we must begin all afresh; Divine influence and power in the work are lost; there may be nothing amiss in other respects; we may arise and shake ourselves, like Samson, but we have lost our strength without being aware of it. God is no longer with us. It may be that *our strength* has placed us in the presence of evil, and thus, instead of the magnificent display of God's glory, the enemy glories over us.

Let us beware, *in ordinary things*, of the first step that would separate us from *inward holiness*. If grace has called us to separation for an extraordinary service in anything whatever, let us keep ourselves from any lack of obedience to the word of the Cross, whereby we are crucified to the *world, sin, and the law* (the three things to which the Cross is applied in Galatians). Anything which brings us into contact with sin produces its effect on our Nazariteship. We lose the *power* attached to communion with God, and the *SPECIAL presence* of the Spirit with us, *whatever be the measure* in which this power was specially granted to us.

It belongs to us, in any case, immediately to acknowledge our defilement, to go to CHRIST, and not to pretend to be Nazarites externally, when we are not so in the eyes of God. *Nothing is more perilous than the service of God when the conscience is not pure.* However, let us *ever* recollect that we are under grace.



A LETTER TO AN INQUIRING HINDOO.

MY DEAR SIR: I, too, have to apologize for leaving your letter, though of the greatest interest to me, so long unanswered. Suffice it to say, that I had much to wind up before quitting home, and that much fresh occupation has hindered since I came to this busy city. You are right in not allowing your mind to get dragged into discussions, and I trust that I shall in no way tempt you to a path so unpromising, especially in the things of God.

But you speak of the doctrine of the Trinity early in your letter. Now, that entirely depends on the revelation of God, and, indeed, almost entirely on the Christian revelation, or Greek Scriptures; for though the Hebrew Scriptures fall in with it when revealed, they can of themselves be scarcely said to reveal it. So, too, the points of salvation and faith turn on the same larger and prior question of their Divine rev

lation, as distinct from the external testimony of creation, or the internal testimony of the human conscience.

But, surely, my dear sir, if you have seriously read the books commonly called the Old and New Testament, you can hardly have failed to see their essential difference, not in measure only, but in kind, from the sacred books of India, China, Arabia, and any other people or age. They differ quite as much from the Talmud of the Jews and from the commentaries of the early Christian writers, which bear the unmistakable signs of being merely human, and consequently fallible, and, in fact, erroneous.

The Old and New Testaments, besides their superior moral character, differ in two respects. They have an *historical* substratum, peculiar each to each, supported, if their testimony be true, by miraculous vouchers; and they are *prophetic*. Now, none but God could clothe man with miraculous power for some worthy moral end, and this, too, where the ways of the men so invested preclude suspicion of trickery and collusion. Still less, if possible, could any but God give distinct prophecies of the most unlikely events hundreds of years before the fact. These qualities are found only in the Bible, the wonder of which is increased by the circumstance that its writers extend over a space of about fifteen hundred years, from Moses till the Apostle John.

These things are only explicable by the truth of the claim of Scripture to be God's Word. If the Bible, then, be His Word, faith comes by hearing that Word. Reasoning is good in its own sphere and for its own proper ends; but faith is subjection to and reception of God's Word, because it is His. If God has made such a revelation, it binds the conscience of all who hear it. But in such a world as this, one need not wonder that men disbelieve it. For, on the face of it, men generally are far from God, and opposed to his will. That God should leave man, so dark and wretched as he is, without a revelation, would be strange indeed: not so, spite of such a revelation, that many should reject it, and many should be unfaithful to it. Least of all is this a difficulty to one who believes the Bible; for the Old Testament predicted the sin and unbelief of the Jews, as the New Testament predicts the sin and unbelief of the Christian professing body. As the revelation comes from God to man, and acts as a moral test, so does CHRIST. If I love what is good and holy and true, I shall love the Bible, and the LORD JESUS; if I like my own will and way, and the world, I shall despise both the

Bible and the LORD JESUS CHRIST. If I begin to learn my unfitness for GOD's presence, I shall begin to abhor myself and look to GOD, Who will surely lead me on to welcome the good news of redemption through JESUS CHRIST.

Either JESUS was a Divine Person or He was the worst of deceivers. This last you do not think: how, then, can you fairly escape from owning the glory of His Person? Seven hundred and fifty years before His birth, Isaiah (vii.) declared to King Ahaz that the Virgin should conceive and bear a Son to be called Emmanuel—GOD WITH US—further calling Him the *mighty* GOD (ix.), the Father of Eternity (or the age to come), &c. In due time, the Virgin Mary does bear such a Son, even JESUS, Who raises the dead, rises Himself from the dead, and goes up to heaven in the face of His disciples.

Again: even the greatest difficulties which unbelief finds are all necessarily elements of the history and of the doctrine. Thus, if JESUS had not been a man, man had derived no such benefit as the Gospel proclaims. If He had not been GOD, the benefit could only have been human, earthly and temporal. To give such a boon as Christianity offers, He must be both GOD and Man in the same Person. Again: if He had not died as Man, there could have been no Christian redemption by blood. If He Who died had not been Divine, the value of blood-shedding had been only that of a creature, and limited. To be infinite, not in Person only, but in His sacrifice for us, He must be, as Scripture declares He was, both GOD and Man.

Take a proof of this from the *Hebrew* Scriptures. It was written by Zechariah five hundred years before the crucifixion: "They shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced." This is still, as a whole, to be fulfilled for the Jews as a *nation*. It has only been verified by individuals as yet. The prophet speaks of a future time of trouble, when the Gentiles will gather round Jerusalem, and GOD will appear on their behalf when at the last extremity, and they will then recognize in their Deliverer GOD, the One Whom they pierced. The "I" of the passage (Zech. xii. 10) is certainly GOD, Jehovah of Israel; yet He must have taken a body and come in humiliation, if He had been once "pierced" by them. In whom can all this meet but in JESUS of Nazareth, the LORD GOD of Israel?

The very notion of Christianity is above human thought till GOD revealed it. Others have conceived GOD's appearing in human form to steal, to kill, to indulge lust or other evil. Such were the ideas of Greeks and Romans, Scripture alone

reveals GOD assuming human nature without sin, to be a Sacrifice for sinners, to make them saints, to glorify Himself in and by them. With this, too, the Trinity harmonizes perfectly; for, instead of its being mere ideas or various functions and displays, the FATHER, in His love, gives the SON, Who, in equal love, comes to die, in order righteously to put away sin and to rise in witness of the victory for the believer, and the HOLY SPIRIT deigns to work in the conscience and heart of him who believes, both to convince him of his need and then to fill him with Divine streams of enjoyment and power to magnify Him Who died and rose for him.

You will see from what is already said, that I in no wise despise the value of reason. Thus it is irrational and immoral to suppose that a Being good and holy, omniscient and omnipotent, made this world and man as they are now. But reason, unaided, cannot account for it. Revelation declares that GOD made all good, but suspended its continuance on the obedience of its head—that the head failed, and that the race and the world fell thereby. My reason bows to this as the only true and righteous and sufficient explanation.

But how can I rise out of this state of ruin? My reason fails to find a remedy. Divine revelation shows me GOD undertaking, GOD giving, GOD fulfilling the mighty task; and this in the nature which failed, yet to the glory of Himself. This my soul accepts as the only solution of all my difficulties. It is worthy of GOD to save the lost, but it is only worthy of Him to save holily and righteously at all cost to Himself, at infinite cost, yet to save freely, of grace, and therefore by faith of His testimony that He gave His only-begotten SON, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. In every other scheme, love is lost, or righteousness is compromised, or guilty man is flattered. The Cross of CHRIST alone satisfies and harmonizes all truth, meeting every want of man and every attribute of GOD.

Before the Scriptures were written at all, as in the days of MOSES, and before they were finished, as in the days of JESUS and the Apostles, miracles were vouchsafed by GOD to arrest attention to the Divine power put forth in a less or a greater degree, as seemed fit to Him.

But when all was written, miracles were not continued, for then the truth revealed was complete, and the testimony such as only inattention or self-will can dispute, the fulfilment of prophecy being the most powerful continuous testimony after miracles were no longer wrought.

Accepting, then, these revelations as proved truly Divine, I hear JESUS saying (John viii.) : "Before Abraham was, I am." Did he speak the truth? If not, the morality of the Gospel in its Chief is detestable, not Divine. Lofty precepts condemn, if there be not holy practice. If JESUS was holy and true, He was GOD, according to the import of His own words. None but a Divine person could say, "Before Abraham was, I am," πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι, ἐγὼ εἰμι. If you know Greek tolerably, you will see, when it is pointed out, the amazing force of this statement. In speaking of Abraham, a mere creature, the LORD uses the verb γίνομαι, which means to become, or come into being. In speaking of Himself, He employs the substantive verb, which alone is proper to express, where required, absolute uncaused being. He does not merely say, "Before Abraham was, I was," no matter how high you carry the point and term of his existence, even if it were the first of created beings, as the Arians say. If so, JESUS would have said, ἐγενόμην. But no! He, the lowliest of men, could not deny His Deity. He is GOD, the "I am," and so He declared Himself, which provoked the unbelieving Jews to take up stones. But the time to suffer was not yet come; and so He passed through and went on His way. Again, in John x., JESUS declares that He has ἐξουσίαν, right and title, as well as power, to lay down His life as well as to take it again: who could have such authority but a Divine Person?

This, then, was no mere Athanasian dogma. It is the distinct teaching of John i., Philippians ii., Hebrews i., and very many other passages in the Apostolic writings. It is the keystone of Christianity. Without it, not only its salvation is a myth, but its morality is a cheat. For all is built on the capital truth that GOD, in Divine love, humbled Himself to become Man and die for sinners, that He might save and bless the believer to the uttermost, not *by* CHRIST only but *with* Him.

But be assured, my dear sir, as great as is the free and boundless blessing of the Gospel, so equally is the sin and danger of neglecting it—mark, not of opposing only, but of neglecting it. For if it be true that GOD really gave His SON thus to live and die, the guilt of neglecting so great salvation, once it is brought before us, is proportionate to the dignity of His Person and the efficacy of the work wrought at a cost so incalculable. May the gracious GOD and FATHER of the LORD JESUS bless you, giving you to read honestly the Scriptures, with prayer for Divine light and guidance!

Believe me ever faithfully yours,

W. K.

“THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF FAITH.”

HEB. XII. 2.

ALL the witnesses for GOD spoken of in Heb. xi., are for our encouragement in the path of faith; but then there is a difference between them and JESUS. Accordingly the Apostle here singles Him out of all.

If I see Abraham, who by faith sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, or Isaac, who blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come; or Jacob on his dying bed of blessing and worship, they have all run their race before us; but in JESUS we have a far higher witness. Besides, in Him there is the grace to sustain us in the race. Therefore in looking unto JESUS we get a motive and an unfailing source of strength. We see in JESUS the love which led Him to take this place for us, who, “When He putteth forth His own sheep, goeth before them.” For if a race is to be run, we need a forerunner. And in JESUS we have got one who did run before us, and has become the captain and completer of faith, in looking to whom we draw strength into our souls. While Abraham and the rest filled up in their little measure their several places, CHRIST has filled up the whole course of faith. There is no position that I can be in, no trial whatever that I can endure, but CHRIST has passed through all and overcome. Thus I have got one who presents Himself in that character which I need: and I find in Him one who knows what grace is wanted, and will supply it: for He has overcome, and says to me, “Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world,”—not, you shall overcome: but I *have* overcome. It was so in the case of the blind man (John ix., 31, &c.) who was cast out of the Synagogue; and why? Because JESUS had been cast out before him. And now we learn that, however rough the storm may be, it does but throw us the more thoroughly on CHRIST, and that which would have been a sore trial does but chase us closer to Him.

Whatever turns our eye away from CHRIST is but a hindrance to our running the race that is set before us. If CHRIST has become the object of the soul, let us lay aside every weight. If I am running a race, a cloak, however comfortable, would only hinder, and must be got rid of; it is a weight, and would prevent my running. I do not want anything to entangle my feet. If I am looking to JESUS in the appointed race, I must throw aside the cloak; otherwise it would seem strange to throw away so useful a garment. Nay, more;

however much encouragement the history of antecedent faithful witnesses in Heb. xi. may give, our eye must be fixed on JESUS, the true and faithful One. There is not a trial or difficulty that He has not passed through before me, and found His resources in GOD the FATHER. He will supply the needed grace to my heart.

There were these two features in the life of CHRIST down here. First, He exercised constant dependence on His Father, as He said, "I live by the Father." The new man is ever a dependent man. The moment we get out of dependence, we get into the flesh. It is not through our own life (for indeed we have but death) that we really live, but by CHRIST, through feeding on Him. In the highest possible sense He walked in dependence on the Father, and for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame. Secondly, His affections were undivided. You never find CHRIST having any *new object* revealed to Him so as to induce loss in His path of faithfulness. Paul and Stephen, on the other hand, had the glory revealed to them that enabled them to endure. For when Heaven was opened to Stephen, the LORD appeared in glory to him, as afterwards to Saul of Tarsus. But when the Heavens opened on JESUS, there was no object presented to Him, but, on the contrary, He was the object of Heaven; the HOLY GHOST descends upon Him; and the voice of the Father declares, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Thus, the Divine Person of the LORD is always being witnessed to. The Apostle here lays hold of the preciousness of CHRIST in the lowliness into which he has come, but he never loses sight of the glory of Him Who has come there. So when I get CHRIST at the Baptism of John, I see Him at the lowest point (save in another way on the cross); and finding Him there, I find all the Divine compassion of His heart.



ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"J. M."—1. The difficulty as to Acts iii. 19, disappears when we take the translation given by Alford and the Bible Union, and which is unquestionably the true one—"In order that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the LORD," not "when" they "shall come," as the common version. Thus, it is no question of people waiting for the "times of refreshing" either to be forgiven or to know it.

But what the Apostle says is, that *if* the Jews (nationally) repented, JESUS whom they had rejected would return, and bring in the "restitution of all things." So it will be, when the Jews do repent, at a future day.

2. John xi. 25 and 26 may be applied, I believe, to the resurrection of the dead and change of the living saints when the LORD comes. When He puts forth, as on that day, the full power that He possesses, this will be the result. But, in the meantime, there is a most important application to the present time, which should not be overlooked. For JESUS having come into this scene of death, has abolished death for His own. The life which He gives is life in Himself risen, in One who has passed through death, conquered and removed it. Thus, for believers, there had been death in its reality in the past. It is gone now. The dead saints of the past shall live again. He that *now* lives and believes has no death really to meet. If JESUS come, death is proved to have no title, for he is changed without it; but if not, to depart and be with CHRIST is gain.

3. Titus iii. 7. Eternal life is a possession. We have it already. (John v. 24.) Still it is for the present a life hidden in its character, as belonging to another sphere than earth, "hid with CHRIST in God." It is therefore (as to full manifestation) a hope also.

4. Rev. xxi., &c. The description of the heavenly Jerusalem is surely symbolic, and it is called "the Bride, the Lamb's wife."

5. Matt. xxiv. 14. The "gospel of the kingdom" is the announcement of the coming rule of Him who is to bring all things back into subjection to God. It is called, in Rev. xiv. 6, "the everlasting gospel," because it is that good news for man which was preached to him from the first, even (after Adam's fall) in the Garden of Eden itself. It thus runs on from that time to the coming of the kingdom (the millenium) itself. Therefore through all the present time. But it is a distinct thing from the announcement of forgiveness and justification through the Blood of CHRIST, which is the "gospel of our salvation," as well as "of the grace of God."

“AND HAVE I NOTHING TO DO?”

THE title of this paper was the significant and repeated exclamation of a poor, dying woman. And were it not for the benefit of others, there would be no good reason for publishing it. But her case is not a rare one. Go where we may, we shall find many in the same condition. And the simple story of God's ways in grace with her soul may be made a blessing to many. The Lord in His abundant mercy grant that it may!

Self-deception is a fearful thing, and not uncommon. Surely we should ever seek to deliver precious souls from it, by plain and faithful dealing, in dependence on God.

The subject of this narrative had reached her seventieth year. She was now very near her journey's end, but still ignorant of the way of salvation.

After a few general inquiries, and learning a little as to the real state of her soul, I asked her plainly, in something like the following words:

“Have you any hope of recovering from this illness?”

“O no, sir! I am an old woman, and I have been a hard working woman all my life. I can never be better in this world.”

“Are you thinking much about the *next* as you lie there?”

“Oh yes, sir; that is just what I am doing. I pray nearly all night and all day.”

“I am glad to hear that. But tell me what do you chiefly pray for?”

“I pray to the ALMIGHTY, that He would pardon my sins. I know I have a great many.”

“Are you very anxious to know whether they are all forgiven or not?”

“Indeed I am, sir. I have nothing else now to think about but to pray to the ALMIGHTY that He would pardon me.”

“And do you believe He will?”

“Oh yes! I am sure a great many of my sins have been pardoned since I began to pray; but I know they are not all pardoned yet; and I keep praying to Him.”

“Well, it is surely a right thing for us poor creatures to pray to God, who only can help us. But it would be quite wrong to make a *Saviour* of our prayers. CHRIST is the *only* SAVIOUR from sin. You must have a great many sins to pray about. The sins of seventy long years! What a num-

ber you must have committed in that time! And remember, you will have to speak to GOD about every one of them, unless another does it for you. Now, tell me this: Do you really expect that *your own prayers* will satisfy GOD for having neglected Him and sinned against Him seventy years?"

"O no, sir! I know the SAVIOUR died for our sins and we have the promise that if we ask we shall receive. But we must ask."

"Just so: that is so far true. But how long do you think you will have to pray yet, before they are all forgiven? Do not the Scriptures positively teach us, that if we are depending on the death of CHRIST for pardon, and not on our own prayers, we are forgiven already? When GOD forgives a sinner, He does it all at once. Not by halves surely! Whenever we trust, by faith, in the death of JESUS, we are fully and freely forgiven, whether we know it or not. GOD does everything perfectly."

The poor woman was sadly in the dark on this important point, but most attentive to what was said, and deeply interested, although not in great trouble about her soul.

After reading to her some passages from the Scriptures, her mind was evidently turned to the word of GOD, and became fixed on it. Especially on such portions as Acts xiii. 28-39, where the Apostle is proving that the death and resurrection of CHRIST is the only ground of pardon, and that GOD only forgives those who truly believe on His SON.

"AND HAVE I NOTHING TO DO?" she exclaimed in the most earnest manner.

"No, dear woman, nothing to do, only to believe. The blessed JESUS has done it all. He has done all the work of our salvation. He did everything that GOD demanded, and now, GOD asks nothing from us, only to believe and rejoice in the perfect, finished work of His beloved SON. 'The Word of GOD expressly says, that it is through faith in the LORD JESUS we are pardoned, and not through our own prayers or doings of any sort. 'Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that *through this man* is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and *by Him* all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses!' Here, you see, the apostle stands up, in the midst of a congregation of Jews at Antioch, and proclaims a full and free pardon to all without exception. Now, all in that assembly who believed the glad tidings were *immediately forgiven and justified*, and they knew that they were so by the plain word

of God; therefore they could take the comfort of it at once.

“Now, mark this, the Apostle does not say one word about *doing*; he only speaks about *believing*. All who believed what he preached about JESUS and the Resurrection were the same moment forgiven, justified and eternally saved. And now if *you* believe the same good news, and trust only in the risen and glorified JESUS, you will be completely forgiven and saved at once, just where you are, and will not require to wait till to-morrow. It will be true *just now*. GOD declares Himself to be just and the justifier of him that believeth in JESUS.” (Rom. iii. 26.)

The simplicity of the Gospel evidently stumbled her for the moment, and again she exclaimed with wonder and amazement, “And have I nothing to do?”

“The Apostle says, ALL THAT BELIEVE ARE FORGIVEN AND JUSTIFIED, and that is enough. We must not say anything different from the Apostle. These are GOD’S own words by the lips of His servant. Oh, then, think no more about your prayers and doings, as a means of pardon. Believe GOD’S Word, praise Him for His mercy, and pray that you may be kept ‘looking unto JESUS.’ Place all your confidence in Him, and in the work which He accomplished for poor helpless sinners on the Cross. His Blood alone cleanseth from all sin. The very instant you believe you are washed in the Blood of JESUS, clothed in the righteousness of GOD and fitted for Heaven, the heavy load of your seventy years’ transgression will be entirely removed, and you will find relief and rest to your weary heart in Him.”

Before leaving, I could bless GOD for the state of her mind. She was now deeply exercised. Her conscience appeared to be in the light of GOD’S word. As I turned round to say a parting word, with my hand on the handle of the door, she once more repeated, with deep emotion, “And have I nothing to do?”

“These were the last words I heard her utter. A few days after this she fell asleep in JESUS, giving evidence to those who visited her, that she was not now counting on her prayers for acceptance before GOD, but on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the bles-ed SAVIOUR of the chief of sinners, whose precious Blood cleanseth us from ALL sin. (1 John i. 7.)

REVELATION II. III.

Concluded from page 77.

The character of Thyatira is so well marked, that it is not difficult to see its application to that great ecclesiastical system which for so many centuries exercised supreme control over men's consciences. Usurpation of power, corruption of doctrine and idolatry are its main features, all which pre-eminently characterizes Romanism, of which Thyatira is the type.

In verse 20 it should read, "notwithstanding I have against thee" &c. It is an important correction, about which all are agreed, whose authority is acknowledged in such matters. The Lord could not say "a few things" for there were many, although in His usual gracious way He will commend whatever can be commended even where so much is evil that the Christian character is almost lost. But unlike ourselves, He is always ready to recognize any good that can be found. He sees both the good and the evil perfectly. We would often fail to recognize anything of good where we see much evil; with us it is apt to eclipse whatever there may be of good completely. But it is in that manner He who seeks to win all that can be won from bad ways, will approach them even though He may have much to find fault with. Witness the Lord Jesus with the young man in Mark x. When He heard of his good character "Jesus beholding him loved him." He could appreciate what was upright in even a fallen child of Adam, who afterwards when tested more fully came sadly short, and again, as the Spirit of that Blessed One in Paul can make mention to the Corinthians of the very gifts they were abusing, before laying bare the evils they had among them.

Verse 21 notes the part of God's patient forbearance with her, such as we know has been manifested in the history of Romanism, but a patience unavailing to bring her to repentance, so that judgment is the necessary result upon herself and those who had been partakers of her sins. How striking here, too, the progress in the downward path. At Ephesus, first love had been left, but there was the judgment of evil; conscience was not gone; at Pergamos there were false teachers, and seemingly allowed; but here the Church herself, or what is called that, becomes the corrupter of God's truth. Like as in the parables of Matt. xiii. we have the woman hiding the leaven in the three measures of meal till the whole was

leavened—the bread of life corrupted by the Church herself—while Pergamos agrees more in character with the preceding parable of the mustard seed, that which was small in its beginnings, becoming a great power in the world, just as the Lord says. “I know . . . where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s throne is.”

Another point of importance is, that at Pergamos, there is faithfulness in the main, and the few are corrupters; but here it is the reverse, and He speaks of a remnant “who have not known the depths of Satan” and who are exhorted to hold fast that which they have until He comes, thus clearly indicating that as a system, Romanism continues down to the end, as other places in the word show, but with a remnant whom the Lord can own as His, faithful according to the measure of light they possess, in the midst of the blinding superstitions of the system, and who will meet with a suited reward at His coming.

The promise, given here, is of association with Himself in the judgments He executes, according to Ps. ii., and which will precede the peaceful reign of the Millenium. The Morning Star, He who is to rule thus the nations with a rod of iron, shall be theirs also.

In Sardis, which follows, we have another development of evil in the history of the Church. There is a profession of a better state of things, but yet her works are not found to suit Him who judges of all things by their fitness for the presence of God. We have here Protestantism with its boastful pretensions, but which falls short of acceptableness to Him. Not that one would seek to disparage at all God’s work, for such, at the outset, the Reformation truly was. Nor is it exactly that time that is contemplated. God’s Spirit surely wrought in power to extricate the truth of the Gospel from the rubbish of superstition in which it had lain so long buried, and by that means brought blessing to multitudes. But after the truth had been thus revived and Protestantism has become established, we find a vast profession boasting of its works, yet, as a whole, departing from the truths that were the very basis of the Reformation, instead of further progress being made. Nor was the connection with the world ever broken, nor the heavenly character and position of the Church returned to; but for political ends the world-power patronized a movement it could not otherwise control, and thus stopped the work of God, as far as it could do so, and national Churches were formed. Nor has Dissent improved things, for none returned to the original thoughts

of God about the calling of the Church, but only separated under protest against certain evils, or to maintain some particular doctrines, and thus formed mere human associations governed by human laws, and all either too broad in their principles, so as to admit the world, or too narrow so as to exclude many of God's people who could not pronounce the Shibboleth of a party. And now we have the sad spectacle of sects too numerous to mention, contending for their party interests, and buried beneath carnality and worldliness, instead of the unity in separation from the world, of that body—the Church—which the One Spirit of God has formed. Besides all this, let me ask, how far the truth of justification “by faith alone without the works of the law” which Paul preached, and for which Luther and others in his day contended, is maintained? Let those judge who know and value the truth of God on these points. It is on this account that the Lord says: “Remember how thou hast received, and heard, and hold fast, and repent,” and the threat is added, “If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.” The Lord, when He comes, will treat that as the world which has debased itself to its level. The day of the Lord, which comes as a thief in the night, will overtake her suddenly, when she is speaking “peace and safety” to herself and flattering herself with the prospect of a Millenium of blessings through the spread of the Gospel. On the other hand, those in her “who have not defiled their garments” shall walk with Him, in white, for they are worthy. Though doubtless many, yet they are few in comparison with the multitudes of carnal professors. To be clothed in white raiment, and to have their names confessed by Him, before His FATHER and the Angels, is the promise to those who overcome, and whose names He will not blot out of the Book of Life, when He corrects the record as man keeps it on earth, by the register of Heaven.

Philadelphia has another character. Keeping His word and not denying His name, is what the Holy and the True One sees. It would not be much, perhaps, in the days when the freshness of first love was the condition of the Church at large. But in the last days, when all is characterized by apostacy and failure, the light, feeble as it may be, but which His own Spirit has kindled, shines brightly to the eye of One Who understands well the circumstances of difficulty in which it is found, and in strong contrast with the midnight darkness

which surrounds. It is like His own path on earth, at the close of a dispensation, with opposers on every side, yet living by the words that proceeded out of the mouth of God, He walked on quietly and patiently in the way appointed Him, and waiting the time when He was to be received up again to Heaven. The opposers here are those who take an earthly standing. For a Jew was one who had a religion suited to the earth—a temple made with hands to worship in, a religion of ceremonies and law of commandments for his rule of life. Once God recognized all this, it was of His own appointment. But the hour had come when the SON stood on earth rejected by the earthly people, and taking the new place of a seeker after spiritual worshippers, who should worship the FATHER in spirit and in truth, and judgment was to set aside the earthly centres. The fulness of that hour was ushered in when the work of redemption having been accomplished by the SON, and He glorified in the glory He had with the FATHER before the world began, the HOLY GHOST came down from on high to form a dwelling place for God of those who gathered by the Gospel of His grace out of the sin and corruption of the world, and baptized “by One Spirit into one body,” were thus linked with the Head in Heaven, and with one another. Their hope was “laid up in Heaven,” where their life was “hid with CHRIST in God.” Their citizenship was in Heaven, from whence they waited for, as SAVIOUR, the LORD JESUS to change their bodies of humiliation and fashion them like His body of glory. Their worship was in the Holiest of all, where the Spirit gave access through the rent veil to those sanctified “by the Blood of JESUS,” into the presence of God to “offer the sacrifice of praise continually.” To turn from the Heavenly character of the dispensation in order to take up with an earthly standing, such as so widely obtains in this day, was to say they were Jews, and to deny all that was most precious in God’s revelation. These he promises shall come and do homage before the feet of those who have kept the word of His patience, and shall know that He has loved them.

Another thing we notice here is the increasing nearness of the LORD’s coming. “Behold, I come *quickly*,” is the word for these days, and a warning is added which shows how needful is watchfulness, even for those occupying so blessed a place. What is Heavenly does not bear long the blighting influence of this evil world, and so He warns them to hold fast, that no man take their crown.

The promise to those who overcome is blessed in the ex-

treme. It is the sharing in so marked a way what is His—the temple of *My* God, and the name of the city of *My* God, as well as *My* new name, are all mentioned as that with which he would be identified publicly who was seeking to be faithful.

Laodicea closes the picture, and a sad ending it is. We have not here the dead state of Sardis nor the faithfulness of Philadelphia, but lukewarmness. Self-satisfaction and the consciousness of having something in independency of CHRIST; the exact opposite of the poor in spirit, whom He commends. The LORD does not charge them with false doctrine, all may be as orthodox as possible; nay, the truth itself, if not held in connection with “faith and a good conscience,” may be the very thing that destroys lowliness, as it is said, “Knowledge puffeth up.” But it is the last stage of declension, and only His special care in visiting with rebuke and chastening those He loves can keep any awake. Still, although about to do so, yet He has not altogether given up the Church. When He does that He will take His own to Heaven, and testimony is at an end to that which has held that place. As long as He owns it at all, He stands at the door to knock, and for those who value His company will give them the enjoyment of the closest intimacy. “I will come in and sup with him and he with Me.” But it is more individual fellowship with Himself when the most part do not value it. The whole state is such that it is about to be spued out of His mouth, and so the next chapter begins with an open door in Heaven and a voice calling John up there to witness from thence the opening of the Book of Judgment for the world, no seal of which is broken until the saints are seated on their thrones around God’s throne in Heaven, while the mere profession is left without life or light, set aside as worthless to Him, and to become an easy dupe to the wiles of the Beast, and to meet its judgment when He comes with all His saints, “to take vengeance on them that know not God, and on them that obey not the Gospel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

“I WILL GUIDE THEE WITH MINE EYE.”

Psalm xxxii. 8, 9.

THERE are three special characters of blessing mentioned in the Psalms.

First, that which we get at the very opening of them: ‘Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the

ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in this law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water," etc. (Ps. i.) It is here a contrast between the ungodly and CHRIST, the righteous Man.

Psalm cxix., we get a little further. This Psalm speaks of having wandered, and of being restored. (v. 67, 71, 176.) It is here "blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD." It speaks of one who has the word, delights in it, looks to it, and seeks to be guided by it; still it is not so absolute.

In the Psalm before us (Ps. xxxii.), we get the blessedness of, and God's dealings with, the sinner whose transgressions are removed. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered [not who has not transgressed, who has not sinned]; blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile" (that is, the restored soul).

It is important to notice the work of the Spirit of God, in the process through which the soul is going here (as it says, "*Thy hand was heavy upon me*"); God's dealings with the soul that does not submit itself entirely, in bringing it down in full subjection and confession. "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and my iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." (v. 2-5.)

This is always true, if the LORD's hand is upon a man, until he recognizes the evil before God, and then there is forgiveness of the iniquity.

It is very important that we should distinguish the government of God towards our souls in forgiveness.

Until there is confession of *sin*, and not merely of *a sin*, there is no forgiveness. We find David (Ps. l.), when he was confessing his sin, saying, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me," etc., not merely, I have done this particular evil, that he does (v. 1-4); but he recognizes *the root and principle of sin*. When our hearts are brought to recognize God's hand, it is not merely a question of what particular sin or of what particular iniquity we may need forgiveness; God has brought down the soul,

through the working of His Spirit on it, to detect the *principle of sin*—the bad will—and so there is confession of that, and not merely of a *particular sin*. There is, then, positive restoration of soul.

Now, this is a much deeper thing in its practical consequences, and the LORD's dealings thereon, than we are apt to suppose. Freed from the bondage of things which hindered its intercourse with God, the soul learns to lean upon God, instead of upon those things which, so to speak, had taken the place of God. "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee in a time when Thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. Thou art my hiding place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble; Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." (v. 6, 7.) There is its confidence.

And then follows what more especially is the object of this paper: "*I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye.* Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee." (v. 8, 9.)

Now, we are often like the horse or the mule, every one of us—and this because our souls have not been ploughed up. When there is anything in which the *will* of man is at work, the LORD deals with us as with the horse or the mule, holding us in. When every part of the heart is in contact with Himself, He guides us with His "eye." "The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Take heed, therefore, that the light that is in thee be not darkness. If thy whole body, therefore, be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light." (Luke xi. 34–36.) When there is anything wherein the eye is not single, so long as this is the case, there is not free intercourse in heart and affections with God; and the consequence is, our will not being subdued, we are not led simply by God. When the heart is in a right state, the whole body is full of light, and there is quick perception of the will of God. He just teaches us by His eye all He wishes, and produces in us quickness of understanding in His fear. (Is. xi. 3.) This is our portion, as having the HOLY GHOST dwelling in us, "quickness of understanding in the fear of the LORD," hearts without any object save the will and the glory of God. And

this is just what CHRIST was: "Lo I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me); I delight to do Thy will, O my GOD: yea Thy law is within my heart." (Ps. xl. 7, 8.) Where there is this, it may be bitter and painful as to the circumstances of the path; but there is in it the joy of obedience, as obedience. There is always joy, and the consequence God guiding us by His eye.

Before anything can be done, if we have not this certainty, before we enter upon any particular service, we should seek to get it, judging our own hearts as to what may be hindering. Suppose I set about a thing, and meet with difficulties, I begin to be uncertain, as to whether it is God's mind or not; and hence, there will be feebleness and discouragement. But on the other hand, if acting in the intelligence of God's mind in communion, I shall be "more than conqueror," whatever may meet me by the way (Rom. viii. 37), and note, here, not only does the power of faith, in the path of faith, remove mountains; but the LORD deals *morally*, and will not let me find out His way, unless there be in me the spirit of obedience. (What would it avail—unless, indeed, God should provide for His own dishonour?) "If any man *will* do [wills to do] His will," says our LORD, "he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself." (John vii. 17.) This is precisely the obedience of Faith. The heart must be in the condition of obedience, as CHRIST's was, "Lo, I come," &c. The Apostle speaks to the Colossians of being "filled with knowledge of His will in all understanding and spiritual understanding." (Col. i. 9.) Here it is quickness of understanding in the fear of the LORD, the condition of a man's soul, though the Spirit of His mind will be necessarily shown in outward acts, when that Will is set before him, as Paul goes on to say, "that ye may walk worthy of the LORD unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

Here, then, is the blessed, joyful state of being guided by God's "eye." "I have meat to eat," says the LORD to the disciples (John iv), that ye know not of." And what was that meat? "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work."

The LORD guides, or rather controls, us in another way, by *providential* circumstances, so that we may not go wrong, even though we are those "which have no understanding." And thankful we ought to be that he does so. But it is only as the horse or the mule. "Your wills being subdued to

Mine," He says, "I will *guide* you with *Mine eye*; but, if you are not subject, I must *keep you in* with *bit and bridle*." This evidently a very different thing.

May our hearts be led to desire to know and to do God's will. It will not then be so much a question of *what* that will is; but of *knowing* and *doing* God's will. And then we shall have the certain and blessed knowledge of being guided by His "eye." There is all this government of God with those "whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered, unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile"—whose whole dependance is upon Him, and who feel they are sure to go wrong if not guided by Himself.



SOME CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF THE INSPIRED BOOKS.

EXODUS.

(Concluded from p. 209.)

It is well to be remarked here in the first place that, except upon the ground of redemption, God never (after innocence was lost) gave a law to man at all. Genesis speaks of none. Nor in this book is there a word about it, until the people are brought out of Egypt. Then, when the law is given it is distinctly upon the ground: "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the House of bondage." And again, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bear you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself; *now, therefore*, if ye will obey my voice—"

It is quite true that, of course, inasmuch as this was temporal, and only the *type* of "eternal redemption," their taking the ground of obedience in that conditional way was the mere putting themselves under wrath and curse. This we have seen. But viewed *as a type*, the light of the New Testament let in upon it shows us very distinctly the picture of that holy government of God under which, as His redeemed, we come. Even that which was of old said, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth, *therefore* I will punish you for your iniquities," contains a principle as distinctly recognized in the New Testament as it could be in the Old. A father corrects and chastens his own children, and not those of other people. So *our FATHER* "scourgeth every

son whom He receiveth." Wholesome and needed discipline; if painful yet most profitable! There is this in it that endears the sternest lessons to the heart of the saint: "He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness."

Thus upon the ground of being brought to God we come under the yoke of His commandments. The law is the type of this: *only* the type, for it is not under the law we come. It is not our "rule of life," and a very simple reason why is, that it *was* the Israelites. Thus it is plain that if a Christian be anything at all more or other than a Jew, the law could not possibly note such difference. In fact, while "holy, just and good," as of course it was, the Christian "rule" as given in Gal. vi. 15, is another thing. It is "in CHRIST . . . a *new* creation." The Christian is a "heavenly" man, as CHRIST is, (1 Cor. xv., 47, 48) and his rule is to walk as that, a pilgrim and stranger upon earth. This the law has nothing of. Had it been fulfilled it would have made earth morally a Paradise, and will when written on the hearts of Israel in Millennial days. But strangership and a heavenly walk it never taught.

Taken typically thus, the giving of the law is in perfect keeping, as at first it might not seem to be, with the character of this Redemption-book. Part of that redemption we might say it is, the bringing of those delivered from the old master under the holy and blessed authority of the Deliverer. This the second part of the book does, and it is in full moral unity with the first part. And however sternly evil may be dealt with, we, who see only the "bruised heel" upon the head of the serpent, can even rejoice in it. Would we have God less holy? would we have His ways less characteristic of Himself?

Thus, then, we read the scene at Sinai. In the *after-giving* of the law I learn, however, how even here the God of Judgment remembers that the creature he is dealing with is but dust. Even in government, holy as He is, He can, nevertheless, show patience and long-suffering mercy too. In judgment He remembers mercy. Surely His people daily realize that.

Still, He is upon the throne, and if long-suffering be shown, holiness is in no wise touched by it. He is in this way still One who "will by no means clear the guilty," for "what a man soweth that shall he also reap." (Gal. vi.) Where we would not take His judgment of sin to begin with, and by the *word of His lips* keep ourselves from the paths of the destroyer, His holy love allows us to reap such fruits of our folly as

makes us own in painful experience the rightness of His thoughts. Thus, one way or other, we do get His mind and judgment about things, and are made partakers of His holiness.

Yet is mercy shown. We reap *what* we sow, but who would say—to *the full extent* of what we sow? Oh, no, for it is our FATHER, who “without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work,” and it is not the exacting of mere penalty, as in the case of those who know not that blest and indissoluble relationship.

And notice the beauty of the type viewed in this way. For which of us knows not that “cleft of the rock” (ch. xxxiii. 22), from which alone the glory of Him who passeth by in the cloud of judgment can be rightly seen? Yet we must notice that even so, it is not His “face.” No, His ways of holy government are in question here, and in the path of His judgments we do not meet Him face to face. Read Exod. xxxiii. and xxxiv. in the light of Heb. xii., and it will be very plain how in verse 11 of the latter chapter we have a key to the interpretation of the former. From our own place of repose and of security, indeed, our “cleft of the rock,” CHRIST JESUS, alone can we behold aright the glory of Him who is (even as “our God”) “a consuming fire.” (Heb. xii. 29.) But even so “no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but rather grievous;” it is not in itself the same at all as the enjoyment of the sunshine of a presence where (as we sometimes sing) there is

“Not a cloud above”

to dim it; just as looking at ourselves as on the Beloved, there is

“Not a spot within”

to cause a cloud. Here we are in a different line of things, though not contradictory. The same grace is acting, for if there *be* spots, it is a Father’s eye discerns and a Father’s love deals with them. Still *chastening* is not in itself joyous, nor the undimmed manifestation of the blessed face of God. He is there, if He wrap Himself in the cloud; and I *know* He is. Still I read, “*afterward* it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby.” Thus it is, as with Moses, *after* that the glory passeth by, “I will take away My hand, and thou shalt see My back parts, but My face shall not be seen.” And still it is true we *have* seen

His face, but not there. Not in disciplinary dealings, but in the face only of His own beloved—JESUS CHRIST.

I notice as characteristic of this aspect of the law which I am speaking of, before the detailed commandments of chap. xxiii., &c., are given, worship is spoken of, the altar upon which alone sacrifice is to be offered. And as soon as we come to the detail, the blessed Servant, who has chosen freely perpetual service, because of unceasing and unwearying love, is put before us. We, too, must serve in the spirit of this love, and as worshippers—voluntarily (however due the service be) and adoringly.

Into detail I cannot go. My object is only a little mapping of the outline, that we may have some clearer idea of this region wherein lies the pure gold that needs no refining, and where all we can gather will be our own. May the LORD Himself guide us herein for His own glory. But I have yet to shew a little how the Tabernacle, and its system of undoubted types, connects itself with all that we have been looking at.

The Tabernacle, as its very name implies, has this for its central thought, that it is God's dwelling-place. "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them" (xxv. 8). This is the line of truth in Hebrews: a sanctuary accessible to a people in the wilderness; a throne of grace to which we may come boldly, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need. The "heavenly places" of Ephesians thus far differ in the mode of presentation from the "heavenly things" of Hebrews, that in Ephesians they are our dwelling-place—we are seated there, "seated together in heavenly places in CHRIST JESUS;" in Hebrews they are, as in Exodus, our wilderness-sanctuary, where, indeed, we have boldness of access,* and ability to worship, but into which we go as priests no doubt, but no less as pilgrims, as the sons of Aaron in Exodus were. And thus it is that in Hebrews we have the "High Priest over God's house," and not in Ephesians: not only precious blood which gives us boldness to enter in, but One there "able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." "Seeing, then, that we have a great High Priest, Who is passed into the Heavens, JESUS the SON of GOD, let us hold fast our profession, for we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as

* Only revealed fully in Hebrews, not Exodus.

we are, sin apart: let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need."

Such, then, is the aspect here. God is with us dwelling in a tent and in a tabernacle, refuge and help and worship of His people, borne tenderly, because of their infirmities, upon the breast and shoulders of their great High Priest before Him (Ex. xxix.); but who are now what Israel were conditionally promised, "a holy priesthood" (I. Pet. ii.), "a kingdom of priests and an holy nation." (Ex. xix. 6.) We must remember carefully what these types do not teach us here, that there are no outside worshippers allowed of God in the place the body of the people of Israel actually held, and that for us the veil is rent, and the way into the holiest of all, into the unveiled presence of God, made manifest.

The Tabernacle itself, as God's dwelling-place, has three applications in the Word of God. The heavens are His dwelling-place, and these are "the patterns of things in the heavens." (Heb. ix. 23.) Then, again, the "Word was made flesh, and (thus) dwelt"—literally *tabernacled*—"amongst us, and we beheld His glory." (John i.) There is the antitype of the Tabernacle. Divine glory in the man CHRIST JESUS. Thirdly, after speaking of the House of God, in which Moses was a servant, we find it said, "But CHRIST as a Son *over* His house, whose house are *we*." (Heb. iii. 6.) Just as I. Tim. ii. 15, "that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the House of God, which is the Church of the living God."

Thus, as connected with the types of Exodus, I find, as one redeemed to God, two spheres in which I have to walk before Him; in the wilderness outside, and in the house, the Church of GOD, in which I ought to know how to behave myself. Paul, it is to be noticed, gives the significant epithet which you find in Hebrews, as well as in Peter's confession of the LORD, "the *living* God." The "living" God is put in contrast with the scene of death, in which He works and shews His power and love. There would be no *need* to talk of His being a *living* God up in Heaven. Down here it is a grand thing for a pilgrim to have and to remember that he has with him a *living* God.

Well, God's house is the Church of the living God, and we heed to remember it; a house to which holiness belongs, and which CHRIST as Son is over; a house filled, too, with His beauty and glory, as the Tabernacle was with the types of

Him and of His work. There and thus in CHRIST, GOD manifests Himself, throned in glory between the Cherubim (the attributes of Him upon the throne), which, looking down upon the golden mercy-seat behold there the precious blood which satisfies and glorifies Him.

Still in the sanctuary was spread Jehovah's table, where the twelve loaves of the shew-bread fed, with what His own eye rested on with delight, the Priests of GOD—CHRIST, His people's food, GOD manifested in humanity—and where the pure light of the sanctuary (the ministry of the HOLY GHOST) replaced altogether the world's day-beams.

Outside the real "house"—the sanctuary—the altar of burnt offering stood, as the Cross in this lower world. There all question of sin was settled for those who drew near to God. The common people in Israel, in fact, approached no nearer than this brazen altar, as (alas) in spirit very many Christians stop there now. But it is not God's mind for any now, for *all* Christians are priests. Still it remains the way of approach for all who would for the first time approach, and they enter the sanctuary in the full, sweet savour of the accepted sacrifice.

But I cannot follow this out in detail further, I must commend my reader to the study of it for himself. After all this (ch. xxviii.) the priest is brought before us, a type of CHRIST, the connection of which, with what is here, we have already glanced out. Our place, too, as sons of Aaron, is given us along with His, and then the altar of incense, and the laver, and the holy anointing oil, all of which we have very plainly to do with in our connection with the house of God.

The failure of the people follows (xxxii.): it soon comes out how much we need the Priest; and then the glory of Jehovah manifesting itself in goodness even among a people such as this.

Lastly, the tabernacle is made, anointed, and set up, and the glory of the LORD fills it. May we look deeper at these things with attentive hearts and anointed eyes.

OUR FATHER'S CARE FOR US.

WE know that in GOD Himself there are two qualities that especially display themselves in dealing with His people. The first is His grace, the second His righteousness. In the Cross

of CHRIST the grace of GOD and the righteousness of GOD meet in perfect concord, and join in the blessing of the believer. So, in our daily walk with GOD, who does not find that His grace brings us into a certain position of blessing, where, if we fail, the LORD has a righteous government in which He chastizes us? This is the reason why you may find such an one much more troubled, so much more in sorrow, affliction and humiliation, because he is a child of GOD, if he have failed as a servant of GOD, and grieved the Spirit. The LORD does not abandon His love—His grace abides, as does its fruit also. Grace has brought that soul to GOD out of the world. Does GOD repent of His grace because the soul needs to repent, as having fallen into what is evil, grievous and humbling? Not so. Does GOD, then, say, "As he is My child, I pass all over"? No; He never passes over the faults of the Christian. There is where we learn the faithful, yet holy, provision of His love. His grace shall never be given up. On the other hand, His righteous government must always take its way. Hence it was with the Corinthians, who really were believers, as the Apostle was told when he went to the city—that city of corruption and vileness. The LORD had much people there; though if there was a spot in the world where the holy Apostle might have been afraid to put his foot and to live, it was Corinth. It was notoriously the vilest of the vile. But the LORD had much people there. At Athens, He had comparatively few people. But at Corinth, the Apostle had learnt what he could not have gathered otherwise, and therefore went on; and even when many of them went sally astray, falling into grievous disorder and sin, he did not give up his confidence that the LORD owned them as His people. But he told them, and told them in the most solemn manner, that if they did not judge themselves, they would be judged of the LORD; and that, when they were judged, they were chastened of Him, that they should not be condemned with the world. For with the LORD sin must be judged; sin can never be tolerated where He is named. If we, therefore, through carelessness, allow sin, one of two things is evident. If we have no portion in CHRIST, we must ourselves be judged for it everlastingly; and, if so, how can we be but lost? But if the grace of GOD has really brought us to Himself by JESUS CHRIST our LORD, He deals with us, sends affliction on us, and perhaps even takes away natural life (1 John v.), that we should not be condemned with the world. Thus the righteous government of GOD must

take its course and do its work; and this no less in mercy to us than in vindication of His own glory.

THE HEART LONGING AFTER THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

AN EXTRACT.

“I am inclined to think that this feeling in reference to ministry, is intimately connected with a deep personal longing after more profound, rich, abiding communion with the PERSON OF CHRIST, by the power of the Holy Ghost. . . . Nothing is of any value that does not spring from personal love to, and communion with CHRIST Himself. We may have Scripture at our finger ends; we may be able to preach with remarkable fluency, a fluency which unpractised spirits may easily mistake for “power;” but oh! if our hearts are not drinking deeply at the fountain-head—if they are not enlivened and invigorated by the realization of the love of CHRIST, it will all end in mere flash and smoke. I have learned . . . to be increasingly dissatisfied with everything, whether in myself or others, short of abiding, real, deep, divinely, inwrought communion with, and conformity to, the blessed Master. Crotchets I despise; mere opinions I dread; controversy I shrink from; all *isms* I esteem as utterly worthless. But . . . I long to know more of His Own Precious Person, His work, and His glory. And then, Oh! to live for Him; to labor, testify, preach, and pray, and all for CHRIST, and by the working of His grace in our hearts!”

“FRAGMENTS GATHERED UP.”

CHRIST is not only everlasting life to the soul that believes on Him, but He is the only source of fruit-bearing, all the course through, for those that have received Him. The secret is the heart occupied with Him, the soul dependent on Him. Himself the object in all trials, difficulties and duties even: so that, though a given thing be a duty, it be not done now barely as such, but with CHRIST before the eye of faith. But when there is not a life exercised in self-judgment and in enjoyment of CHRIST, as well as prayer, men get tired of this; they turn away from Him to the nostrums of the day, whether novel o

antique, rural or intellectual. They find their attraction in religious feelings, experiences, frames, or visions: in imagining some new good *self*, or in anatomizing the old bad self; in sacerdotalism, ordinances, or legalism, of one sort or another.

There are two great and evident consequences resulting from the place in which CHRIST has set us: one as looking towards the Father, the other as looking towards the world. The first grand truth on which *all* is based, is, that He places us *in the same condition, and where He Himself is*. When the LORD JESUS was down here, He presented a double aspect, one towards the Father, and one towards the world: and just so is it with the saint now. What is true of JESUS is true also of those who believe in Him. His joy being fulfilled in them.

“‘SURELY a serpent will bite without enchantment.’ (Eccles. x. 11). A serpent bites because it is a serpent: it wants an *opportunity* rather than a provocation: it is its nature. So, whatever may be a babbler’s pretext,—however pressing he may urge the reason to be, why he ‘ought’ to speak his mind, or ‘discharge his conscience,’ with respect to another’s failings, he babbles because he is a babbler. ‘God is not mocked,’ and knows how to distinguish between the exercise of a Christian grace, and the indulgence of a carnal propensity if I do not.”