

GRACE, REDEMPTION,
AND GLORY.

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GRACE FOR GRACE.

Made upon Made.

JOHN i. 16.

THEY who have visited the sea-side know what a beautiful and wonderful sight the sea is. As they have stood and watched on the shore one wave after the other brought in by the wind that blew, they have been enchanted at the sight, and the heart, if of a Christian, has gone up in praise to Him whose is the sea, who made it, and who, holding the wind in His fists, lets it out just at His own pleasure.

Now this is but a weak illustration of the wondrous grace of God, which knows neither measure nor end. God's grace is full

and free. It comes upon those who believe in Jesus, wave upon wave, and, reigning through righteousness, it streams forth in all its fulness from Him who is love, the God of all grace. Indeed I may say, that were we more alive to the ways and actings of God towards us, it would seem as though He invented occasions for the display of His favour to those who own the claims of His Son, believing on Him. Some know what it is to have sinned so much as to bring them to the belief that there could be no grace for them ; that they had sinned it all away, and that nothing but judgment was left for them. Some may have in this life to endure chastening, but it is that they may not be judged with the world by-and-by (1 Cor. xi.), and it is a wonderfully blessed thing to know that God does so love and care for us as to chasten us when we will not judge ourselves. But then, when one has passed thus under the chastening hand of God and has been restored to Him in peace, then it is one sees how He opens up channels for fresh outflows of His favour and love. Then He seems to turn every circumstance into an opportunity

for showing His grace, and in every detail of life, the hand of God, the Father, is known and felt ; the heart is thus kept in a quiet but happy state of praise and worship.

The favour then of God towards us who believe in Christ knows no bounds. It is infinite, and flows forth upon us wave upon wave. The greatest of all the expressions of the love of God, even the gift of His only begotten Son, is exhaustless in its effects to believers. The work of Christ on the cross was a finished work. God in all His characters and attributes was glorified in that work. His justice was once and for ever fully satisfied, Christ having drunk the cup that God's righteousness required of us sinners—the cup of wrath. (John xviii. 11.) The requirements of God's righteousness were indeed terrible ; but He who undertook to satisfy those demands was no less a One than the Christ of God—the Eternal Word made flesh. He, and He alone, could drink that awful cup. He did drink it, so that God might, in accordance with His holy and righteous character, make known all His favour. (Rom. i. 16, 18.)

The very moment Christ Jesus had satisfied

the just claims that God had against us, the veil of the temple, which had kept God hidden, and man at a distance from Him, was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and God was no longer concealed, but was made known in His nature—love. (Matt. xxvii. 51 ; 2 Cor. iv. 6.) The Son of God had indeed spoken of the Father as He walked up and down here on earth. He declared the Father's name unto the men God had given Him out of the world. (John xvii. 6.) He had, I say, spoken of the Father, but scarcely was He known and understood as such, until the Spirit of God came down as a rushing mighty wind, and brought home to the disciples this wondrous wave of grace, enabling them to know and to call God, Abba, Father. (Acts ii.) And thus it is with us who believe. We have been made sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. (Rom. viii. 15 ; Gal. iv. 5, 6.)

The veil has been for ever removed, and God the Father is made known to us by the Spirit, with nothing now to hide Him from

us, and not only so, but the kingdom of God's grace, where grace *reigns*, is opened to us; and into that we have access by Christ through faith, and there it is we find our present home. (Rom. v. 2-21.) The paradise on earth, where our first parents sinned, has been for ever closed against us; but the paradise of God, the garden of His delights, has been opened, not on earth, but *in heaven*, and *there* our God and Father, in the person of His Christ, is made known to us, and *there* in Him we find the only resting-place for our spirits and souls. (Luke xv. 22-24)

It was a marvellous thing that God should give His Son to die for us, so that we might be saved from eternal wrath; but that we should be made His sons and daughters, and that He should become our God and Father, is a wave of grace the fulness of which cannot be surpassed. (Ephes. i. 5, 6.) It is to the praise of the glory of His grace, and the blessed Lord Himself prayed that we all might be completely one in this divine family circle. He in whom the Father was, and He in the Father, would that we might be one in them, our relationship one, our fellowship the

same; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (John xvii. 20, 21 ; 1 John i. 3.)

Now this is no mere *idea*, but a divine, wondrous, and practical *reality*. We have been born of God, and so have a new and holy nature. The eternal life is in His Son, and in Him we have life, having been quickened together with Him. And thus it is we have a capacity whereby we can know God our Father, and enjoy common thoughts and desires with Him. We can enjoy the blessed relationship of children, and by the *indwelling* Holy Spirit can and do address God as Father. (Gal. iv. 6.)

It is often said, that "in the midst of life we are in death;" and I do not wish to quarrel with this expression, as I know what is meant to be conveyed by it; but still the real truth is, that with the true Christian it is, "In the midst of death we are in life." We are surrounded by death. All are in a state of *dying*, and ninety or a hundred years at most, and there is an end of the so-called life; so that it is death we are really in the midst of, and in such a scene the true believer has and is in

life : that life is Christ in heaven. (Col. iii. 3, 4; Rom. vi. 11.) The Holy Spirit of God leads our spirits up to the Fountain of Life in the glory, making us practically strangers and pilgrims here, and heaven our home. *There* is Christ our Life, and we live in Him, enjoying the blessed relationship of children to God, and Christ is not ashamed to call us His brethren. (Heb. ii. 11.) It is all life up *there*, and death reigns on earth.

And yet still further we read, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one : I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one ; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." (John xvii. 22, 23.) What a wondrous wave of grace is this ! Has the Holy Spirit brought it home to us ? and have I believed that God has loved and does love me, even to the extent that He loves His own Son ? The Lord Himself has said it, and the Spirit of God has caused the same to be written. I ask, Have you believed it, reader ? and has this wave of grace rolled into your spirit by

the power of the Holy Ghost? Thus there is then a perfect oneness in life and oneness in relationship; oneness in communion, and oneness in love, between Christ and the members of His body, and between God and His children, so that we may be all perfect in one.

Yet again there are further expressions of God's favour, and indeed it is wave upon wave, grace for grace. Jesus said to His Father, "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." (John xvii. 26.) What marvellous words are these! and we have been brought *to God Himself* in Christ in the *heavenly* places, to enjoy all this His love, that it may be in us and Christ in us. (Eph. i. 3, ii. 5, 6.) There is no distance now between us and God. Since the veil has been removed we are brought to Him, made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, clean every whit, and translated into the kingdom of the Son of His love. (Col. i. 13.) We have died with Christ to sin, the world, and all that was against us, and as new creatures in Christ

we have access into this grace whercin we stand. (Rom. v. 1, 2.) The heavens are opened, and in spirit it is our privilege to walk there with God in the unclouded sunshine of His favour, enjoying all the delights of His presence. He leads us along the river of His pleasures, and gives us to rejoice in that blessed sphere of peace, holiness, and liberty. (Ps. xxxvi. 7, 9.) We are brought to God. (1 Peter iii. 18.) We have access into His grace—we swim in the boundless ocean of His love. It is blessed to stand on the sea-shore of God's favour, watching and feeling the sweet influences of His grace flowing in upon our spirits wave upon wave; but how far more blessed is it to cast oneself wholly and unreservedly into the vast, unfathomable ocean of His love. (Ezek. xlvil. 5.) Not standing ankle or even knee-deep, but swimming in the very fulness and depths of His love immeasurable. There is no bottom to this sea of love. It is deep, deep, deep down in the very depths of God Himself (1 Cor. ii. 10.), who is Himself love—the infinite God. His love is a sphere, and you may take the wings of the morning and fly, and

fly—ah! fly to the very uttermost, and there will be a still further uttermost to fly to, and all will be love—nothing but love, higher than the heavens, deeper than the depths.

And now it may be asked, Why does God so love us? Impertinent question! some might reply; it is not for us mortals to make any such inquiry. It is presumption. God loves us, and that is quite enough for us. No doubt such would be a very proper answer to make, had there been any limit to God's love. There is no limit.

“We taste a love that knows no let,
Of Abba, as of God.”

God has not kept from us anything, not even the secret motives and principles on which He has loved us and acted toward us. He makes known to us all His counsels, purposes, and ways, and there is now no reserve on His part. (John xv. 15.) Christ has so glorified His Father and God on every question that His heart is fully and entirely open, so that He will not keep one secret back from those whom He loves. He reveals His whole mind to us, and even His eternal counsels, which

had been kept secret from prophets and kings in other times, concerning Himself, His Son, His people, yea, concerning *all* His truth, are now made known. (John xvi. 13.) If we are not learning Him and His ways, the reason is not on God's side, but on ours, because the Scriptures contain all truth, and the Holy Ghost is given us to lead us into it, and if we do not grieve Him He does so. Without reserve then God tells us *all*, and it is therefore no presumption to inquire into the *motives* of His love to us.

The reason why God has blessed us with the new birth, and made us His children, is because it is according to the good pleasure of His will. God has had a will concerning us, and that will is that we should be saved ; and that, being born of Him, we should be His own children, and therefore it is He has made us such. He intended from all eternity to have us to dwell with Him, and it was His sovereign grace that picked us up, and made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. It is solely of His own will and power that we have been begotten again by the word of truth, and this His will

is absolute ; *according* to which He has acted toward us. (James i. 18.)

Then, again, we have redemption and pardon ; why ? Because it is *according* to the riches of His grace, in which He has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence. (Eph. i. 7, 8.)

But still further, there is our inheritance ; for we are “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” And again I ask, why ? Not, however, by way of mere curiosity, but to show out that wonderful love of our God ; and how true it is His grace is a mighty ocean, which is rolled upon us wave upon wave, and which we can discern and enjoy, if we will but read God’s word in dependence upon His Spirit. Well, then, the reason we are made heirs, is because, and only because, it is “*according* to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” By his own hand, as it were, God is Himself carrying out His eternal purposes in saving and in blessing us, and by-and-by He will Himself work all that He has willed, *according* to His own absolute will, “in gathering together in one all things in Christ”—all things, both

which are in heaven and which are in earth, and we are to be sharers with Him in His inheritance. (Eph. i. 9-12.)

Is it not wonderful that we, whose sins crucified the Lord of glory, should thus be taken up of our God and Father, and made to have blessed access into His favour, and there, in the presence of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, learn from Himself all the secrets of the activity of His love towards us, and how that our sins never changed that love, nor caused Him to alter His purposes concerning us?

Now it must ever be remembered that the finished work of Christ on the cross, where He satisfied the justice of God, is the ground on which God now pours out all this His love and favour, wave upon wave.

But we might make this subject more personal and individual. No doubt many, putting themselves with the multitude of God's people, can see why God loved and saved *us*. But then, why did He love *me*? Why did He pass by that *noble*, that *moral*, yea, that *religious* man, and why did He pick me up? Why indeed? Well may the

question be put, and well may it awaken surprise. But what is the answer? It is but one—God willed it. He *would* have me. He purposed it in eternity; and I have turned out to be a vessel in which God can show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness towards me in Christ Jesus. (Eph. ii. 7.) Christ loved *me*, He gave Himself for *me*. He loved me so as to die for me, and having met all the claims that God had against me, I have been saved and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. (Eph. i. 3.) God says, moreover, that as Christ is so am I in this world, and that I am to be conformed to the image of His Son. (1 John iv. 17; Rom. viii. 29.) But not only so, He asks me to sit down with Him, to listen to Him telling out all His heart and mind towards me—the motives of His favour; and still more, He desires to interest me with all that interests Him, concerning the glory of His own Son.

Now all this is not the mere will of God in its hardness and severity, but it is love, and there is a delight in it all. We see it illustrated in the New Testament, in the case of

the prodigal son. The father *ran* to meet him, embraced and kissed him, and brought him home. He spread a feast for him, and they sat down together, and there was a general rejoicing. It was the father himself who called forth the joy, saying, "Let us make merry, for this my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found."

Then, again, we are told of the pleasure Christ has over His bride. It was for the *joy* that was set before Him that He endured the cross, despising the shame ; the joy of glorifying His Father, and of having us as His eternal companions in glory—His bride. He is now seated at the right hand of God, loving, caring for, and interesting Himself in that bride ; yea, in every individual member of His body. He awaits the time when the last member shall be ingathered by the Holy Ghost, and then He will come again and receive her to Himself, and present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing ; and so shall she be ever with her Lord. (John xiv. 3 ; Eph. v. 27 ; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.)

Such, then, is the wonderful love of the

Father and His Son towards us who have believed in Christ, as shown in their actings towards us. But now let us hear what God says in expression of the joy that He has over us. "For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." (Isaiah lxii. 5.) In these words we see that God's joy over us is of the highest character. The illustration He uses to give us to understand, is that of the bridegroom rejoicing over his bride, which is the highest joy known among men.

Turn again to Jer. xxxii. 41: "Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly, with my whole heart and with my whole soul." Here we have, not only the nature, but the extent of God's joy over His people. There is no half-heartedness, and no half-measures with God. It is His delight to do us good, and to settle us in our true place before Him, and He does so with His *whole* heart, and with His *whole* soul. We have said, God willed to save us, and so we are saved; but then it is not, as we hinted, a cold and severe decree,

but it is a will warmed by the warmth of His love, and animated by the joy of His heart. The fulness of His love and the depths of His joy actuated the will. But what a wave of grace is this, to know and feel that God acts toward us with *all* His heart and with *all* His soul.

Still, this is not all; for we read in Zeph. iii. 17, "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." Thus the joy of God over us is not only of the best and highest character, and the fullest in measure, but He joys over us with singing. This no doubt may be a figure of speech, but how it expresses the feelings of joy that God has towards those who believe in His Son. He is spoken of as singing over us in His joy. When we are very happy, we are not content with being quiet; our joy expresses itself in songs. So it is with our God and Father. He is not content in having cleansed us and brought us to Himself in His Christ; but having done so, He rejoices over us with singing. He has created us anew in Christ

Jesus. The breath of God indwells us, so that we are one Spirit with the Lord. This breath of God blows over His garden, and by doing so the sweet savour of Christ flows out in which God delights. We are a sweet savour of Christ to God. (2 Cor. ii. 15.)

What manner of people then ought we to be, delighting and refreshing the heart of our God and Father, by reckoning ourselves dead to all that which God hates ; and by living and exhibiting Him in whom is centred all His delights. Now it is the Holy Spirit in us who can alone take of Christ in us, and rejoice the heart of God ; and it is the same Spirit who takes of the things of Christ, and delights our hearts. What a wonderful person a true Christian is ! Christ is in him, and he is in Christ by the one Holy Spirit of God. (1 Cor. vi. 17.) This Holy Spirit is the bond of this wondrous union ; and He mutually rejoices the heart of the Head in heaven, and the hearts of the members of the one body of Christ.



WHAT GOD AND THE BELIEVER HAVE IN CHRIST'S ATONING WORK.

[The reader is earnestly requested to study the scriptures quoted.]

“**B**Y one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin,” is the solemn record of Romans v. 12, compared with Genesis iii. The serpent, Satan, the cruel adversary of man, the hidden enemy of our souls, was in the garden where the man was placed to inspire distrust of God. Man fell by disobedience and was completely separated from God; Adam became the head of a fallen race, and sin hath reigned unto death.

Could any way be found by which man could return to his God? The God who had been sinned against, the living God who had

been dishonoured, must reveal it. It was for Him to declare what could vindicate His character and name as God. The Lord God must show how, consistently with His holiness, righteousness, justice, and truth, mercy could flow down to guilty, sinful creatures.

He had to reveal also what could cleanse the sinner, and give him a title to be in His presence. He had to communicate a life to man dead in trespasses and sins, the divine nature capable of understanding and knowing God.

It is clear that God's heart of love and compassion must move towards man. His own arm of power must bring salvation. Atonement must be made by which God would be glorified, and but One, the anointed Man, could do this. The seed of the woman must bruise the serpent's head. The eternal Son, ever in the bosom of the Father, must come forth. He was ever God's resource (so to speak) ; whether for creation, or in providence, or in government, or to accomplish redemption, Jesus, the Lord of glory, the anointed Man, came to finish the work which God gave Him to do.

The humbled Man, in whom "dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. ii. 9), who in every way and by every work proved Himself to be the illustrious victim—the Lamb of God—went to the cross. He was crucified between two thieves, and went down into death to destroy its power.

He bore the wrath and judgment of God against sin, and not only put away sin for ever by the sacrifice of Himself, but perfectly, everlastingly glorified God by His work and death. And God, who gave the ransom and provided the substitute for man in His own Son, hath showed His estimate of His work, His delight in His beloved Son in raising Him up from among the dead, and crowning Him with glory and honour at His right hand, that faith and hope might be in God; and now He sends forth the glad tidings of salvation, a way open to Himself, by faith in that atoning blood, and in Him who has been glorified.

God has declared, that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7), that there is "redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins."

(Eph. i. 7.) And the Holy Ghost's witness is, "And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. x. 17.)

Atonement has thus been made for sin; God has been glorified by that work; the mercy-seat opened to the sinner; access to God by faith in the atoning blood has been revealed. There is reconciliation to God by the death of His Son. God is commanding men to repent, beseeching (as it were), by His servants, that men should be reconciled to Him; and he who has "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," finds through grace there is "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;" and what a word wherewith to plead before the throne of God! "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. viii. 32.)

God alone knows what sin really is, and abhors it. He alone can value, and does fully value, the sacrifice which has put it away. It is His estimate of the atoning blood that is worthy of it, not that of the awakened, quickened sinner; doubtless there would be reality

in that, but it would be *his* estimate, *his* feelings, whereas faith sees as God sees.

Peace is founded on His word, which has divine authority over the soul. Many a distressed one, looking into himself and judging according to his knowledge of the cross of Christ, fails in realizing the peace he longs for; whereas looking to Jesus crucified, and to Jesus glorified, and God's love in giving Him, and God's delight in Him and rest in His work, he may soon taste, not only peace with God, but the peace of God.

Exodus xii. would illustrate the above. It was said to the children of Israel, "The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are." But their security, their preservation from judgment, lay in the well-known words, "And when I see the blood I will pass over you."

The true ground of peace, that which could lead to the complete deliverance of His people, lay in what a holy God had found in the blood of the lamb; for God had come out as a judge. The children of Israel were sinners as the Egyptians, but the blood being before Him, God's own gift, the Israelites

were infallibly secure. The blood was their title as the blood of the Lamb of God is to believers in Christ Jesus. Indeed, that precious blood is the foundation of all God's dealings with men, even in the millennial kingdom, and in the new heavens and new earth. In this sense, "the Lamb of God taketh away the sin of the world." (John i. 29.)

It may be added here, that the believer, having eternal life, a life of great capacity if unhindered, needs power: life and power are distinct; for his deeper blessing the Holy Ghost, who taught him the value of the sacrifice, leads him on to behold the Person of the Lord Jesus in glory; to see Him with unveiled face, and know the transforming power of that sight. (See 2 Corinthians iii. 18; compare Acts vii. 53.) It is our distinct privilege and blessing to behold by faith the glory of the Lord in heaven, and faith loves to gaze on Him, the Man in supreme glory upon the Father's throne; and the eye and heart occupied with Him in true dependence, there is power "to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and to run with

patience the race that is set before us." (Heb. xii. 1.)

In Psalm xxii. we find the expression of the feelings and sufferings of the Lord on the cross. Here it is requisite to distinguish between the sufferings of Christ at the hands of men, and what He endured at the hand of the eternal God, when, having undertaken the tremendous responsibility of atoning for sin, He had to drink the all-absorbing cup to Him of the wrath of God: verses 6-18 would show what He endured from men for righteousness' sake, because of His faithfulness; in that suffering, His people (faithful to Him) may be called in their little measure to participate; but this could not be spoken of as atonement to God, though many confuse it with that work. What were all such sufferings, though felt by Him as only that blessed One could feel them, when compared with the hour when all the billows of God's wrath went over Him? When forsaken of His God, He cried, and could not be heard; *the* righteous Man, forsaken of God, and making His soul an offering for sin, He bore in His soul all that God had against sin in respect to His

people, and the fire of God's holiness consumed Him, as it were, on the altar, but found nothing but a sweet savour to His God.

It was a work, a divinely perfect work, finished when He bowed His sacred head in death—a work between God and His Son; (who else could have been in it?) an hour such as never could have been before or after. When He who could know no sin was made sin for us, and having through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, He made expiation for the guilt of man, which avails him who believes in His name, and obtained eternal redemption. (2 Cor. v. 21; Heb. ix.)

Having done that work by which He will reconcile all things to God, He has redeemed creation which now groans and travails in pain, and will deliver the creature itself into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. (Rom. viii. 21, 22.) The kingdom and the inheritance are all His as Son of man: His people, too, are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Him.

It is sweet to look on thus, as the psalm does, to the fruit of His mighty work. Now

raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, He is, as the ascended and exalted Man, the living proof and witness in heaven itself, that sin has been put away for ever for His people; that there is no hindrance to their approach; no veil, but immediate access to God. Reader, do you know the Lord Jesus as the Man in glory, who died for sinners? Have you bowed down before the cross? Do you receive Him? If so you are saved, your portion is peace with God, "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God."

In the epistle to the Hebrews, chapters ix. x., we find full light as to the atonement and its blessed consequences. In chapter ix. 12-14, we get the stupendous truth that Christ entered in once by His own blood into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption. That blessed One brought up, as it were, the atoning blood (as to its efficacy and value), under the eye of the eternal God, and it was accepted there. In that acceptance and in Him His people stand; the blood applied to the conscience, purging it, and giving title to the believer to enter with boldness into the holy of holies. (Chap. x. 19.) What

a portion is here revealed to the child of God ! that by the death of Jesus he has been brought in spirit and by faith into the presence of God, without spot or stain upon the soul, the conscience purified as well as sins purged away, so that he is without fear (which has torment) before God, with the sweet liberty "to serve the living God." Precious privilege ! no longer to be the servant of sin or of the world, but of the living God.

The reader will observe the all-importance of this truth, that the believer has immediate access to God ; he is there and ALWAYS there (as to his standing, that is, in spirit and by faith), in virtue of a work which has put away his sins ; he has a perfect divine title by the blood of Christ. It is *not* his condition or attainment, which so many being occupied with, fail to see their proper place and blessing (as to his walk and conversation he has to judge himself, and when failure or sin may arise to confess to God), but as to his standing and portion, he has been brought to God by the death of Jesus, as unchangeable in its value as the nature of Christ Himself. (1 Peter iii. 18.)

It is fitting to state, in conclusion, that atonement having thus been made, and God not only vindicated but fully glorified, so that grace reigns through righteousness (Rom. v. 21), there is the coming in of an Almighty God and Saviour, to rescue man out of his sin and misery. This is the other part of God's salvation for poor sinful man. The mighty Saviour delivers him not only from his sins, but from the power of Satan, communicating life, eternal life, and bringing him to God in a new creation.

A reference to Hebrews ii. 14, 15, compared with Zechariah iii. 1-5, wonderfully shows us that that blessed One who loved to call Himself "the Son of man who came to seek and to save the lost," took death, not only that He might fully glorify God in putting away sin for ever, but that He might deliver men from the power of the devil. (Heb. ii.)

The prophet vividly illustrates this: the trembling convicted sinner, typified by Joshua, hears that word of sweetest consolation. "*Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.*" What a deliverance (see ver. 1) from

sin and Satan's power ! The man transformed into a blood-cleansed worshipper in the garment of salvation !

A solemn question forces itself out here to any who may need it. Have you, dear reader, bowed down before the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ ? not merely with the general thought of being a sinful creature, but with a heartfelt conviction of guilt, of ruin, and of being lost ; as it is written, " When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the *ungodly*." God has revealed His name as Love, and His delight is in mercy ; but He will have men to submit to His Christ, His beloved Son, who has glorified Him by His work. His word solemnly assures us, " 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." May the reader who needs such a word hear His voice, who said when on earth, "*Every one who is of the truth heareth my voice.*" (Compare John v. 24, 25 ; also John x. 3, 4-16, 27-30.)

It is earnestly pressed, that while in the word of God salvation is offered to the sinner in sovereign grace, the state and condition of

soul of one receiving such mercy is insisted on—repentance towards God. “Come unto me, *all ye that labour and are heavy laden*, and I will give you rest” (Matt. xi. 28), said the gracious Lord. The conscience would be exercised, the heart broken; for it is a serious thing to have to do with the living God, to be *alone* with Him about our sins. Ought not repentance to be more earnestly insisted on? Remember that Laodicea is being formed (see Rev. iii. 14–22), and judgment is at hand. May God awaken souls!

May the precious children of God who are scattered abroad realize more deeply, through the Holy Spirit's power, their relationship to God the Father as children, and to the Lord Jesus “as members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.”

The Saviour of the Church is a glorified and heavenly Christ; rejected by the world, and dishonoured here, but exalted to the right hand of God. He has communicated to them a heavenly life, a resurrection life, *after He had put away their sins*. (See Ephesians ii. 1–10; Colossians ii. 13.) They are called to live Christ, to exhibit a heavenly

life as a people separated from the world which lieth in the wicked one. Oh that this were realized in some measure! that there might be an answer to that word in John xvii., "I am glorified in them;" that the Lord Jesus might so become the object of the affections of the heart, that they might enter into that heart-stirring relationship which we find in John, "The Bride, the Lamb's wife;" that thus the proper hope of the Church might be known, waiting for the Son from heaven (see 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17), their deliverer from the wrath to come. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." Thus the Church says to Him who reveals Himself "as the bright and morning star." (Rev. xxii. 16, 17.) May this hope be known by the Spirit of God in very many souls! Our Lord Jesus must have the first place in all things. The Creator Himself. Jehovah of the Old Testament. The Ancient of days, who will sit in judgment. The Lord of all. Head of the body the Church. Son of God and Son of the Father. The Anointed Man who loved us and gave Himself for us. The Coming One. To Him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.



REDEMPTION.

ROM. vi. 1-7; COL. iii. 1-5; EPH. ii. 4-8; GAL. ii. 20.

YOU will see, beloved friends, that several of these passages that I have read speak of our having died with Christ; and we have simply to ask the question, first of all, When was it that we died with Christ? The third and fourth verses of the sixth of Romans are very distinct on this point. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." We might, perhaps, turn to the second of Colossians,

before we proceed to refer to this more particularly. In the tenth and eleventh verses we read, "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power : in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, *in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.*"

Now, as I have said, most of these passages speak of the same thing—of our having died with Christ ; and in this lies the foundation of our standing *before God*. Because, you will see at once, it is not what we are actually, but what we are as before God. We are said to be baptized unto the death of Christ ; and the apostle uses this in the sixth of Romans as an argument why we should not continue in sin.

Now, it is a marvellous thing, if we consider it, that we, if believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, can be said to be before God as those who have died with Christ. Thus we see at once it is the light in which God regards us, His judicial estimate of us, as having died in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is brought out most distinctly in the sixth of Romans. We are said to have died with

Christ ; and the consequence is stated in the seventh verse, that "he that is dead is freed from sin." In the verse preceding this we are told, "Our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Here we get the secret of the whole thing. It is the old man that was crucified with the Lord Jesus Christ. My Adam nature or standing is therefore gone completely, because that I died, or was crucified, with Christ.

This is exceedingly simple ; but is it not the simple that we want to apprehend in power ? It is exceedingly easy for each one of us here to-night to say, "I have died with Christ ;" but what a marvellous thing it is, if I can walk in the midst of this world, saying that I as a child of Adam have no standing at all before God ! that my old man has been crucified with Christ ! Nothing short of this we understand as being set before us in the passage we are looking at, and indeed in several of the passages we have read ; for what can the apostle mean when he says, "I am (or have been) crucified with Christ" ? Does it not mean simply this : that, looking

back to the Lord Jesus Christ in death, and regarding himself as linked with Him in His death (by God's grace, of course), and seeing Him there as his substitute, meeting the judgment due to sin, and sins too, he is able to say truly, "That death was my death ; and therefore it is true before God that I have been crucified with the Lord Jesus Christ " ?

We do not forget that the facts of the case will often seem opposed to this statement of God's word ; and so the question meets us, How do I *know* that I was crucified with Christ ? May I not answer that by putting another question, How do I know that I am saved ? In the first place (to say nothing now of the witness of the Spirit), it is because I believe the testimony of God's word. How then do I know I have been crucified with Christ ? It is not an experience, it is not an attainment ; and ought we not to be very distinct and clear upon this point ? It is not experience. I don't *feel* that I have been crucified with Christ ; neither have I attained to this. But God tells me it is so ; and because He tells me so, I accept it, I believe it on the testimony of His word.

See then the practical influence of such a truth upon my walk, when it is held in power as it ought to be. What is it that troubles me most in my daily life? Is it not the old nature? Is it not the flesh that is still in me? Yes, it is quite true that I have the flesh in me; but *God* has put it in the place of death. There it is for Him, and so I can look back to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, and say, "Yes, I was crucified with Christ, and so I, as far as my old nature or Adam-standing is concerned, am gone altogether out of God's sight." What power it thus gives me! because, if God has put this flesh of mine into the place of death, where ought I to keep it? We get the answer to the question in the tenth and eleventh verses: "For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*"

Another aspect of the same thing may be found in chap. viii. 12: "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do

mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." And so the practical power is just in this—God has put me, that is, my old man, in the place of death. I was crucified with Christ, and therefore I have, through the Spirit, to keep it just where He puts it. Since I am justified from sin, sin has no claim upon me, nor the flesh either; and therefore in the power of the Spirit I yield not to the flesh—I recognize not its claims. God has delivered me from it, and has given me a standing outside of it altogether, because He regards me as having been put to death in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The object is—and here responsibility comes in—"that the body of sin might be destroyed" (that is, annulled, brought to nought), "that henceforth we should not serve sin." Here then is the practical responsibility. Am I dead? Then I must not yield to sin. And just in proportion as I do yield to sin, I practically deny my standing. The Spirit of God is always careful to connect responsibility with standing. If I sin, I deny in practice my standing. If the flesh is active, I deny in the same way the

fact that I was crucified with Christ. I repeat it, see how practical this may become in our daily lives. Many of us to-day, it may be, have had things round about us to irritate us. It may be that the wheels of life have not run smoothly in our homes, or in our places of business. Have I been irritated? Then the flesh has come into activity, and in so far I deny that I am a dead man; I have yielded to the old man, and so denied my standing in Christ Jesus. Because my standing, as we shall see, is the measure of my responsibility. If God regards me as dead, I have also to regard myself as dead. I have to "reckon" myself dead. Of course, if I were actually dead, I need not "reckon" myself so; but because He regards me as dead, I have to reckon myself such. That is, my standing is the measure of my responsibility. God looks upon me, then, as having died to sin, being dead to it, and on that foundation we get the exhortation, "Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

We turn now to another aspect, that which we find in Col. iii. It is not simply death

here, but resurrection ; and the two things are linked together in baptism. That you see in chap. ii. 12. Then we get in chap. iii. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above ;" that is, responsibility is brought in as connected with our resurrection with Christ as well as with our having died with Him.

First of all, however, we have the fact here stated. I need not dwell upon the "if"—an "if" of responsibility, as it is termed ; but the fact is given us, that we are regarded as having been raised with Christ—not simply therefore dead, but raised with Christ ; and so we get the double aspect of our standing. In that respect, and on that fact, is founded the exhortation to "seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." But then we get, in the second and third verses, a further exposition of this. The apostle says, "Set your affection (mind) on things above, not on things on the earth ; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." And thus the responsibility of being raised with Christ is to set my affection on things above. I am clean out of this scene

altogether ; I belong not to it, because I have died out of it in the death of Christ. Through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus I have been brought into a new place, a new scene, which is to characterize my life down here. My affections are to be set on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. The expression of the life down here is to be in accordance with the place given me by God through the death and resurrection of Christ.

We shall all feel how wonderfully practical this is. Am I risen with Christ? If so, do I set my affections on things above, where Christ sitteth? The Spirit of God does not permit us to say, as a cloke for licentiousness, "I am risen with Christ;" quite the contrary. I remember once speaking on this point to a professed believer, one indeed who prided himself upon the fact of being a believer, but whose life was anything but what it should be. His answer to me was, "I am a child of God;" and he was using this profession to cover his laxity and failure in responsibility. No; God's Spirit does not allow that. As we saw in Rom. viii., "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." The life is to be the evidence,

in one sense, of what I am ; and if a person says, " I am risen with Christ," and yet has his affections set on things here, what then ? I don't say there may not be inconsistencies in walk. We know there are. But what I say is this, On this foundation we have before us, I am not entitled to say I am risen with Christ, if all my life down here partakes of the character of the scene through which I am passing. No ; if we have life in the risen Christ, that life will find an outward expression. It is Christ Himself who is my life ; that is brought out here—" When Christ, who is our life." If He is my life, He must be expressed ; and if He be not expressed, then I have reason to doubt that He is my life. Is it not so ? This is a familiar truth ; but do we not need to press it upon our souls—upon our hearts and consciences as before God ? For what is the character of my life now ? Ought I not to search myself in this matter ? Ought I not to bring myself into the presence of such a Scripture as this, and say, " Well, I *do* profess to be thus risen with Christ. Am I, then, now seeking the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of

God?" A saint said to me the other day, speaking of herself and her husband (both believers of long standing), and accounting for the fact that they were seldom seen at the meetings, "We have our business to attend to, and must do it; that is the first thing we have to do." Well, "if ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." How do these two things correspond? We cannot claim a standing unless we accept the responsibility. That is the point brought before us—the measure of my responsibility exactly corresponds with my standing; and if I am in Christ, He expects me to walk as a risen one, so that even enemies may see in me some likeness to my blessed Lord.

Another saint recently said to me, "Well, but after all we are *down here*." Undoubtedly we *are* down here. But that is not the point. The thing is, being down here, ought we not to express the life of Christ? He is my life, I am in Him risen, and therefore if I do not set my affections on things above, I ought to search my own heart, and ascertain whether I can truly say that I *am* risen with Him. After all, it comes simply to this—

What is the heart occupied with? If my heart is occupied with the Risen One, I shall soon be lifted out of this present scene. If He fill my gaze, I shall be blind to the fairest sights on earth, and I shall be deaf to its sweetest sounds. It is entirely a question of affection. Does He fill my heart? Does He occupy me? Not simply am I occupied with Him. The two are connected. If I am occupied with Him, He will be occupied in manifesting Himself to me; and if that is the case, I shall do everything down here as *to Him*, and of necessity my affections will be set on things above, where He sits on the right hand of God.

I might go farther. If I understand the place into which I am brought, shall I not be exceedingly *familiar* with that place? Shall I not be more familiar with it than with things down here? And yet do not many of us pride ourselves upon the practical wisdom we possess in the things of earth. Another saint said to me that he had been thrown back upon himself by finding this—he had been in the habit of reading the newspaper every morning, and found, on reckoning up

the time occupied in that way, that he had spent more time on his newspaper than on the word of God. God gave him grace to judge it and put it away; but it shows us how easily we may fall into a practical denial of our being dead and risen with Christ; and thus it behoves us to remember the responsibility we have as being put into this position.

Shall we now turn to the next passage I read, Eph. ii. 6? "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." So that we are brought not simply through death into resurrection, but we are seated (not *with*, but) *in* Christ in heavenly places. What then is my standing? It is there in Christ where He is. Nothing short of it. It is not simply that I am raised together with Christ down here *where I am*. No, I am carried farther; I am seated in Christ *where He is* in the glory. That is my place. Oh, what marvellous grace, that God in mercy should have come down to us, to meet us when dead in trespasses and sins, and have quickened us with Christ, raised us up together, made us sit together in

heavenly places in Him! Always before Him, in His presence!

I suppose there is no passage more familiar to us than this one. We speak so much of the wondrous place of blessing into which we are brought. We, above all others, then ought to understand the responsibility of it. Yes, if I *am* a heavenly one—for it comes to that—I have to *live* as a heavenly one in Christ where He is. What a marvellous place it is! I raise my eye of faith, and I see Him glorified at God's right hand; and if I want to understand the full character of my redemption, I can only get it by just looking at Him. He is the measure of it, and so it is quite true in the verse we sometimes sing—

“So near, so very near to God,
More near I cannot be;
For in the Person of His Son,
I am as near as He.”

We are brought then right home to God; and the very presence of God is our home, and being our home, it should be there that our hearts should dwell. What would you think of any one, in a human way, whose heart was never in his own home, whose

heart, when in business, did not turn back to the home where his loved ones were? A strange husband, or father, as the case might be! But what would you say of the believer whose heart seldom or never turned to the place where he is seated in Christ? I think it is Payson who mentions three classes of believers. They may not be found here, but yet they are sometimes found. He describes one class as busy with earthly things; so busy that their backs are turned to the Lord Jesus. Another class he speaks of whose faces are turned only now and then towards Christ. The third class are standing, as he describes it, with faces always upward in the full light of His presence. To which of these classes do we belong? If we understand the place we have got through death and resurrection, and being seated in Christ, surely our hearts will ever be with Christ, and our eyes will ever be gazing upon Him. There is nothing saints sing more readily than that verse—

“ Oh, fix our earnest gaze
So wholly, Lord, on Thee,
That with Thy beauty occupied,
We elsewhere none may see ! ”

and yet in our daily walk how easily are our thoughts, our hearts, taken up and occupied with the many things going on around us!

Ah, beloved friends, if we had full perception of the place into which we have been brought, and if the heart dwelt in that place, if we *are* gazing upon Him and getting any glimpse of His beauty, surely we shall not wish to see any beauty elsewhere! May we understand the responsibility of our place and position.

But let me pass on to the responsibility in a more distinct form, as brought out in other passages. I have spoken simply of death, and resurrection, and being seated in Christ in heavenly places; but now what is my responsibility down here as to walk, *because* of the place and the standing I have in Him? To give the answer, first, in the most general form, let us turn to I John ii. 6. This is not connected with standing, but it brings out the thought I want to express. "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." And so it is then that I am in Christ where He is; and also the converse of that, Christ is in me down

here. "He that saith he abideth in him"—that is communion—"ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." Thus the general responsibility is to walk as Christ walked. How was that? Turn to John iii. 13: "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is *in heaven*." So that even when He was here on the earth, Jesus was able to say, "*in heaven*;" or, putting it in other words, He walked as the Heavenly One upon the earth, as being in heaven while upon the earth. A model for us! We then have to walk, not as belonging to this scene, but to that place in which we are seated in Christ; so that it may be true in spirit of us as it was true of Christ—in heaven while upon the earth. And oh, what a different character it would give to our lives if this were the case! An expression of Christ, not simply in words, but in acts; yea, in all things, the life of Christ expressed in us and by us, in our walk and conversation.

We may get more distinct forms of this expression; for instance, Eph. v. 2. This is based upon the fact of our being children of

God; and we get a characteristic of walk, and a very important one, brought out. The apostle says, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, even as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." In this respect also I have to walk as Christ did—"in love, even as he hath loved us." Turn also to John xiii. 14: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you;" also verse 17: "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." But what I want to bring before you specially is in Eph. v. 2. We are to imitate Christ, then, simply because of what we are, and the place we occupy. And then we have this example set before us here; and it is wonderful the terms in which we have it described. He "hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." The apostle John also brings this out in his first epistle. I will read it just in passing. Chap. iii. 16: "Hereby

perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." And what else? "And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." So that the love of Christ ought to be our model in this expression of it—love even to death. But in the verse I read out of Ephesians, we have the important truth, that while Christ loved us, and gave Himself for us, it was "an offering and a sacrifice *to God* for a sweet-smelling savour." The expression of our love, therefore, must not have the saints for its object, but it must be God Himself; and this love can only be expressed in obedience, not otherwise. It is exceedingly important to remember this. We might be tempted—many are—to think that we must *exhibit* love under all circumstances. Not so; the expression of the love must be governed by the word of God; and so the glory of God is to be the first thing. "He gave Himself for us." Yes; but it is "an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." I suppose there is no snare so great as that which pleads for charity towards all, in the sense that we must not exclude any from the Lord's table, which is

quite true so far as it goes ; but we must except those whom God's word excludes. The love must be expressed in obedience to God. It must have God for its object ; and therefore, if I go outside of His word, I am making my fellow-believer the object, and not God. We thus get the true character of love : unless it has God for its object, it is not the love that Christ exhibited when He gave Himself for us. We have to imitate Christ ; that is our responsibility.

There is one other aspect which I cannot refer to to-night. We have it in 1 Peter ii. 20. It shows our responsibility towards persecutors and foes. We have to imitate Christ in this also.

But I now turn to the last passage we read, Gal. ii. 20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." There will scarcely be a difference of judgment as to the first words of this verse ; for is it not true that every one of us can say—that is, if we are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ—"I *have been* crucified with Christ" ? But is it also true that we can say, "Nevertheless I live ; yet not I" ? Has it been true

of me to-day? Has none of the flesh been expressed, none of the old life? Can we say of *our* lives to-day, *I* have not lived; but Christ has lived in me? The apostle says it. Can we say it? We have thus again the whole of the responsibility of my standing, it is Christ in me down here; and because He is in me, He is to be expressed in all that I am. Oh what marvellous saints we should be if this were the case! If I could see in you, fellow-believer, and you could see in me, nothing but Christ! And yet how often we say, "Oh, but there are peculiarities of character, temper, and disposition, to be accounted for!" But am I not dead? Where then can be the peculiarities? Are we buried as to the old self in the grave of Christ? Surely not, if these things are manifested. In God's sight we are, and that is the blessedness of it—the old man is gone completely; but now we are speaking of responsibility, and I want to press it upon my own heart and yours. Is it true of me and you that *we* don't live; but Christ lives in us? Is it true in our relationships with the saints, for instance? Have they seen anything but

Christ in us when assembled together in the name of the Lord Jesus—gathered together in the power of His Spirit? Have we all exhibited Christ, and not ourselves? Has the word spoken, the hymns sung, the worship offered, all been an expression of Christ? In my home, through the past week, has it been so? Have the unconverted ones, as they looked at me, said, What a power is expressed in that life! In my place of business have those round about me been constrained to say, What a marvellous life it is! I happened to say once to the principal, I think it was, of a house of business, when speaking of a young man in his employ, that he was a believer. What was his reply? “I didn’t know it.” How was that? Perhaps, you will say, the principal had not eyes to see. But I want to ask you this, Should there be a believer anywhere, and not be known? Should it be so? Was it so in the early days? Ah, but you say to me in reply to that, The days were so different. They were; but I want to ask you this, Was the expression of the life of Christ different? He has not changed, and why should the expression

change? Do you mean to tell me that the world is more like Christ than it was then? No doubt the world has lessened the violence of its hostility and opposition in manifestation; but is not the world the same? Ought there not to be the same complete separation? Yes; we are in danger of sliding back, because we think we have a separate place, and are quite safe. Let it not be so with us. This is the truth I want to bring out—I have nothing to do but to express Christ; and there was one who did it, I suppose, in a measure that no saint has ever attained to since. He said, “To me to live is Christ;” nothing else. Now, will that one word sum up the whole of my life? Is He the one object? Is it Christ *in* me. If not, then I am not recognizing my responsibility. What then ought I to do? To go in self-judgment into the presence of God, and confess it, and seek for more grace.

And then see also that, in this marvellous place which He has given to us He is able to say to us, “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwelleth in you.” The Spirit of God charac-

terises all my existence before Him, so that the flesh is completely gone out of His sight, and only Christ remains, and we in Him.

But then we must still bear in mind the other side—Christ in me down here; and all my work is to express Christ in every possible way. We are to express Him, not only when we are having Christian fellowship, but everywhere, at all times, and all seasons. But is it not possible for the saints themselves to come between us and Christ? I put the question as a test. I would put it to myself as well as you. Am I happier in fellowship with saints than I am in the presence of Christ? Some of you would say at once, "Why, of course we are happier in the presence of Christ." But think before you answer. Are you? Do you find as much joy in solitary fellowship with Christ as you do in fellowship with the saints, it may be over the Word, or when privately together? Now it is not a question easy to answer. I have found out from my own experience, that an hour or two will soon slip away in happy fellowship with saints. Do we know anything about an hour or two "slipping away" in the presence of Christ?

Do not put the question aside ; for we must face it, and answer it. And be sure of this, we have no power of sustained communion, unless we can answer it, and say, "Happier in the presence of Christ than in the presence of the saints ; happier with Him, dwelling with Him, in communion with Him, than even with the most Christ-like of God's people." Why ? Because the most Christ-like of all His people will but approximate to the expression of what He is. Can you point me out a single saint of your acquaintance of whom you can say, "Exactly like Christ" ? No ! Well, then, if you are happier with the saints than with Him, it shows that you do not appreciate Christ as you ought. Hence I want you to answer that question, "Where are you the happier, with the saints, or with Christ ?"

Conscious that I have not expounded the subject as I fain would do, yet if you but remember this one thing, that you have nothing to do but to live Christ, I shall feel that the Lord has not sent me in vain. Distinctive truth has its place, and thank God we have got it ; and some of us who have had difficulty

in getting hold of it may feel that more than others; but after all, the one thing is *living Christ*. I do not know how to express it more strongly. I go back to it once more. Are we in Christ *there*, and is He in us *here*? Suppose then we commenced to-morrow by saying, "Christ in me;" or when we awake in the morning, let the first thought be, "Henceforth I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:" as we go to the duties that God may have for us in the day, let us say, "Henceforth I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" and when we go back into the bosom of our families, with our children round about us, let us still be saying the same thing; and then the marvellous power of the Spirit of God will be free to work in us and by us, so that even the unconverted will confess that there is something about us that they cannot understand. We have not half the power we ought to have; and the reason of our weakness is, that the picture of Christ in our lives is so indistinct. What did He do? Express the Father perfectly. Our work is to express Him, and *only* express Him! Keep that object before you—only Christ, because you are *in Him where He is*!



GLORY.

IN approaching the word of God, it is of the last moment that we exercise the spirit of the Bereans. The Bereans received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, to see whether the things they heard were according to that standard. It is often found that Christians come to the Scriptures with preconceived opinions ; and anything that clashes with them is at once rejected, or anything new is often condemned, without even a reasonable hearing. Now, I say, this is not receiving the Word with all readiness of mind, neither is it searching the Scriptures, to see if it be so or not. To expect such a spirit to get on in divine knowledge is quite hopeless. It is simply impossible. I ask an attentive

and prayerful reading. I ask you to hold your minds in *readiness* to receive anything that God declares, however much it may clash with previously received impressions.

In order to understand the truth of God in general, and prophecy in particular, it is necessary to know how rightly to *divide* the word of truth, and not to jumble it together. (2 Tim. ii. 15.) God's economy with man is divided into several periods or dispensations, having characteristics peculiar and distinct to each. We shall hope to consider these divisions in the course of this paper.

The church of God, I believe, is the key to prophecy ; and I believe it is impossible to understand prophecy until the peculiarity and the uniqueness of the church of God is apprehended. Unless we rightly understand the distinctive feature of this present dispensation of the grace of God—that is to say, a taking out of the whole world a people to His name (Acts xv. 14), forming that people into one body (1 Cor. xii.), which is the complement, the development, or the fulness of Him who filleth all in all (Eph. i. 22, 23), which body has been predestinated to the praise of the

glory of His grace (Eph. ii.), and is to be throughout all future ages (and now indeed in some measure) the reflection of the divine glory, and the manifestation of all the perfections of the person of the Christ of God. It is the one pearl of great price to be the great ornament in heaven, the chief treasure of the heart of Christ. I say, unless we understand this, the Scriptures of *prophecy* are but confusion to us.

Now at the close of the millennium there will have been eight dispensations or periods in the dealings of God with man. I will as briefly as possible run through them ; the earlier ones will need but a very few remarks.

The Adam in innocency forms the first dispensation. Man created in the image of God, and woman built out of and in the image of the man, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, formed *the* Adam. God called *their* name Adam. (Gen. v. 2.) This, I need scarcely say, is a type of Christ and the Church forming one body—the Christ of God, or the second Adam, as taught in Ephes. v. They were placed in the garden, blessed with *earthly* blessings, having all

creation in willing subjection, and enjoying in some measure communion with God the Creator. One thing was given them as a test of their fidelity. Do this, and die. They failed; they distrusted God; and therefore God drove them from the garden, and in mercy put cherubims at the entrance of Eden, lest they should go back and take of the tree of life, and live for ever in a state of misery. God had something better in store for man.

Man as a sinner driven from the presence of God, to the time of Noah, forms the second period or dispensation. Man did not improve, but went on from bad to worse, until all flesh had become corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. Noah, however, finds grace in the sight of God, who, with his wife, sons, and their wives, is saved in the ark, while all the rest are destroyed by the flood. Thus the two first dispensations close with sin and judgment. Be it, however, remembered that Enoch was caught away before the judgments on the earth—as a type of the Church caught away before the troubles yet to come. (1 Thess. iv. 17.) So, too, be it remembered, that there were a few owned of

God on earth, who passed through the flood in safety—a type, I believe, of the remnant of Jewish saints who will pass through the great tribulation under the protection of God. (Rev. vii.)

Noah leaves the ark, and a new dispensation commences. God establishes His first covenant with man. “Behold, I do establish my covenant with you and your seed after you. I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a token between me and the earth.” This is the first covenant mentioned in Scripture. It is a *free* and *unconditional* covenant; it was based on sacrifice; it is an everlasting covenant which shall not fail. “And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every living thing as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and

day and night shall not cease." (Gen. viii. 20-22.)

The specific characteristics of this dispensation are stated in Gen. ix. The fear of us and the dread of us is to be upon every animal. Every moving thing that liveth to be meat. Flesh and the life thereof shall not be eaten. Man's blood shall be avenged by man.

In spite of all this expression of God's love man did not improve, but grew still worse. Not only did corruption and violence go on, but now he sets aside the only true God. In a spirit of concerted and determined independence man sought to establish a centre of his own, as seen in the tower of Babel. "And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad on the face of the whole earth" (Gen. xi. 4.) In judgment God came and confused their language. Still they repented not, but went on in increased opposition to God until the time of Abram's call, when all, including the father of Abram and his house, were sunken in idolatry. (Josh. xxiv. 2.) All flesh had departed from God.

What was God then to do? He had blessed man in the garden, but man distrusted his God. In Noah's time God looked on the earth, and it was filled with corruption and violence. Now a third time He beholds man, and all have declared themselves against God and in favour of idols. What then, I ask, is God to do? Blessing has failed to secure the heart of man to God. Judgment has failed too. The only thing that God can do, if He is to have any of mankind as His own, is to put forth His sovereignty and power, and compel those to follow and serve Him whom He will.

For two thousand years God had dealt with man universally, and man had only proved himself to be opposed to God in spirit, soul, and body. So now God comes in in grace, and says, I will take up a family and nation, and see whether man will serve me then. Hence we find God calling out Abram from his country and father's house, to a land that He would show him. (Gen. xii.) Abram obeys the call, and leaves his country to walk a path of faith, God promising him the land, and to make of him a great nation. Thus

a new dispensation commences. Abram begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs, who went down into Egypt, and there became a great nation, but under the power and dominion of a Gentile monarch. A Pharaoh who knew not Joseph, neither Joseph's God, kept them in bondage, and dealt very hardly with them. They cry to their God, who hears their cry and raises up Moses, who under God delivers a redeemed people out of Egypt to walk a life of faith with God. They are delivered and pass through the Red Sea and the wilderness until they come to mount Sinai, where a new state of things commences—*a fourth dispensation*; they have been walking by faith, now it is to be by rule. God here offers His people the law, saying, Do this and live. I say God offered them the law, and they accepted it. The law was not pressed upon them. I believe Israel might have refused it; nay, I think they ought to have done so. They willingly accepted the offer, saying, All this we will do. (Exod. xix. 8.) Thus giving up a life of faith and setting themselves to obtain and keep by their own efforts what really

depended upon the promise of God to Abraham. This was a simple impossibility, and happily the promise to Abraham stands good, and the law which was given four hundred and thirty years after cannot disannul it (Gal. iii. 17.) God will be true to His promise, however man may have failed. The life and walk of faith was however set aside for a time. God's people were under law in order that they might in a more decided manner than ever be concluded under sin; so that, after all, the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might come on them who work not but *believe*. (Rom. v. 20; vii. 13.) However, until faith came they must be kept under law, shut up unto the faith which was to be revealed. (Gal. iii. 22-25.)

All the promises to Abraham will be fully verified. The land was specially named to him as his portion. Stephen tells us that he had not had so much as to set his foot on. God will be true to His promise, and the day will yet come when the land will be Abraham's; the law will not disannul the promises.

Israel, then, having accepted the law, Moses returns to God, who writes it on two tables of

stone—a law which was a ministry of condemnation and death ; given that the offence might abound, and is broken as soon as accepted. (Exod. xxxii. ; 2 Cor. iii. 7, 9 ; Rom. v. 20.) It could not have been otherwise. The law was and is, holy, just, and good, demanding strict obedience, but they who received it were the very reverse. Man is carnal, sold under sin. His nature is corrupt, and therefore conflict must be the result in bringing the law in contact with the flesh. God had, however, at all times a remnant saved by the power and operation of the Holy Ghost—a remnant according to the election of grace. So by-and-by, as we shall see, when Israel returns in unbelief God will by His grace call out by the Holy Ghost a remnant to own Him only as the one God.

Man becomes still worse. I say man, but I mean that section of mankind, the Jews ; for we are now dealing with a *special* people, taken out of the world—the people and nation of God.

It must be here observed, that when God is dealing with Israel, it is Israel He is dealing with, and no other people. God has one sub-

ject or object before Him at a time. This is true throughout all the dispensations. To anticipate for a moment the time in which *we* are living, God has before Him the Church, and it is the Church only that is occupying His heart and mind. By-and-by He will have the Jews again as Jews. He will send a messenger to measure the temple, but the court of the *Gentiles* He will direct not to be measured, because He will be on *Jewish* ground, and on *Jewish* only. Further, I find if God had fixed a time, and He had for the existence of the Jewish economy, that time He will have; and if Israel is carried into captivity by the Gentiles, as she was seven times during the Judges, these times of servitude are not recognised by God, but it is so much cancelled, or lost time.* This can be proved, and I mention it here to justify the statement, that when God deals with Jews, He deals with Jews only. God never confounds things that differ; He keeps things distinct and in their right place and order. But to return.

The Jews under law only went on worse

* See the *Cycle of Seventy Weeks*, by Sir E. Denny.

and worse ; they set aside God their ruler, and desired a king like the nations around, and God granted them their request. Under the kings there was a still greater development of man's evil nature. The true God is again set aside, and idols set up in His stead. God sent them prophets, who appealed to their hearts and consciences, telling them of God's covenant with their fathers. They foretold that God would bring Israel into judgment, and purge them as silver is purged ; and that in spite of all their sin and rebellion, He would finally establish His kingdom in righteousness, and would set the Messiah on His throne, who should reign before His ancients gloriously. (Isa. xxiv. 23.)

God's *Jewish* dispensation, which, as we have seen, commenced with the call of Abraham, goes on up to the time of Christ, who is born a Jew of the tribe of Judah and Israel's king, but is eventually cut off. The time for the first Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ having arrived, He is ushered in according to the prophet (Mal. iii. 1 ; John i. 6, 7), by a messenger, one who has come with a mission to prepare the hearts of the people for the

coming Messiah. John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. "As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the *way of the Lord*, make his *paths straight*. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low ; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." (Luke iii. 4-6.)

Now, please mark the distinct and peculiar testimony of John. John and his disciples went forth preaching, "Behold, the *kingdom* of heaven is at hand." He had come to prepare the way for the *coming King*. He had no other thought than this. His gospel was the gospel of the kingdom. He proclaimed the coming King ; the law prophesied until John (Matt. xi. 13), but John was more than a prophet (Matt. xi. 9), and he *declared* the immediate approach of the *kingdom*—not prophesied of it, but *declared* it. He looked, and Israel looked too, and some were really waiting for the establishment of the millenium. (Luke xxiv. 21 ; Acts i. 6.) The law

and the prophets were until John, and since that time the *kingdom* of God is preached or proclaimed. (Luke xvi. 16.) The coming of Jesus, to die for our sins, was not at all clearly before them. The disciples of our Lord Himself did not understand this. They would have kept Him from going to the cross if they could. (Matt. xvi. 22.) They were expecting the *kingdom*, and were very much perplexed when Jesus was crucified, supposing that it had been He who would have redeemed Israel. (Luke xxiv. 21.)

John, for his testimony to the truth, was cast into prison, whereupon (Luke iii. 9-23) Christ comes forth, full of grace and truth, *introducing a new dispensation*. (John i. 14.) The *law* was given by Moses, *grace and truth* came by Jesus Christ. (John i. 17.) The law and the prophets were *until John*—Christ was the *end* of the law. (Rom. x. 4) Grace, which is in opposition to law, and can have no affinity to it whatever, came by Jesus Christ, *introducing* what the Scripture calls the dispensation of the *grace* of God. (Eph. iii. 2.) Grace and law lose their essential nature and characteristics the moment it is attempted

to unite them. (Rom. xi. 6.) They will not amalgamate. It is a dispensation of grace—*grace reigning* through righteousness. (Rom. v.)

The mission of Moses, then, was one of law—a law of condemnation and death (2 Cor. iii. 7–9); that of Christ was one of *grace* and truth—life, justification, and peace. (Rom. v. 1–18.) He came, a fountain filled with them, to bring in a new order of things, to set aside the old. He came, not to repair the old creation, but as Head of a *new* creation. Man, in all previous times, whether under blessing or judgment, was only proved to be altogether bad. Now God comes in grace, and brings in a *new* creation, the second Adam as head thereof. The Jews had, as we have before said, accepted the law, which is not of faith; and they were therefore shut up to the faith which was at a future time to be revealed. That time has now come. The law could not give life, and therefore Christ, the end of the law, has come—Himself the life. Faith has again come, and, consequently, by the body of Christ we are dead to the law. (Rom. vii. 4.) The law was Israel's school-master, but now Christ has come, and has

revealed faith, to which faith the promise is now verified. (Gal. iii. 23–26.) Faith, I say, is revealed, and there is no more shutting up to it, but there is perfect liberty; and happy indeed are they who will stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ has made them free. If the Son make us free, we are free indeed. (John viii. 36; Gal. v. 1.)

The mission of Moses kept God concealed; Christ, who is in the bosom of the Father, has come to declare Him. (John i. 18.) He has come as the Word of God, the image of the invisible God, to manifest Him who is love, the God of all grace. Hence, the moment that Christ died on the cross, and there satisfied the claims of divine righteousness, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, the flood-gates of God's love were burst asunder, and out came the blessing full and free, and that according to the perfection of His own nature, which nature is love.

The mission of Jesus was, nevertheless, one in its character with that of John the Baptist. Indeed, they were identically the same. "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; as it is written in the prophets,

Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." (Mark i. 1, 2.) John proclaimed the *coming kingdom*; Christ came as the *King*. He was born *King* of the Jews. The Gentiles came asking, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" Heaven was interested too in this, for it was a star that guided these Gentiles. Jesus and His disciples proclaimed, like John, "Behold, the *kingdom* of heaven is at hand." These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*." (Matt. x. 5, 6.) The sermon on the mount, as it is called, is but a detailed statement of the behaviour which will become those who shall be in the *kingdom*. The Jews, Samaritans (John iv. 25), and Gentiles were in expectation that Christ would set up His *kingdom*. The prayer of the disciples, commonly called the Lord's Prayer, was in view of the kingdom. They prayed, "Thy *kingdom* come; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." And then the ascription of glory to God,

“Thine is the *kingdom*, and the power, and the glory,” has yet to be manifested. But when Christ the *King* came to His own nation, His own received Him not. In due time, according to the prophet, He presents Himself to Israel as *King* at the entrance of Jerusalem. (Matt. xxi.) The triumphant cry goes up, “Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.” When Jesus, however, arrives at the city, another cry is heard, “Crucify him, crucify him! away with him, away with him!” Pilate asks, “Shall I crucify your *King*?” The reply is more intense than ever, “Away with him, crucify him! We will not have this man to reign over us.” Jesus as *King* of the Jews is rejected.

Now please to notice the course of this rejection, and its result; for this is important. In Matt. xi. and xii. we see Jesus rejected first by His own, the Jews. In consequence of this, we find Him in Matt. xiii. sitting in a ship on the sea (the sea being a figure of peoples and nations. (Rev. xvii. 15), having multitudes before Him, declaring the parable of the sower, showing Christ’s purpose to set

aside Israel as such, and to take a people to His name out of all nations and peoples. In Matt. xv. we have grace going out to Gentiles, Jesus having left Jerusalem, and departed to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. He never left Jewish ground while here, it was to the *coasts* of Gentile territory He went. In Matt. xvi. 18 we have the first mention of the Church, and Christ's purpose to build it is declared for the first time, but it is all based upon His death and resurrection. So long as the Jews are owned of God as Jews, this new thing cannot be taken up. And Christ will still hold on with the Jews as long as He can; they shall have every opportunity; and it is not until they declare their determination not to have Him, that He speaks of the Church. He, however, tells them, and this is very important, as it will be yet fulfilled, Though you reject me, yet "if *another* shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." (John v. 43.) Then, in Matt. xvii., we have a glimpse of the kingdom in the transfiguration. In Matt. xxi. Jesus presents Himself to Israel as their King, and is rejected. In Matthew xxiii. (note verse 13) Israel is cast off—"O Jeru-

saalem, Jesusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. xxiii. 37-39.) Matt xxvi. to the end is the record of the further rejection, the crucifixion, and the resurrection of the King of the Jews, and so that dispensation closes. This is a very important and emphatic full stop—a momentous period.

Christ went to heaven, and is now seated, not on His own throne, but on the Father's throne (Rev. iii. 21), having been rejected and turned out of the world. He has postponed His reign for a time. He will, however, yet come forth King of kings, and Lord of lords, and all shall know Him, from the least to the greatest. (Rev. xix. 11-16.)

Now, it must be mentioned that the Lord made three statements before He left the earth—two to His disciples and one to the Jews; and to these I now call attention.

1. To the JEWS He said, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: *that upon you* may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." (Matt. xxiii. 29–35.) This is the declaration of *the* great tribulation, but it is upon the *Jews* as such, for their rejection of Christ, and not upon His disciples.

2. To the DISCIPLES He promised—first,

“I will come again, and receive you unto myself” (John xiv. 3); secondly, “Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” (Luke xxiv. 49.) This is very different to what was said to the Jews who rejected Him. The Lord, however, in Matt. xxiv. xxv. told His disciples, privately and in detail, what would happen to Israel and the nations. Though the Jews are cut off, the promise of God to Abram standeth sure, and God will yet be true to all He has said. Thus the Jews are now set aside, but only for a time. (Rom. xi. 25–31.) The question now is, What has been taking place since Israel’s rejection? The Scriptures go on to tell us that a new dispensation commenced, that of the Holy Ghost—the period in which *we* are *now* living.

When the day of Pentecost was fully come, while the 120 disciples were in an upper room, sitting and holding a prayer meeting, the ascended and glorified Jesus fulfilled His promise, and the Holy Ghost descended to the earth, and baptized the disciples into one body. (1 Cor. xii. 13.) Three thousand souls were born again on that day, through the

preaching of Peter; and these three thousand were *added*—added to what? to Israel as a nation? No; for that had been set aside. They were added to the *Church* (Acts ii. 47), to that new thing which our Lord declared in Matt. xvi. He would build.

In this second of Acts we have the first *historical* mention of the Church; and this is the beginning of the seventh dispensation, the one in which *we* are *now* living; the peculiarity of which is the dwelling of God the Holy Ghost on the earth; not in temples made with hands (Acts xvii. 24), as in Judaism; neither in incarnation, as in the days of the Son of Man, who was the temple of God then (John ii. 19), but He now dwells in a temple which He is building of *living* stones, hewn out of all nations and peoples; a *spiritual* house. (Eph. ii. 21, 22; 1 Peter ii. 5.)

The Holy Ghost is baptizing these individual souls into one body, which is the fulness of Him who filleth all in all, bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh, and of which Adam and Eve were a type. (Eph. i. 23; v. 30–32.) This is a *new* thing *altogether*, never

heard of until it was made known by revelation. Paul says, "How that by *revelation* He made known to me the mystery." (Eph. iii. 3-5.) By *revelation*, not by the Scriptures. Why? That Christ should die and that Christ should rise again he got from the Scriptures. (1 Cor. xv. 1, 3, 4.) Why, then, I ask, was this *new* thing made known by *revelation*? For the simplest of all reasons, it was not in the Old Testament Scriptures at all. It had been kept secret from before the foundation of the world, *hid* in God. (Eph. iii. 9.) Any one reading Eph. iii. attentively cannot fail to see this. And here I repeat, that unless we clearly understand the peculiarity and uniqueness of the Church of God, the body and bride of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall never understand prophecy, or indeed any of God's truth. It is, I more than ever see, the key to that portion of the Scriptures. It is this that is occupying the mind and heart of God *now*. He purposed it in eternity. (Eph. iii. 11.) He is accomplishing that purpose now; and it will be for the display of His glory throughout all ages, world without end. (Eph. iii. 21.) He is forming it out of all nations, and not

Jews only, "for by one Spirit are we all baptized into *one body*, whether Jews or Gentiles." (1 Cor. xii. 13.) Thus, then, there is at this *present time* on earth three things—the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God. (1 Cor. x. 32.)

Judaism was a great nation, but the Church is *a body*, a building of God. It is not a nation belonging to earth. God has no nation on earth now, but He is dealing with individual souls gathered *out of* all nations. The gospel preached by John and *Christ* was the gospel of the *kingdom* to *Jews* as such. But that preached now is the gospel of the *grace* of God (Acts xx. 24) going out to all—*all* men *everywhere* are commanded to repent. (Acts xvii. 30.) It may be well, however, to point out a few particulars, in order to show how distinctly different the Church of God is from Judaism.

1. The Jew was a man in the flesh, under law, having an earthly calling.

The members of the body of Christ are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; not under law, but under grace, having a *heavenly* calling. (Rom. viii. 9; vi. 14; Heb. iii. 1.)

2. The Jew had earthly blessings in earthly places. (Deut. xxviii.)

The Church of God has all *spiritual* blessings in *heavenly* places in Christ. (Eph. i. 3.)

3. The Jew, under law, fought against earthly enemies with carnal weapons (Joshua).

The Church, under grace, loves and feeds her enemies, or ought to do so, withholding carnal weapons, and fighting against *wicked spirits* in *heavenly* places, clothed with the whole armour of God. (Rom. xii. 20; Eph. vi. 11, 12.)

4. The Jew had an earthly place of worship, having a veil which kept the worshippers out from the presence of God.

The Church has a *sanctuary above*, a place of worship in the true tabernacle, which the Lord has pitched, and *not man* (Heb. viii. 2); having no veil to conceal the presence of the Father, but the holiest of all is wide open, into which all true worshippers can enter with boldness. (Heb. x. 19.) The *heavens* are open, and we see Jesus *there* crowned with glory and honour. (Heb. ii. 9.)

5. The Jew was under a law which said, "Do this, and live." (Exod. xix.)

The Church is under grace, and the order is, First live, and then do. (Titus ii. 11, 12; Gal. v. 22.)

6. Israel's was a *fleshly* worship. (Exodus and Leviticus.)

The Church is *spiritual*. (John iv. 24; 1 Peter ii. 5.)

7. Judaism had its special priesthood. (Lev. viii.)

All the members of the Church are priests to God. (1 Peter ii. 5, 9.)

8. Judaism was a *kingdom*, and will yet be one. (Kings and Chron.)

The members of the Church are to reign *with* Christ. (Rom. viii. 17; 2 Tim. 11, 12.)

9. The Jew was entirely separate from Gentiles.

The Church is a combination of both Jew and Gentile. (1 Cor. xii. 13.)

10. The Jew was ever at a distance from God.

The Church is *indwelt* by God the Holy Ghost. (1 Cor. vi. 19; 1 John iv.)

11. The Jews were a worldly people, though separate from the Gentiles. Only a remnant at any time were truly the Lord's.

The body of Christ is not *of* the world, even as Christ was not *of* the world, and *all* its members are the Lord's. (John xvii. 14 ; 1 Cor. xii.)

12. The Jew is' looking for the mid-day Sun of Righteousness to come with healing in His wings. (Mal. iv. 2.)

The Church is looking out for the bright and Morning Star, which rises *before* the sun. (Rev. xxii. 16, 17.)

13. The hope of the Jew was and is, that Christ will come and reign over them as His *kingdom*. (Isa. xxiv. 23.)

The Church is expecting that He will come and take her to Himself, to be for ever with her Lord in glory, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, and by-and-by to come forth and to reign *with* Him in His earthly and Jewish kingdom. (John xiv. 3 ; Rev. v. 10 ; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.)

And this leads me to the second promise of Jesus to His disciples I mentioned just now, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself."

But when will He come? Doubtless when the last member is added to the body—His

body ; when the last stone is put into its place in the temple. The coming of the Lord to take her to Himself is the proper hope of this unique thing—the Church, which is His body and bride. It is the catching away of Enoch before the coming tribulations and judgments. The Lord is going to have a court-day—a presentation-day—when He will present His bride to Himself a glorious Church, having neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing. (Eph. v. 27.) Our Queen has her presentation-days, when she goes from Windsor to St. James's, and her select few go to meet her there. The Lord Himself will descend from heaven, and we shall go in the clouds to meet Him in the air. What a presentation-day ! What glory to Jesus then ! What casting of crowns at His feet ! There will be no cloud over this scene ; joy will be full and lasting. The wine will not be out at that wedding, but each and all, according to their measure, will be full. “Come, Lord Jesus ; come quickly.” “The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : and the dead in Christ shall rise

first." (1 Thess. iv. 16.) "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. iii. 20, 21.) This coming of Christ to take to Himself the Church closes this seventh dispensation, which commenced with the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost.

This being fulfilled, and the Church having gone to glory, God will be once more in a position to take up His people the Jews as such as an *earthly* people, for the *earth* and for *earthly* privileges and blessings, and to fulfil His unconditional covenant with Abram. They will be restored to their own land in unbelief. As to the way and manner thereof I have not been able to discover. When restored, the declaration of Jesus to the Jews concerning the tribulation will soon come to pass. (Matt. xxiv.) It is, however, all strictly *Jewish*, and that is a point of great moment. The Jews will be dealt with as Jews, and all the prophecies which refer to this tribulation

are emphatically Jewish. The Church is not Gentile, neither Jewish, but composed of both. Judaism is Jewish wholly, and not Gentile at all, but quite distinct. Matt. xxiii. and xxiv. are Jewish. All the woes therein were pronounced upon the Jews. Upon them all the blood of all the slain prophets is to come. Daniel's prophecy is Jewish—peculiarly so. The sealed ones in Rev. vii. are decidedly Jewish. The cry of the suffering ones in the fifth seal is a Jewish cry, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" This is no cry of the Church, who is to love her enemies, and pray for them, not against them. Does not this cry of Rev. vi. harmonize with the cry of the suffering remnant in the Psalms, that remnant being Jewish? Again, the remnant martyred for the testimony of the word in Rev. xi. are undoubtedly Jewish. They have the features peculiar to Moses and Elias. That part of the temple which God owns in Rev. xi. is strikingly Jewish, showing how God is dealing only with Jews. He directs that the court of the Gentiles shall not be measured, but left out.

Again, the body of Christ having been removed to heaven, and the Jews once more brought upon the earthly scene, other prophecies will be fulfilled contemporaneous with Israel's restoration. I mean the prophecies concerning the ten kingdoms and Antichrist. The Holy Ghost and the Church having left the earth, Satan will descend from heaven to earth (Rev. xii.), corruption will immediately set in with all possible force; the letting power, or power which restrains (see 2 Thess. ii. 7), will be out of the way, so that sin will have full course. The wicked will then spring as the grass, and the workers of iniquity will flourish. (Ps. xcii. 7.) The light will have been removed, and then darkness will cover the earth and gross darkness the people. (Isa. lx. 2.) The leaven will spread, and spread more rapidly than ever, until the whole be leavened. That man of sin, the son of perdition, will be revealed (2 Thess. ii. 8), who corresponds with the little horn of Dan. vii., the beast or eighth head of Rev. xiii., and he is that other one before alluded to, whom Jesus said the Jews would receive if he came in his own name. (John v. 43.) He is the

individual mentioned in Dan. ix. 27, as the prince that shall confirm a covenant with Daniel's people for one week, that is, the seventieth week of Daniel. By fair speeches and promises he will succeed in obtaining the support of Israel. (Psalm v. 6 ; xliii. 1 ; 2 Thess. ii. 11 ; Rev. xiii. 14) I do not know, but it may be that part of the covenant will be that he should put them in their own land, on condition of their accepting him as their king. Be this, however, as it may, he will confirm the covenant for one week, and he will go forth conquering and to conquer. (Rev. vi. 2.)

Israel, when restored, will build their city and temple once again (Isa. lxvi. 6 ; Zech. viii. 9-12 ; Rev. xi. 1, 2) ; not that it will be the temple of Ezekiel, which I suppose will not be built until the *kingdom* is established, and that some fifty miles from Jerusalem. (Ezek. xlvii.)* This temple, built by the Jews under Antichrist, is seen in Mal. iii. ; 2 Thess. ii. ; and Rev. xi. Things go on quietly for some time ; but in the midst of the week, this

* See small chart published by W. H. Broom, 25, Paternoster Square.

prince—Antichrist—having been possessed of Satan, and become, as I believe he will, the incarnation of the devil, according to Rev. xii., will break the covenant, remove the sacrifice of oblations, and his agent, the second beast of Rev. xiii., will set up an image in this temple, and seek to make all men worship it. Most will do so. There will be, however, a godly remnant, who having been converted to God after their restoration by the Spirit of God, will not bow to nor worship the beast, but, on the contrary, they will set up a testimony for Christ, which will bring trial and persecution on them.

Elias, as John the Baptist (who was Elias if the people would have received it, Matt. xi. 14), will come to proclaim Christ as the rightful King of Israel; the gospel of the kingdom, according to Matt. xxiv. 14, will once more be preached for a witness to all nations, and the end shall come, upon which the great tribulation spoken of in Dan. xii., and referred to in Matt. xxiv. 15, will take place.

According to Dan. vii. 25, this Antichrist “shall speak great words against the most

High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Also according to Rev. vi., "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for *the word of God*, and for *the testimony* which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Also according to chap. xi., "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall *prophesy* a thousand two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth. And when they shall have finished *their testimony*, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall

call on my name, and I will hear them : I will say, It is my people : and they shall say, The Lord is my God." (Zech. xiii. 8, 9.) Again, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand :) then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains : let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house : neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days ! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day : for *then shall be great tribulation*, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved : but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." (Matt. xxiv. 15–22.) The river Euphrates, too, will be dried up to make way for the kings of the East—that is, of Media and Persia—to come up against the Jews. (Rev. xvi. 12 ; Isa. xxi. 2.)

This tribulation will go on for three and a half years ; the holy city shall be trodden under foot forty-two months (Rev. xi. 2) ; towards the close of which the Lord will come, as we read in Matt. xxiv. 29, 30 : "*Immediately after the tribulation* of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven : and then shall all the *tribes of the earth* mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." *All the tribes of the earth* shall mourn ; not the Jews only, but all the tribes of the earth.

At this time the Lord will come to the *nations* ; His previous coming was to *receive to Himself* the Church, His bride ; now it is to the nations, to deliver His Jewish remnant out of the great tribulation, and to preserve them from the judgments as in the days of Noah. He will hide them in the secret of His presence from the pride of man ; He will keep them secretly in a pavilion from the

strife of tongues. (Ps. xxxi. 20.) Then, as for the nations, He is coming as an eagle to the carcase. He is coming to *force* universal subjection to Himself, to whom a name has been given which is above every name, a name at which *every* knee shall bow, and *every* tongue confess Him to be Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. ii.)

The testimony of the remnant as to the rights of Christ as King, and the two witnesses having been despised and rejected by Anti-christ and the nations, the witnesses having been slain, Christ determines to come forth and fight against those nations, and to set up His kingdom by force: to take to Himself His great power, and to reign. (Rev. xi. 17.) But He will hold back His judgments as long as He can. Judgment is His strange work, and He will withhold it until He is compelled to put it forth. He will give the nations one more chance; they have slain His witnesses; still He will send forth one other testimony. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue,

and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him ; for the hour of his judgment is come ; and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Rev. xiv. 6, 7.)

Thus, there will have been three distinct gospels : the gospel of the kingdom, the gospel of the grace of God, and the everlasting gospel ; each distinct from the other, and having peculiarities of its own. The everlasting gospel then is proclaimed, the nations are called to own and worship the one true God, and Him only ; but they still refuse, and therefore Christ comes to fight against the nations, and to deliver His own elect jewels. (Rom. xi. 26.)

But will He come *alone*? No ; He will come *with* all His saints. We have before seen that He has come to receive His Bride to Himself (1 Thess. iv. 16) ; but now we read, "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will *gather all nations* against Jerusalem to battle ; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished ; and half of the city shall go forth

into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, *and fight against* THOSE NATIONS, as when He fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah; AND THE LORD MY GOD SHALL COME, AND ALL THE SAINTS WITH THEE." (Zech. xiv. 1-5.) "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh WITH *ten thousands of his saints.*" (Jude 14.) "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then *shall ye also appear* WITH HIM *in glory.*" (Col. iii. 4.) "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before

God, even our Father, at the *coming of our Lord Jesus Christ* WITH *all his saints*." (1 Thess. iii. 13.) "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are *with him* are called, and chosen, and faithful." (Rev. xvii. 14.) "The *armies* which were in heaven *followed him* upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." (Rev. xix. 14.) Thus the saints which were caught up to meet Christ in the air now come *with* Him.

And now for what is He coming? that is, when His saints come *with* Him? He is coming to destroy the man of sin with the brightness of His coming. (2 Thess. ii. 8.) "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed

him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev. xix. 11-16.) He is coming to pour out the last vials of judgments on the nations (Rev. xv.); to bring the nations into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and to plead with them there (Joel iii. 2; Isa. lxvi. 16), and to fight the battle of Armageddon. (Rev. xvi. 16.)

Then the one shall be taken for judgment, and the other left for earthly blessing. (Matt. xxiv. 37-41.) It will be as in the days of Noah, the wicked will be taken away in judgment, and the remnant left to replenish the purified earth, out of which all things that offend shall be gathered by the angels of God. (Matt. xiii. 47-49.) All those who have the mark of the beast shall be trodden in the wine-press of God's wrath. (Rev. xiv. 9, 10; Isa. lxiii.) Antichrist having thus been de-

stroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming (2 Thess. ii.), the seven last vials of the wrath of God having been poured out upon the nations (Rev. xv.), and Christ having pleaded with them in the valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel iii. 2), Israel will have been delivered, as it were, from Egypt, as of old, and will sing the song of *Moses and the Lamb*. (Exod. xiv. and xv.; Rev. xv.) Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty. They will own Christ as King of nations, and that His ways have been true and just. Satan will be bound, and universal peace and joy will prevail. The second book of Psalms—that is, from Psalm xliii. to lxxxii.—if read with care and prayerful attention, will be seen to harmonize with the time of Jacob's trouble (Jer. xxx. 7)—from the time of Antichrist's rise to his fall, and the reign of peace. But what saints are these who come with Christ? Who but those caught up at the close of this present dispensation, and who are to judge the world? (1 Cor. vi. 2.)

Will not then the Church go through the great tribulation? I say, No. Because—

1st. When Christ comes to destroy Anti-

christ, and to set up His kingdom, His saints come *with* Him.

2nd. The tribulation is *Jewish* in its character, and the Church is not Jewish.

3rd. There is no condemnation to the Church. She has passed from death unto life, and shall not come into condemnation. (John v. 24.)

4th. Her hope is that Christ will come, and will receive her to *Himself*, and take her to heaven, to appear with Him in glory when He comes to reign, and to reign with Him.

To return : the Jews having been delivered, and the kingdom set up, the nations will go forth and fetch home their brethren, the ten tribes. In answer to their prayer, perhaps on hearing of Judah's prosperity, "Turn *us*, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger to cease from us." (Psa. lxxxv. 4.) "Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, and to triumph in thy praise." (Psa. cvi. 47.) "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from As-

syria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea." (Isaiah xi. 11.) "And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord." (Isa. lxvi. 20.) And as nothing defiled can enter the kingdom, the tribes, according to Ezek. xx. 33-38, will be purged before they get into the land. Israel, as the ten tribes, will have been tried by one called the Assyrian, as the little horn of the ram in Dan. viii.; Isa. ix. x.

The third book of Psalms—that is from Psalm lxxiii. to lxxxix.—corresponds with this Jewish period. Judah and Israel in the land become one nation, and Psalm cxxxiii. will have peculiar force and meaning. The envy of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. (Isa. xi. 13.) Christ will be

the one Lord, and the kingdom will be His. (Obad. xxi.) And He shall be king over all the earth. (Zech. xiv. 9.) The temple of Ezekiel will then be built, not, however, on the old site in Jerusalem, but somewhere about fifty miles from that place. Sacrifice and a special priesthood will again be established. Then will God be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, and burnt-offering and whole burnt-offerings ; they shall then offer bullocks upon His altar. (Ps. li. 19.) The great day of atonement will be kept, when Isa. liii., Zech. xii., and Psalm li. will have a meaning and application but little understood now.

Christ will be a priest too, as well as king. He will be the true Melchisedec, who will, as in days of old, come forth and bless His people the children of Abraham, after the battle with the nations and the deliverance of Lot. Jesus, the true Melchisedec, will sit as a priest on His throne (Zech. vi. 13), king of peace, king of righteousness. His reign will be characterized by strict and uncompromising holiness and justice. His name will be the Lord our *righteousness*. The name of the city will be the city of *righteousness* (Isa. i.

26), the Lord our *righteousness*. (Jer. xxxiii. 16.) This king will reign in *righteousness* (Isa. xxxii.), and His sceptre will be a sceptre of *righteousness*. (Heb. i.) The girdle of His loins will be one of *righteousness* (Isa. xi. 5), and His people will walk in the light of the Sun of *righteousness*. (Mal. iv. ; Rev. xxi.) *Holiness* will be written on His mitre, all things will have that mark too. All things which offend will be removed, and Psalm xv. and ci. will have special application. Indeed, the law will be written on the hearts of the people, and Psalm cxix. will have peculiar force and meaning. He, however, who sins will be at once put to death. (Psalm ci.) Jerusalem will be called a city of truth, the holy mountain (Zech. viii. 3), and no unclean thing or anything that defileth will be permitted to remain there. It will be a reign of *righteousness*, and God will be their God in truth and in *righteousness*.

Israel's blessings, too, will be *full*, but *earthly*. "For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron ; I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteous-

ness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders ; but thou shalt call thy walls salvation, and thy gates praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day ; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee : but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." (Isaiah lx. 17-19.) But still there will be age and infirmity, there shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age, and the street too of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. (Zech. viii. 4, 5.)

The *nations* also will get blessings, for in Abraham shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. There will be a river, the streams whereof will make glad the city of our God (Ps. xlv. ; Joel iii. 18 ; Zech. xiv. 8 ; Ezek. xlvii. ; Rev. xxii. ; Isa. xxxiii. 21 ; Ps. lxxv. 9 ; Isa. xxxv. 7), the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. This river will extend its blessings to all nations. The leaves of the trees on either side of this river will be for the healing of the nations. Jerusalem shall

be the joy of the whole earth. "For if the casting away of Israel be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" (Rom. xi. 15.) In a word, the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. (Hab. ii. 14.) And *all* flesh shall see the salvation of God. (Luke iii. 6.) God will pour out His Spirit too *on all flesh*. (Joel ii. 28.)

According to Psalm xlv. the Jews, or a section of them, will then have a bridal relationship to Jehovah. Her Maker will be her Husband. (Isa. liv. 5.) "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you." (Jer. iii. 14.) And then the Song of Solomon will have a meaning and interest never before felt or understood.





IN CHRIST AND CHRIST IN US.

2 COR. xii.

OCCASIONALLY a chapter like this brings out a complete picture of certain truth as a whole. There were Judaising teachers who were calling in question Paul's apostleship, and he appeals to the Corinthians in a remarkable way in the following chapter to judge themselves. He had been the means of their conversion. If you want to know my apostleship, "examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." This is not a precept at all, but a taunt, though a gracious one, of course. If Christ is in you, where did you get Him? Through my ministry. He had been obliged to go over the ground of chapter xi., and having done so, he says, "It is not expedient for me

doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord." I come now not to what I have done for the Lord, but to what the Lord has done for me. What is so remarkable in this chapter is, that it begins with the highest place a Christian can be in, and it ends with the lowest, even actual sin.

Paul, though greatly comforted by the report Titus had brought at the beginning of the epistle, was still a little uneasy about the Corinthians. (*vv.* 20, 21.) "We do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying."

In that way we find the highest place the Christian can be in, the third heaven; and the lowest place of actual sin. They are the extremes at both ends in this picture of the Christian condition; but there is also the ordinary condition of the Christian. "I know [not 'knew'] a man in Christ;" he speaks not of himself, though it was himself plainly enough, but of "a man in Christ," such a one "caught up to the third heaven." He was caught up in an extraordinary way, and he had an apostolic vision, which strengthened his faith for service; still his place could not be more than "in Christ." Every man that

has the Spirit of Christ is in Christ. "There is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."

Our place before God is there ; we are in Christ before God. We learn the blessed truth, that Christians are in Christ. We find Christ in a man, too, farther on in the chapter. "In Christ" is put in direct contrast with being in the flesh. We never have the true apprehension of our standing till we find this, that we are in Christ. The treasure is in an earthen vessel, but our place before God is simply that, and only that. Therefore the apostle says in Romans vii., "When we were in the flesh." This is describing the condition of a person where he is not in Christ. I could not say, "When I was at B——," while I am there ; I could say, "When I was in England," after I have left it. Do you know, in the consciousness of your souls, that you are not in the flesh at all ? Taking your place and standing before God, it is not your place at all. In the state of your mind

you may be in the flesh for want of instruction ; but if you were really in the flesh, there must be condemnation. “The carnal mind is enmity against God.” Is this my state before God ? It is all the opposite to that of being in Christ. If you really believe, if you have the Spirit of Christ, you are not in the flesh at all, but in Christ—who is in the third heaven, or above all heavens. This is a different thing from mere forgiveness. As a child of Adam I am found out of the earthly paradise, and my mind is enmity against God. Christ comes, accomplishes blessed redemption for the vilest, and brings the believer to God.

A man's being in prison is his condition, not his guilt. Adam was driven from paradise, but this was not his guilt, but the punishment of it ; beside that, his will was enmity against God. There is the putting away of all this by Christ. If the sinner feels he is defiled by sin, he is cleansed by Christ ; if the believer feels he is guilty, he is forgiven ; if men believe Him whom they have offended, “their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” The work of the Lord Jesus

Christ is a perfect answer to God. We get first our need met through the Lord and Saviour ; but there is another thing, not what we have done, but what we are—our condition and state connected with it, as the tree is connected with the fruit.

We are out of the earthly paradise, and certainly we are not in the heavenly paradise. But the believer is brought out of where he was. There he is looked at as dying in Christ. Washed in His precious blood, and having His Spirit in me, I know then that I died with Him, and I reckon myself dead. “Ye are dead.” How am I alive then ? “And your life is hid with Christ in God.” I have a life in Christ which makes me free from the old life ; I may be foolish and yield to it—quite true. “What the law could not do God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” The tree as contrasted with the fruit has been condemned, but condemned to death ; so I have done with it. Then what are you ? In Christ, not in Adam. “In the flesh” is a condition I have nothing more to say to, as being in it. God has brought us to

Himself in Christ; we are in Christ before God, and there only before God. By virtue of His precious blood, the Holy Ghost takes His abode in us; then I can say, I am in Christ and Christ is in me. Not only has Christ cleared away the sin, but He has taken me out of the place I was in and put me into a new one. My place before God is only in Christ, and in Christ consequent on His having borne my sins, consequent on Satan's having done his worst, consequent on the cup of wrath having been drunk. The Christ I know is the one who has accomplished the wonderful work of redemption.

This makes one understand what the apostle speaks of here, "a man in Christ." I will glory in that man, but of myself I will not glory. So we ought always, beloved friends, because it is all of grace. The Christian has died in Christ, he is risen in Christ; and we have been made "to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." By redemption He has taken us out of the condition we were in, and the flesh is a condemned thing. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

Beloved friends, let me ask you, Do you know what it is to be in Christ? If not, do not rest till you do. It is harder to understand that we are in Christ than that we are forgiven. A man rejoices when he knows his sins are forgiven; but what gives real depth is knowing that we are out of the old condition.

At the Red Sea the Israelites were desired to "stand still and see the salvation of God;" God was not a judge kept outside as before. Just look at the apostle before Agrippa: "would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds"—not "would to God that all that hear me were Christians." Was this vanity or pride? Far from it; but he was conscious of his place in Christ. It was not a matter of attainment; the apostle would have shrunk from that more than any of us. Could you say, as to the privileges that belong to you, "would to God that all that hear me were both almost and altogether such as I am?"

Christ being risen has become the Chris-

tian's life, who treats the flesh as a thing dead and gone ; before God he is in this new condition in Christ.

The Christ who has become my life (I say Christ has become my life, and Christ in that very power in which He rose from the dead), the Christ who is my life, is past the wrath, past the sins, past death, past everything. Where is Christ? Far above all heavens. Looking up, I can say, The Christ who is this perfectness is in the presence of God for me.

See what a difference it is. You cannot impute sin, as a present thing, to a dead man. And such is before God the truth in Christ of the Christian. He is justified and cleared from everything because he is not in the flesh ; he is dead. Such is the blessed place into which we are thus brought. How do I get this? By having Christ's life in me, and the blessed One before God for me. This is not all ; for in point of fact "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." We have an apostolic vision in this chapter ; what effect had it on the flesh? It was "puffed up." Now Paul, not one has ever been in the third heaven but you ! Only see

the way the flesh is judged there! Leave the flesh without law, and it is lawless; put it under law, it breaks law; put it in connection with Christ, it crucifies Him; put the Holy Ghost in a man, the flesh lusts against Him; take a man to the third heaven, it is puffed up; and, if there were a fourth heaven, flesh would be more puffed up still. The remedy is—not more grace, but keeping it utterly down.

The new man is obedient and dependent; it is not an independent thing that sets up to act for itself. I am dependent on His grace every instant. The flesh will not be this. Satan tried Christ. "Command that these stones be made bread," but He remained in dependence and obedience. Satan would have us, if we know these amazing privileges, to get out of dependence into self-will. What is to be done to keep practically dead? "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." If we are in Christ before God, Christ is in us. We have divine life; we want power to live in obedience and in constant dependence. "The

heart is deceitful above all things : who can know it ?" God does know it. Paul was in danger here, but the Lord had thought about all that, and He has the remedy all ready—"a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him." What a comfort it is to us, if we are in earnest, if we seek to serve and to glorify God down here, that the eye of the Lord Jesus is never off us ! "He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous." Let us remember the flesh never can be made any better ; but Christ is continually thinking of us to do the needed thing. What does He do ? He puts down the flesh. How does He deal with us ? He makes nothing of us ; and this is not at all pleasant.

The Lord took care by this thorn in the flesh that Paul should be a person in some way contemptible. Paul asked three times that it should be taken away. Not at all, the Lord says : I have given it on purpose ; I must make nothing of Paul, that Christ may be everything in Paul. Do you say you are in Christ before God, and loved as Christ is loved ? Take care, however ; you are in a place of temptation ; you have to bear "about

in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." I reckon myself dead, if I talk of my place before God ; I bear about the dying of the Lord Jesus, if I am to manifest the life of Christ in this world. Nature, of course, does not like that ; but, if we are to manifest the life of Christ, the flesh must be put down.

Reckon yourselves to be dead, because Christ has died. When you go down to this world, the only possible dealing with the flesh is making nothing of you. This is not power, but it is the way God deals with us to give power, whether to an apostle or to the giver of a cup of cold water. If you are in Christ, one wants nothing but Christ from you. The thorn is not power in itself, but preparation for power. Suppose Paul despicable in his ministry. Well, there never was such a work done before. Then there must be something besides Paul here ; Christ must be here. Ah, says Paul, "I glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me." His strength is made perfect in weakness. He cannot make it perfect in our strength ! I am as weak as water—a poor weak thing. God has chosen that no flesh may glory in

His presence. Where a person is nothing, "My grace is sufficient." Where is His strength made perfect? In a person who has no strength at all; then it must be Christ. When I am made nothing of, "I glory in my infirmities." There is what the Christian is.

God says, I am dead, and loved as Christ is loved. My place is in Christ, and in Christ only. Experience contradicts this. So I have to find out that the flesh is a judged and dead thing. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live." If in point of fact the flesh is there it is a judged thing. If I know that my servant is a rogue, I keep my things all locked up, and so they are safe; not that he is changed, but that the state of things is changed. When the flesh is really distrusted, though it is there, there is not a twentieth part of the danger. The Lord keeps me then; He sends a thorn, if needed, to put me down completely. When the flesh is practically put down, and in its place, then Christ's strength is made perfect in weakness, for there can be no doubt that it is His power. Are your hearts content that self should be

put down? Are you glad of it? Can you glory in infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon you?

If we seek to live Christ, if we are conscious that our portion is Christ, we shall want more of that kind of putting down of the flesh. We want more depth—all of us—showing us what the flesh is, and what Christ is. The time is coming when we shall see that all the rest was worse than vanity, stunting the life of Christ, instead of mortifying our members on the earth.

The Lord give us so to see Christ that we may now say with the apostle, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord!"

Lord Jesus! are we one with Thee?

O height! O depth of love!

With Thee who diedst upon the tree,

We're one in heaven above.

Such was Thy grace that for our sake

Thou didst from heaven come down;

With us of flesh and blood partake,

And make our guilt Thine own.

Our sins, our guilt, in love divine,

Confess'd and borne by Thee;

The gall, the curse, the wrath were Thine,

To set Thy ransom'd free.

Ascended now in glory bright,
Life-giving Head Thou art ;
Nor life, nor death, nor depth, nor height,
Thy saints and Thee can part.

Then teach us, Lord, to know and own
The wondrous mystery :
That Thou in heaven with us art one,
And we are one with Thee.

And soon shall come that glorious day,
When, seated on Thy throne,
Thou shalt to wondering worlds display
That Thou with us art one !





THE PRAYERS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL.

At the onset of his Christian course. A.D. 34.

“**L**ORD, what wilt Thou have me to do?” (Acts ix. 6.)

On the road near Damascus.

1st Prayer for the Thessalonians, A.D. 54

Written from Athens.

“Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith. Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in

holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." (1 Thess. iii. 10-13.)

2nd, for the same, A.D. 54. Written from Athens.

"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly ; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. v. 23.)

3rd, for the same, A.D. 54. From Athens, "the city wholly given up to idolatry."

Acts xviii. 16.

"We pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power : that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. i. 11, 12.)

4th, for the same, A.D. 54. From Athens.

"Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and

God, even our Father, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." (2 Thess. ii. 16, 17.)

5th, for the same, A.D. 54. From Athens.

"The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." (2 Thess. iii. 5.)

6th, for the same, A.D. 54. From Athens.

"Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all." (2 Thess. iii. 16.)

1st, for the Corinthians, A.D. 60. From Philippi in Macedonia, Acts xvi. 9-12.

"Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness." (2 Cor. ix. 10.)

2nd, for the same, A.D. 60. From Philippi in Macedonia.

"Now I pray to God that ye do no evil." (2 Cor. xiii. 7.)

3rd, for the same, A.D. 60. From Philippi in Macedonia.

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.” (2 Cor. xiii. 14.)

1st, for the Romans. Written at Corinthus, A.D. 60, and sent by Phebe, servant of the Church at Cenchræa.

“Without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers ; making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established.” (Rom. i. 10, 11.)

2nd, for the same. Written at Corinthus, A.D. 60.

“Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus : that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. xv. 5, 6.)

*3rd, for the same. Written at Corinthus,
A.D. 60.*

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.” (Rom. xv. 13.)

*4th, for the same. Written at Corinthus,
A.D. 60.*

“Now the God of peace be with you all.” (Rom. xv. 33.)

*1st, for the Ephesians, A.D. 60. At Miletus
while on the way to Jerusalem.*

“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.” (Acts xx. 32.)

*2nd, for the same, A.D. 64. Written from his
own hired house while a prisoner at Rome.*

Acts xxviii. 30, 31.

“I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory,

may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him : the eyes of your understanding being enlightened ; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, . . . when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come : and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. i. 16-23.)

3rd, for the same, A.D. 64. Written from his own hired house while a prisoner at Rome.

"I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in earth and heaven is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell

in your hearts by faith ; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Eph. iii. 14-21.)

For the Philippians, A.D. 64. Written from his own hired house while a prisoner at Rome.

"I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment ; that ye may approve things that are excellent ; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ." (Phil. i. 9, 10.)

For the Colossians, A.D. 64. Written from his own hired house while a prisoner at Rome.

"We, since the day we heard it, (*i.e.* of their faith and love, and its fruit,) do not cease to

pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature." (Col. i. 9-15.)

For the Hebrews. Written from Rome,

A.D. 63.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in

you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Heb. xiii. 20, 21.)

For Philemon, A.D. 65. Written at Rome.

"I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers, (hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints); that the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus." (Phil. i. 4-6.)

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

(13 times repeated.)

