

HELP AND FOOD

FOR

THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.

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ERRATA.

Page 174, 2d line from foot, to "Scrip-" add "ture."

" 185, 2d par., 2d line, should be "question; under law, rigidly enforced,".

" 189, 5th line from foot, read "incorporated them in a ritual."

" 190, 4th line, "damned" should be "dammed."

" 192, 1st line, "I" should be "it."

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KEY-NOTES TO THE BIBLE BOOKS.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE.

I.

A KINSMAN-REDEEMER. (Chap. i.-iv. 13.)

THE character of Luke has been already dwelt upon. It shows us the Lord as man fully, perfect in dependence, near us in the grace which has brought Him down. But this involves the salvation by grace of those who in faith receive Him; and this salvation is every where the theme in Luke, from the opening to the close. "A Kinsman-Redeemer" might well be the title of the whole book. As such He is presented to us very plainly in this opening part.

1. (i.) *His Annunciation: Promise fulfilled in Grace.*

It is striking how the names of those brought before us in the very first chapter are significant of the character of what is in the mind of the Spirit here. "Zechariah" means "Jehovah has remembered," "Jehovah" being the name by which God reveals Himself in the book of redemption (Exodus), taking the people up in grace, to fulfill the promise made to their fathers; while "Elizabeth" means "God's oath." Referring to this very promise, Zacharias's song accordingly unites the significance of these two names: "Blessed be the Lord [Jehovah] God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David; . . . to perform the mercy promised to

our fathers, and to *remember* His holy covenant; the *oath* which He swore to our father Abraham." Grace is fulfilling—as grace only could fulfill—divine promise to a lost and guilty people. And in beautiful accord with this, the child of such an union, brought forth himself by almighty power, beyond the strength of nature, is named "John,"—*i.e.*, the "grace of Jehovah." This is characteristic, as already said, of the whole book; and for this reason, it is emphasized at the beginning,—in the goodness of God, to assist our apprehension of it.

(1) 1-4. The brief introduction answers also fully to the contents of the book. Luke is a Gentile addressing another Gentile as to that which he himself has received by faith through the ministry of others, to communicate to him the certain knowledge of that in which he has been instructed. His reference to those from whom the things of which he speaks have been by himself received does not in the least affect the full authority of what he writes as inspired scripture. God is not tied to any *method* of inspiration, and Luke's gospel is to give full certainty to faith.

(2) 5-25. *The announcement of the herald of Christ's coming.* The true seed of Abraham, (comp. Heb. ii. 14, 16,) the election of grace, come at once into view in Luke. Zacharias and Elizabeth repeat the history of their forefather. Zacharias is of the priestly family, of the course of Abijah, the *eighth* course. They are righteous before God, yet childless, and Elizabeth ("God's oath,") under the reproach of barrenness among men (see *v.* 25); but no mere human righteousness can claim the fulfillment of divine promises. God has in fact delayed the answer to Zacharias's prayers to make it the

more manifestly from Himself, and thus the greater. The angel appears at the time of incense, and on the right side of the altar of incense, and John is announced to go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of many to God.

(3) 26-38. *The announcement of Christ Himself.* The next announcement is of One infinitely greater, and made, not in the temple, but in a private dwelling. The One who comes is to be "Seed of the woman," virgin-born, true man, yet even as such Son of God; Heir of David's throne, yet with unending empire. "The gift of John to Zacharias was an answer to his prayers—God faithful in His goodness toward His people who wait upon Him. But this was an act of sovereign grace." Christ, unsought for by man, was given in the mere good pleasure of God; and man, in Him, rises to a rule higher than that lost in Eden, and to a full image and likeness of God, of which that which the first man possessed was but the type.

(4) 39-56. *Mary's song.* The song of Mary is of grace,—a grace which necessarily, therefore, takes up the lowly and puts down the proud; of a Saviour-God acting in remembrance of His mercy, and according to promise, which is the contrast to law. It does not go beyond Israel as yet prophetically, but in *principle* does: Israel themselves only finding blessing from God in that free grace in which the Gentiles can as well be blessed as they.

(5) 57-80. *Zacharias's song.* The song of Zacharias also celebrates the visitation of and mercy to Israel, likewise grounding it on God's free promise to Abraham. John's mission is declared in terms very evangelical,—“To give knowledge of salva-

tion unto His people by the remission of their sins." It is "the tender mercy of our God, whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us."

2. (ii.) *His Coming, and Reception by Faith.*

(1) ii. 1-7. *His birth in Bethlehem.* In the circumstances of His birth is seen His humiliation, and yet all the power of the world is unconsciously His servant. The Sovereign of the world commands a census that the prophecy as to His birthplace may be accomplished; Mary and Joseph are brought by it to Bethlehem, and then it is carried no further: "the census itself was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria,"—years afterward. But thus the Lord of all is born into the world, and laid in a manger, for there is no room for Him in the inn: sad sign, surely, of men's condition, when their Lord and Maker, prophesied of in every minute particular as coming, heralded even now by angelic visitation, could come at last unnoticed and unknown!

(2) 8-20. *The announcement to the shepherds.* The announcement is here, not as to the magi of a King of the Jews, but of a "Saviour which is Christ the Lord." "To the poor the gospel is preached" characterizes this first testimony, not of a star in the heavens, but of heaven itself opened, angels themselves announcing God's "delight in men." To shepherds is the good Shepherd made known, a Saviour becoming such by the *renunciation* of power; His sign the manger now, in after-days the cross. They come to Bethlehem, see, and spread abroad the news of what is come to pass, and men wonder, while faith in them rejoices and glorifies God.

(3) 21-39. *The testimony of the Holy Ghost in Simeon and Anna.* Angels have witnessed; now, the Spirit of God in the hearts of His believing people. In circumcision, the Lord accepts the "*likeness of sinful flesh*" (Rom. viii. 3; the very expression declares Him absolutely free from the reality of it); as in the purification of His mother, and the sacrifices offered—sacrifices which spoke of Him. Under all this, faith, in Simeon, recognizes, as taught of the Spirit, a Saviour and salvation, into the light of which (the glory of Israel) the Gentiles are to be brought. Yet the stumbling of many is foreseen also, the thoughts of human hearts being tested and revealed. A second witness is given by the Spirit in Anna.

(4) 40-52. *The youth of the perfect Man.* Only in Luke have we the Lord's youth spoken of, and who except an inspired writer would have dared so to speak of it? Perfect in subjection to His earthly parents; perfect in His place as a child; with the doctors in the temple, listening, and asking questions; growing in wisdom as in stature, and winning correspondingly the openly manifested favor of God, and even of man; withal, about His Father's business always, yet marked by no miracle as yet, but only by the loveliness of lowly sweet perfection: such is the picture for a moment unveiled before our eyes. May we adoringly contemplate it!

3. (iii.-iv. 13.) *Manifested, Approved, and Vindicated by Trial.*

(1) iii. 1-6. *The Baptist.* With so brief a notice, thirty years pass,—the time of the Lord's fulfillment of His own personal responsibility as man,—

the "ten days" before the "keeping up" of the passover-lamb (Ex. xii. 3, 6). His public manifestation is now approaching, and the word of God comes to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. Here, the quotation from Isaiah attests the moral principles of the preparation of the Lord's way, and that "*all flesh* shall see the salvation of God."

(2) 7-20. *His testimony.* It is characteristic that what is said to the leaders of the people in Matthew is here addressed to the people at large. Practical conduct is enjoined, while yet no claim on God is allowed on this account: they must not begin to say within themselves that they have Abraham for their father. One mightier than he is to follow him, baptizing with the Holy Ghost or with the fire of divine wrath. John's testimony ends in Herod's prison.

(3) 21-38. *The Son of Man.* The Lord now is presented, baptized, and sealed with the Holy Ghost in the very place which for others is the place of confessed sin: the Father's voice proclaims Him the object of divine delight. He is now thirty years of age—the age of commencing Levite service. In His genealogy—no doubt, Mary's,—the generations are counted, not *forward to*, but *backward from* Him; the stream of blessing, therefore, not stopping with Abraham, but going back to Adam, and Adam himself seen (though not as fountain-head of the race,) once more as *son of God*.

(4) iv. 1-13. *His testing.* After the testimony of acceptation, He is tested. No other order would be worthy of Him or of God. *He* needs not the test, though man does: full of the Holy Ghost, He

is led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, and is forty days tempted, not by sin, for He had none, nor could it even from outside solicit Him, but by the devil. Assailed in all human weakness by every possible device of the enemy, He conquers him by the Word of God alone. "And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from Him for a season."

UNCONSCIOUS DEFILEMENT.

"And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord; THOUGH HE WIST IT NOT, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity." (Lev. v. 17.)

THE application of the Lord's action in John xiii, where He washes His disciples' feet, is often a seriously defective one. It is quite true that it is, as the Lord Himself explains it, a cleansing that we may have part with Him.* Not part *in* Him, of course, for this all His disciples had, with one terrible exception only. Part *with* Him is fellowship; and for fellowship, there must be cleansing—judgment of all that with which He cannot go. *He*, therefore, must cleanse. Not merely, we must be clean, but *He* must cleanse: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me."

Carefully He keeps this separate from that one great washing, or bathing of the whole person,

*This alone should be enough to set aside the thought which some have entertained, that the foot-washing is to be taken as a literal institution, enjoined upon all Christians by Christ's precept and example. He Himself says, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know afterward." Peter certainly knew what his Master was doing in this lowly act of His, literally taken. But who could suppose that the literal act was necessary, in order that His disciples should have "part with" Him?

which, once accomplished, never needs to be repeated. "He that is washed [or rather, "bathed,"] needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, but not all"—referring to the traitor. Here, the indelible mark that new birth makes upon the soul is clearly declared. "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with washing of water, *by the Word*." We are "born of *water*" (Jno. iii. 5),—"born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the *Word of God*" (1 Pet. i. 23). And "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 Jno. iii. 9). Here, then, is that washing which is once for all, and which never needs to be repeated; which transforms a sinner into a saint by a true and effectual work upon his soul, and that for eternity.

But then the words of the apostle most certainly do not mean—against all the assurances of every man's soul, as well as express scripture also,—that a child of God, by virtue of being that, is incapable of sin. "In many things we offend *all*" is the positive assurance of the Word again (Jas. iii. 2). The words of John declare the nature and perpetuity of the Christian character: it is the Christian as such that he presents to us, without at all denying that the Christian does not always act in character. Every where, as we know, Scripture is filled with warnings against sin, which, dwelling in us, although born again, is ready to manifest itself, in thought and word and deed, upon any occasion. The world through which we pass, also, is full of incitements to it; the devil, the prince of it, our ceaseless and unsleeping foe; while sin

itself, if indulged, dulls all the spiritual faculties, blights all the freshness of the life within us, destroys communion, and betrays us into the enemy's hand. How well for us that there is One who with ceaseless love cares for, and with untiring vigilance watches over, His own! How well that He is ready, that we may have part with Him, to wash our feet!

But here, there is a danger of such defective application of this as I have spoken of. Rightly we speak of the cleansing needed as from sin; rightly we think of it as a remedy for defilement; but we fail often, I believe, in forgetting the continual need of recurrence to the Lord, not when *conscious* of defilement merely, but when *unconscious*; we fail in application of the text at the head of this paper, which states, as plainly as words can state, that sin is still sin, although we may not recognize it as such: "*though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity.*"

Yet this is a very simple and a very necessary thing, as a moment's consideration will convince us. Were it otherwise, the greatest ignorance of the divine Word would be the greatest security, the dullest conscience would be the freest one. Were it otherwise, sin and evil would not have the unchanging character which we are sure they must have, but would be *created* by the light, not exposed by it. It would not be (as in Eph. v. 9, *R. V.*) "the fruit of the *light* is in all goodness and righteousness and truth," but the very opposite.

But then, with an unexercised conscience, how much sin there may be and will be, where there is really no recognition of it! and how important the apostle's words, "Herein do I *exercise* myself, that

I may have always a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man" (Acts xxiv. 16)! How different is this from an acceptance merely of the verdict of a conscience dull and inappreciative,—of a judge who does not trouble himself with any close acquaintance with his statute-book!

Perhaps even these thoughts may savor of law to some, and of a law more intolerable in proportion to its greater spirituality than that which is done away. Nevertheless, we shall not more easily than the apostle retain a conscience void of offense without his exercise; and a conscience *not* void of offense means, necessarily, a soul not in communion—not having *part with Christ*.

It is not, I say again, a question of salvation or eternal life, but of a present fellowship with Christ, in which alone (if the apostle may be witness to us, 1 Jno. i. 3, 4,) fullness of joy is found. How strange and sad to find, what cannot fail to be found by those who note the condition of souls in general, how little in fact of that in which lie the power and brightness of all Christian life we are often content with possessing! Do not many, in fact, alas! satisfy themselves (as far as they may) with merely saying, "Well, at least my soul is safe," and letting the other go—not willingly indeed, but it costs too much; many indeed hardly realizing that they are letting so much go, just because the mirror of conscience is covered with the dust of years perhaps of neglect, and no longer witnesses as it once did?

And how the mere sights and sounds, the mere contact with sin impossible to avoid, contribute insensibly to dull and deaden the conscience! and how easy it is to be "hardened through the deceit-

fulness of sin"! Do we realize this deceitfulness? How many a fortress suddenly falls, as we think by some open assault, when in reality it was by a quiet sapping and mining going on unknown, unrecognized, until suddenly the crash came! In a scene of death and corruption, it needs but that the open vessel have *no covering bound upon it* to be unclean (Num. xix. 15). He that touches a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave, is unclean (*v.* 18). Nay, he that only cleanses another from what defiles him,—so poisonous is the atmosphere of sin,—becomes himself, though to a less extent, unclean (*v.* 21). How vivid are these pictures of the old law! and how they should appeal to our souls in a day like the present! They may startle us into the terrible feeling of hopelessness of escape from that which fills the air with an unseen miasma. And indeed hopeless it is, in a sense, to escape, but it is not of escape the Lord's words speak, but of *cleansing*: we have a refuge in His presence and love in the very words which assure us of the hopelessness of escape: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me."

They assure us of our need of continual recourse to Him, not when we are conscious of defilement merely, and not, surely, as sensible that we have been away. In these cases, we are indeed in need of application to Him, and shall find a welcome, and our need fully met. But we have also need of continual recourse to Him, lest before we are aware, the joy of communion be gone, and spiritual torpor steal upon us. How many souls are far and have been long away from the Lord who can give no account of how it is so! There is no history of gross sin, no witness of conscience perhaps at all,

so insensible has been the departure. Only the tide of joy and affection once known has quietly ebbed away under the power of a secret influence unsuspected in its strength, and now the diminished stream runs in channels between mud-banks instead of the green fields of its former flood.

What is the remedy? what is the preservative? No legal one, indeed. "Sin shall not have dominion over you; because ye are not under the law, but under grace." And grace it is that invites and welcomes us in the person of Him who stands ever with the cleansing water and the towel ready to minister to His weary disciples. What more refreshing than, in those eastern lands, from which the figure comes to us, the ready basin for the feet of the traveler? "Thou gavest Me no water for My feet" was a reproach for inhospitality. And He who has chosen us for Himself, and who delights to minister to us, has ever for our necessities the grace that purifies according to His own thought, and to maintain us in practical nearness to Himself. In His presence, heart and life bared to Him, His inspection sought without reserve, we learn the prompt and keen discernment of One whom nothing escapes, nothing deceives. And oh, how strength is renewed, comfort ministered, the soul energized! Truly we learn how "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, shall spring up with wings as eagles, shall run and not be weary, shall walk and not faint."

In a word, the Lord's own presence is our one resource,—the "wing" that would (how often!) have sheltered Jerusalem, and they would not; and there to learn the purification that must needs go with fellowship with Him,—deliverance from

our own will and ways; how real a deliverance from the weights that burden, the cares that consume, the spiritual life! His ways are ways of pleasantness, and all His paths are peace.

It is not enough merely to know nothing wrong against ourselves; it is not enough unless we are able habitually, unreservedly, in His presence to say, "Search me, O God, and try me; prove my reins and my heart; and see whether there be *any* wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." This, and this alone, will keep the soul in freshness and vigor, in a joy of the Lord which indeed is strength.

THE LESSONS OF THE AGES.

INTRODUCTORY.

IT has become a fact more familiar to many, through certain recent discussions of momentous importance, that Scripture is full of a doctrine of the "ages." The phrase is in our common version more often obscured than not by being translated "world," or "worlds," or hidden under the stereotyped form, "forever," or "forever and ever." This last expression is always, in the New Testament, if literally rendered, "for the ages of ages." It never implies less than full eternity, as it is the measure of God's own life: "He that liveth for the ages of ages" is His title (Rev. iv. 9). Christ, too, presents Himself as "alive for the ages of ages" (chap. i. 18); and there are ascribed "blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for the ages

of ages" (chap. v. 13). These same "ages of ages" measure also the duration of the punishment—which is no less, then, than eternal—whether of the devil and his angels in the lake of fire (chap. xx. 10) or of the beast-worshipers who drink of the wine of the wrath of God (chap. xiv. 11). There is no hope of finding an escape from eternity under an admitted phraseology of this kind in Scripture.

The term "forever" is again sometimes "for the ages," while much more often the singular of this word is used, which some would render, in a way very equivocal to our habits of thought, "for the age;" but where "age" must refer to the "age of ages" (the expression used in Eph. iii. 21), inasmuch as it also stands for true eternity, for which it is the common word; while (save in three passages,) the adjective derived from it is rendered "everlasting," or "eternal," every where in the New Testament; and rightly and necessarily so.

There may be thus *an* "age" (a period rounded off from the rest of time, and having distinctive characters of its own,) as well as, in Scripture-language, "*the* age," sum of all ages, which knows no limit and no end. In the adjective also may be found these different significations; for while in its ordinary use, as I have already said, it means eternal, there are just three passages, with which we have now more to do, in which it refers to an age, or ages, rather than *the* age.

The Revised Version, even in Romans xvi. 25, 2 Timothy i. 9, and Titus i. 2, keeps to the word "eternal;" but it is hard to realize what "eternal *times*" can be. The Authorized Version has "before [or "since"] the world began;" but this is again a paraphrase rather than a translation. The true

force is, "in [or "before"] the *age*-times"—times marked out as "ages," distinctive, rounded-off periods. In Timothy and Titus, it is God's grace, or the promise of eternal life, which is said to have been given us (in the divine counsels) before these age-times were: in Romans it is that *in* certain ages God had kept secret a mystery, now in Christianity revealed.

Thus there are ages past as well as ages to come—ages which lose themselves to our sight in that eternity which stretches in measureless infinity before us. The ages that are past, moreover, are distinguished from those to come as a series which, in a certain sense at least, has come to an end, and which is characterized as a series of steps toward the fulfillment of a purpose now accomplished, and from the accomplishment of which important results accrue to us. So, speaking of the things that are recorded as happening of old to Israel, the apostle says (1 Cor. x. 11), "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples [or, as in the margin, "types"]; and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the *ages* [not "world"] are come." Since these ages have ended, then, the types of a past dispensation have begun to speak as never before; which corresponds to what, in another place, the apostle says (2 Cor. iii.), that the vail which was over the Old Testament is now "done away in Christ."

Again, in Hebrews ix. 26, we are told precisely that it was "at the end of the ages" (as we should read it,) Christ "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." This sacrifice closed, then, if not in every sense, the ages; and thus the New Testament, written on this side of the dividing-line, gives

the true key to the Old. In Christ come, all that the past pointed to was fulfilled; the substance was reached of all its shadows; the heart of God was opened out to man, and in free and unrestrained speech declared itself.

But why not before? it is natural to ask. If, as now seen, this grace was in Him from the beginning, why was it so long before He openly manifested it? Was it necessary that through so many centuries of deferred hope, or of darkness without true hope, the coming of the Deliverer and the gospel of deliverance should be delayed? The New Testament affirms this absolutely when it speaks of a "due time" in which Christ died (Rom. v. 7). How, then, was this "due time" marked? First, "*when we were yet without strength*, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." And again, "*when in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*" (1 Cor. i. 21.)

The wisdom of the world had thus to be proved at fault, and the world itself helpless and hopeless in its moral ruin, before the due time of man's deliverance could come. He must get the blessing on true ground,—as grace, not something that man's hand had wrought at. "When we were *yet without strength*"—"yet," after repeated trial. Again, "*when in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God*;" it must be granted time and opportunity to prove this, therefore. The delay in the coming of the Deliverer was the result of time required to certify the need of the deliverance: the ages previous to Christ's death were ages of a special trial of man, which the cross ended; for indeed there was his heart fully proved to be

at "enmity to God," while, as to true and divine wisdom, it was what "none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." (1 Cor. ii. 8.)

But if, then, it was so necessary that these probationary ages should have their course,—if the coming of Christ on this very account waited four thousand years, how important must it be for us to get hold of the meaning of these age-times! As the world is but the multiple of the individual man, so it will be found that we pass in general, in order to find our blessing in Christ's death, through the stages of these different dispensations. Certainly it is when yet ungodly and without strength we find what that death has wrought. And what law is, though God never put the Gentile under it, we know as putting *ourselves* under it, as indeed the Gentile Christians have done in a body.

Scripture, too, will be cleared for us as we consider these ages past; our own portion in it will be freed from admixture, and appraised more truly; God's ways will speak more distinctly their perfect character, and many a precious lesson as to these shall we learn, or be confirmed in; the history of the world itself will have a new significance, if perchance it thus may fill fewer pages;—in short, every way we may find most real profit, if only the blessed Spirit of God lead us Himself down the track of a past, gone indeed, but not yet done with,—a past which is the seed of the present and the future, and of which the judgment-seat at last will give us, for eternity, the full moral. For now "we know in part, and we prophesy in part;" and yet this partial knowledge may be most helpful.

Let us glance at the course over which, if the Lord will, we hope to travel. We have—

1. The trial of innocent man in Eden; brief indeed—the history of a day rather than an age,—yet all-important in its results for every step of the journey afterward.

2. The trial of natural conscience simply, in the time before the flood.

3. The trial of human government (the political trial, as we may call it) from Noah's time, virtually over at Babel, although, of course, as a divine institution, this remains to the present time.

4. After an important interval, which has its own significance with reference to these age-times, and in which Abraham and his seed appear upon the scene, we have next the great trial of man under the law. This had two parts of very unequal duration.

The trial of pure law lasted at the most forty days, ending under the mount itself with the breaking of the tables of the covenant, and judgment executed on the people for the breach of it, in the worship of the golden calf. Then followed, for nine hundred years, a system of mingled law and mercy, the tables of law being now written by the hand of the mediator; and here man was as much convicted of his impotence for self-recovery as he was of his ungodliness before. This ended when Hosea's "Lo-Ammi" was recorded against the people, and the kingdom of Judah came to an end by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

5. From this time onward the question was not, Could they keep the law? but, Would they submit to the sentence, and receive the Deliverer? The remnant, returned from the Babylonish captivity,

with their temple empty, and under the heel of the Gentile, were witnesses of a ruin which John's baptism of repentance called to (and should have sealed) their confession of. Thus, and thus only, could they have been prepared for the Saviour, and found remission. Here, alas! Satan's wit combined with human pride to build up Pharisaism, and the cross proved not merely that man could not keep the law, but that the mind of the flesh was "enmity against God." This was the "end of the ages" of Hebrews ix. 26.

Yet, in fact, the ages go on after this,—nay, the *Jewish* "age" does. We learn this from Daniel, whose seventieth prophetic "week" is detached from the sixty-nine at the end of which Messiah the Prince comes and is cut off, by an interval of desolation for the city and the sanctuary, whose final blessing he announces. From the New Testament alone we learn what fills this interval, and that the "harvest" of judgment upon *Christian* profession coincides with the "end" of this *Jewish* "age." *

The gap is thus a very large one, of more than eighteen hundred years, and in this Christianity comes in, not properly as an age, but as a break in the ages, in which a wholly different thing is presented from such probationary trial as the "ages" present. God's revelation of Himself is what characterizes Christianity. Man remains the same as ever, indeed, and shows himself as incompetent to hold the blessings of the gospel as he was to stand the probation of law; still these are essen-

* See Matthew xiii. 39, 49, where "world" should be "age," and where the second parable shows the end of christendom, as the last does what immediately follows it.

tially different; and Christianity is but an interruption of the course of the world-ages, the end of which (for us) is come, and which yet go on after Christianity, to their full consummation in Messiah's kingdom—the “age to come.”

Christianity past, the true saints, living or dead, being taken up to heaven, the “end of the age” is marked on the one hand by a new work of grace in a remnant of Israel and of the Gentiles, and on the other hand by the apostasy of professing christendom and the mass of the Jews, who, having rejected Christ, receive Antichrist. The full ripe result of iniquity is reached and judged by the Lord at His personal appearing.

6. Then follows the “world to come”—a day in which, Satan being bound, and evil kept down with a strong hand, man is brought face to face with eternal realities. It is a dispensation of sight rather than of faith, under which, alas! man, as ever, shows what he is, in once more (Satan being again let loose,) rising up against God in open insurrection. The judgment of the dead follows; the wicked being cast into hell; the earth and heavens fleeing away before the face of Him who sits upon the great white throne.

7. All enemies are now subdued; the kingdom of the rod of iron is given up; new heavens and new earth succeed the old; God is all in all; and the ages of ages (probationary ages no more,) commence their eternal course.

The Lord give us ability to gather up in some measure the lessons of these wondrous ages—lessons, not for time alone, but for all eternity.

(To be continued, D. V.)

ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER XX.

Hebrews.

THE epistle to the Hebrews gives, as the epistle to the Galatians does, the contrast between Judaism and Christianity, but in a different way. Galatians is written to Gentiles, to deliver them from the law as a "yoke of bondage" to which they were being subjected by Jewish teachers; it dwells, therefore, upon the character of the law as the elements of the world, a world to which as Christians we are crucified,—upon its curse, from which Christ's work had to deliver: upon the moral, therefore, not ceremonial part. Hebrews, on the other hand, is written to the Jews themselves, though of course believing ones, and takes up the ceremonial part, that in which faith ever found its refuge when oppressed with the sense of guilt, to show that here also Judaism necessarily failed, witnessing, as it was designed to witness, to that which was the substance of its shadows, now come, and by which its place was irrevocably taken. Among these typical ceremonies, those which had to do with cleansing have in this way a special place; and thus the question of sacrifices—above all, of Israel's great day of atonement—comes to be a prominent topic in the epistle.

There are thus two apparently contradictory aspects of these legal types, but which are in fact in perfect accord with one another: on the one hand, their typical likeness to the things they represent; on the other, their entire unlikeness as to real efficacy. "The law, having a shadow of good things to come," was "not the perfect image."

This appears in the very beginning of the epistle, in which the day of atonement is evidently in view, when it is said of Christ that "when He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens." The Jewish high-priest put indeed the blood of atonement upon the mercy-seat once a year; but so far from sitting down there, he was not again permitted to enter throughout the year. For him, as for all the people, the face of God was hid,—clear proof that he had not purged the sins of any, in truth, as before Him. Judaism means God hidden and inaccessible: Christianity, sins purged and man brought nigh.

After dwelling upon the glory of Him who could effect this, as contrasted with angels, through whose ministration the law was given, in the second chapter the apostle shows us the Son of God become Son of Man, and tasting death for every man, with the purpose of bringing many sons unto glory. He who sanctifieth and those who are sanctified are all of One, on which account He is not ashamed to call them brethren. The children which God hath given Him being "partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death,—that is, the devil; . . . for on the seed of Abraham He layeth hold. Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people."

All through, once more, the day of atonement is plainly in view, upon which this passage becomes therefore a most instructive comment. "Propitiation"—which no one doubts to be the proper word,

instead of "reconciliation," in ver. 17,—is here said to be expressly for the sins of the people; and the true people of Christ are interpreted to be the "seed of Abraham," clearly embracing all and only those whom as children given to Him He is not ashamed to call His brethren. With these there is a double link of connection. The sanctified and the Sanctifier are all of one, so that He is not ashamed to call them brethren. And then, because they are partakers of flesh and blood, He Himself also takes part of the same; this is on account of propitiation needed, although, as we know, He does not take manhood temporarily, but eternally. Thus, while it is true that the Lord tasted death for every man, yet it is for His people He makes propitiation; of the seed of Abraham He taketh hold. It is the kinsman-redeemer of Leviticus xxv.

In the fifth chapter we are given to see the "holy linen coat" with which the high-priest enters the sanctuary. This always speaks of practical righteousness, and the truth correspondent to it we find in ver. 7-9: "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him out of [not "from"] death, *and was heard for His piety*; though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience through the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him, called of God a High-Priest after the order of Melchisedek." Thus the perfection of His obedience is that by which the Lord is delivered out of death: it is God's "Holy One" who cannot "see corruption." Raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, He is "saluted," as the word means,

"as High-Priest," and enters the sanctuary. It is still the day of atonement that is before us, although with the added truth as to the order of His priesthood, which is not of Aaron, but Melchisedek.

In the ninth chapter, the apostle takes up, with unmistakable plainness, the same type: "But Christ being come, a High-Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands—that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption; . . . for Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; . . . Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and to them that look for Him shall He appear without sin"—that is, apart from it, having no more to offer for it,—“unto salvation.” Our place as Christians, then, is found between the entering in of the high-priest into the sanctuary and his coming out again, when Israel’s sins will be removed, as ceremonially they were by the typical scape-goat: for us, in the meanwhile, the result of our great High-Priest’s entrance into the heavens is known by the Holy Ghost come down. We know that, having by Himself purged our sins, He is set down at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens,—that He has obtained eternal redemption for us. “By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.” Thus our conscience is at rest, and we have ourselves present “boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us through the vail—that is to say, His flesh.” Our

privilege—nay, our responsibility is to “draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.”

Finally, the day of atonement is that to which the principle of the last chapter most fully applies, the bringing into the holy place the blood of those beasts whose bodies were burnt without the camp. The complete judgment of sin must needs be before heaven can open to the worshiper. The judgment of the world is found in this, and the setting aside of the “camp” of Judaism. The Christian position is founded upon that which is the condemnation of the world, and is therefore outside it, as it is inside the vail, as brought to God.

In all this, it is evident that Christians answer to the priestly house, as we saw when going through the type in question. For these, the bullock is provided for a sin-offering; yet in the seventeenth verse of the tenth chapter the principle of the scape-goat is applied to them: “Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” In these various references we shall find, if we compare them, the full type of Israel’s great day unfolded to us, while that is added which none of the types of Judaism could convey. Upon this I do not think it needful to dwell further at present. The epistle to the Hebrews gives us the most connected, detailed teaching as to atonement which we shall find in the New Testament, and with it we may almost close our notice of the Scripture-passages; we have then, if the Lord permit, to see how far we can put together the various features which have been presented to us of this so wondrous work. It is the theme of an eternal song, which here on earth already it is ours to sing.

"THE TABERNACLE OF GOD SHALL BE WITH MEN."

(Rev. xxi.)

ONE of the great blessings of prophecy is, that going on to the end, (for the end is that on which the heart of God is,) it connects every thing with that end, and thus brings out its true character. The crop shows what the seed is; and thus Scripture is full of the "harvest"—the end which declares the true nature of things through which we pass, ignorant so often of what their end is,—bringing it before us as a present thing, that this knowledge may be a guide for conduct in the meantime.

But if this be so as to human thoughts and deeds, how great is the blessedness of being able to put ourselves at the end of *God's* thoughts and purposes, and to find there that full discovery of what has been in His heart all through. This is what the verse at the head of this paper leads us into. We are beyond all dispensations, beyond all need of governmental dealings in view of sin. The first heavens and earth are passed away; there are now new heavens and a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness. The kingdom of the rod of iron is passed also, its design being accomplished, and all things are put in subjection under Him who alone has title to fullest rule. And "then cometh the end, when He"—the Creator, and now the new Creator, of all things,—“shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father;” “and when all things have been subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject to Him who did put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.”

This, then, is the kingdom of the Father,—a blessed term, simple to understand, although its deep, deep blessedness who may tell? when the subjects shall be all children, and distance on the

part of every redeemed soul shall be over forever; when the heart of God shall be free to manifest itself fully, and love shall undergo no more suspicion, as it shall wear no more disguises. Then indeed every eye shall see, no more through a glass darkly, but face to face: that which is perfect shall be come, and that which is in part be done away.

How wonderful then to behold, in full redemption of that promise when Christ came to earth, God's heart, so to speak, moving Him out of heaven: the tabernacle of God with men, and God Himself, in full displayed glory now, dwelling among them!

To the eye of faith, indeed, nothing can exceed that first visitation,—a glory, too, unvailed, not hidden, full of grace and truth. This was Emmanuel—"God with us." And when that path of humiliation ended at the cross, there above all was the Son of Man glorified, and God glorified in Him. No wonder that the Lamb is the light of the eternal city, and the throne of God is the throne of the Lamb.

And yet it might be said,—for how slow are our hearts to entertain the grace of God!—that the nearness taken by Him in His humiliation here is after all no measure (pledge though it may be) of the eternal nearness. Did it not cloud the disciples' hearts in the prospect of His leaving them, though it were for the Father's house,—that in that Father's house the old intimacy of these earth-days, so sweet,—sweeter for the sorrows which proved and approved it,—could not be again? Was it not to meet such a thought that the Lord's assurance was given of those many mansions which now must necessarily hold, not Him only, but them? "If it

were not so, I would have told you" are His tender words: "I could not have encouraged for a moment expectations doomed to disappointment, or admitted you to an intimacy which was here to end."

But what a rapture for our hearts, to see eternity fulfill a pledge like this, not to some special circle of redeemed ones merely, but to all redeemed ones—to men as men! There are earthly and heavenly spheres, and our own portion is not earthly, even were it the new earth. "Where I am" is Christ's own proper dwelling-place, and there is our home. And yet these words, who would limit or lessen their significance, when earth shall be doubly locked in the embrace of heaven, and the tabernacle of God shall be with men? And here, and not till here, is the true rest of God, when at last He shall rest in His love,—He whom, if we have made to serve with our sins, we, even we, may satisfy: His delights in the sons of men, and the sons of men brought to their endless worship and delight in Him.

The apostle, after having been in paradise, could only speak of things unspeakable, which it was not possible for man to utter. How much can we utter here? "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy courts; they shall be still praising Thee." And blessed, too, are they in whose heart the ways down here are only ways that lead there!

"THE most deeply taught and gifted servants of Christ have always rejoiced to come back to 'that one well-spring of delight' at which their thirsty spirits drank when first they knew the Lord. And the eternal song of the Church in glory will be 'Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.'"

KEY-NOTES TO THE BIBLE BOOKS.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE.—*Continued.*

II.

GRACE SOVEREIGN, AND THE WORD ITS INSTRUMENT. (Chap. iv. 14-viii. 21.)

WE have now the character of the Lord's ministry, which through all dispensations, although not as openly in all, must needs be the same: grace, sovereign grace, acting through the Word, received by faith, as seed in the new-plowed earth,—the Lord's own symbol. The two things, both so necessary, so hard to show in accordance, are fully and severally recognized in the two sections of this second part.

I. (iv. 14-vi. 49.) *Sovereign Grace.*

Grace, to be grace, must be sovereign. Its very meaning is that it is free, unmerited favor—favor that comes solely from the will, the heart, of Him who shows it. And, being the grace *of God*, it cannot lack power, or instruments, or suitability to the need of man. This is what this first section, then, declares to us.

(1) iv. 14-30. *The need of sovereign grace, when man's will does nothing but reject this.* Characteristically, the ministry of the Lord opens in Luke in "Nazareth, where He had been brought up." Could there be lack of heart for these on His part? or a more favorable place for His word, than there where He had grown up before their eyes, "in favor with God and man"? where too His whole

history could be known so easily by any who cared? It is here, therefore, He declares Isaiah's prophecy of grace in a personal, present Saviour to be fulfilled in Himself. They wonder, bearing witness to His gracious words. Had they, then, no need? Alas! they have but a question which betrays the real unbelief and indifference of their hearts: "Is not this Joseph's son?" and the Lord's words show it to be nothing exceptional with man, but the exemplification of a common rule: "Verily I say unto you, *No* prophet is accepted in his own country."

This is man's state, then, as man,—his universal state. It being so, divine love will not indeed be baffled—because it is divine—but it will be forced to manifest itself in such a way as to show unmistakably the condition of things, and must find its objects where they shall be witnesses at once of man's rejection, and of sovereign goodness. This is what is declared in the taking up of the Gentiles, and already far in the past there had been intimations of it. Many widows had been in Israel in Elijah's days, many lepers in Elisha's; yet, in the apostasy of the people, a Canaanitish woman and a Syrian leper had been chosen of God for mercy instead of these.

But the warning only rouses the wrath of men convicted and resisting conviction. Nazareth casts out Him who for thirty years had gone in grace up and down among them. And they would have slain Him, but that they had not power. Thus, however, at the very beginning of this gospel of grace, its future history is foreshadowed. Its power must be of itself—of Him from whom and of whom it is,—and it will be grace to Gentiles, to

those without claim or promise—sovereign grace.

(2) iv. 31-44. *Grace sovereign to deliver from the power of the enemy.* At Capernaum, we begin to see divine power working—the word of the Lord casting out demons, the power of Satan manifest in the very assemblies of the people where they came to meet God. He “rebukes” the devil, and “rebukes” in Simon’s house the disease which was his work; and throughout Galilee manifests His power in deliverance.

(3) v. 1-26. *Grace sovereign over sin.* We have now the threefold power of grace over sin,—as guilt of conscience, as corruption of nature, and as impotence. Its word is, to Simon Peter, smitten with the sense of guilt, “Fear not;” to the leper, “Be thou clean;” to the palsied man, “Rise and walk.” The details in the two latter cases we have looked at before. Peace, purity, power, are all (and in this order,) the fruits of grace, through faith.

(4) v. 27-vi. 11. *Grace sovereign to deliver from the law.* The Lord now openly calls a publican from the receipt of custom, and justifies His seeking sinners. In the presence of the Bridegroom, the children of the bride-chamber could not fast, and the new wine of grace must have new bottles to contain it. Judaism, therefore, must pass, as the Lord shows them by His teaching as to the Sabbath: on the one hand, they were rejecting Him who was Lord of the Sabbath; on the other, His grace could not know the limit of law.

(5) vi. 12-49. *Rewards and responsibilities of grace.* We have now the blessedness of those whose characters are formed by grace through faith; then, the conduct it dictates; and lastly, the security of

those who build upon the rock of His word, in the day that will try all men's foundations.

2. (vii.-viii. 21.) *The Word as the Means of Grace, Testing and Productive.*

(1) vii. 1-17. *The Word, "living and powerful."* The second section of this division of the gospel begins, as did the first, with the Gentile as the recipient of God's grace. Here, however, as not in the first case, personal faith comes into prominence, and in a manner which makes the centurion a plain pattern of faith in an absent, sovereign Lord. His case we have seen in Matthew contrasted with that of the leper, where He heals as *present*—the way Israel's final blessing will be brought in. Of His power thus in blessing, as unseen Lord of all, His *written* word is now both the assurance and the instrument. "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed," He says at an after-time; "blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

In the case of the widow's son at Nain, the divine power of His word in perfect sufficiency and suitability to the need of man is seen. Resurrection is confessedly a divine work. It is that, also, in which man's whole condition is reached as under the doom of sin, which death is. Final resurrection is that in which His hand will bring us to the goal of complete blessing; and of that such as this are the anticipation and pledge. This blessing the Word initiates for us here in that spiritual birth in which we awake to a new life which implies and necessitates that of the body at last.

(2) vii. 18-35. *The double testimony, of God, demanding faith on man's part.* In the next section,

we find John, the witness of the Lord for others, compelled himself to receive His witness in the same manner as any other. In answer to his inquiry, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" the Lord sets before him the character of His works,—not only superhuman power, but divine grace: the blind seeing, the dead raised, the gospel preached to the poor. If His servant's faith seem for the moment shaken, beautiful it is to see His after-vindication of him as a prophet, and more than a prophet. Thus too the dispensations of God, various as may be their aspects, confirm one another. In fact, what could be more different than John's message, coming in the way of righteousness, and that of Him who came in grace which, as all had need of it, welcomed all? Yet, while unbelief rejected both, the truly wise justified both. The Old and New Testaments exhibit respectively these different features of one harmonious revelation in which God has spoken to us. "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," are the double response in the soul to this twofold message.

(3) vii. 36–50. *Fruit found in the soul's response of love to love.* The woman in the Pharisee's house becomes now the example of how the soul is gained for God,—the true beginning of sanctification in the apprehension of forgiveness. That it is one who owes the five hundred pence that is thus reached and changed makes the triumph of divine grace the greater. Free forgiveness known and assured to him who is bankrupt of resources to meet the claim of righteousness upon him, is that which brings with peace reconciliation to God, and thus power for a new life.

(4) viii. 1-18. *The Word as seed, testing the heart.* Now, in the parable of the sower, the Lord shows how the Word of God, as seed, tests the character of the soil in which it is sown. The moral is found in the closing verses.

(5) viii. 19-21. *The blessedness of those who keep the Word.* In a few brief words the Lord then declares His relationship to be with those who, in the spirit of obedience, hear God's Word. This is the principle of Christianity, in contrast with Judaism, as has elsewhere been said, the gathering in one of the children of God which were scattered abroad, (Jno. xi. 52.)

THE LESSONS OF THE AGES.

THE TIME OF INNOCENCE.

A TIME so different from any thing we ourselves have known as is the primitive time of innocence in Eden, there is necessarily difficulty in realizing or interpreting aright. Innocence we have lost, and can never regain. Nor is there any thing really like it to be found in such a state as that of childhood, which, speaking comparatively only, we call the age of innocence. Much of what we deem this is, in fact, but *immaturity*; and Adam was not immature, but a man with all the faculties of manhood fresh and vigorous in him, as come, in a perfection no where now seen, out of the hand of his Creator.

Indeed, theologians, realizing this, have imagined a moral or spiritual perfection in him for which Scripture gives no warrant. It is the "*new* man,

which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." On the other hand, it is said that "God made man *upright*," which is in contrast with the craft implied in the "many inventions" they have since "sought out."

Let us look briefly at the whole Scripture-account (confined as it is to little more than one chapter of the book of Genesis) of man's creation, and of the condition in which he was placed in Eden, the "garden of delight."

The first words are,—

"And God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.'

"So God created man"—and here the words fall into a rhythmic measure, the first poetry of Scripture, as if God were rejoicing over the creature He had made—"So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him: male and female created He them."

The second and briefer, yet more detailed, account is in chapter ii.

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."

We must not expect to have man's inner nature, however, fully revealed in this initial revelation as to him. The language is pictorial and figurative largely, according to the usual character of the Old Testament. More is hidden than is openly declared. Plainly "of the earth, earthy," as the first man is, "the dust of the earth" is not all he

is. Formed, as to his bodily frame, of this, God "breathes into his nostrils," communicating thus something from Himself, by virtue of which he becomes a living soul. Not even does this expression, "a living soul," give the full reality of what he is. The beast also is, and has, a living soul,—"every thing wherein there is a living soul" is the description, in chapter i. 30, of "every beast of the earth, and every fowl of the air, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." "Likeness" to God cannot be affirmed of such an one as this, for God is not "soul," but "spirit," and the "Father of *spirits*." Man is thus alone in relationship to God, as possessing not only soul, but also spirit; that "spirit of man" which "knoweth the things of a man," and is his real distinction from the beasts that, as having no link with God or God's eternity, are "beasts that perish."

"Spirit," thus, in man, is linked with "soul." An intelligent and moral nature, which is implied in this, furnishes the affections of the heart (or soul) with objects suited to its own proper character, and lifts it thus, as it were, into its own sphere of being. Man is not a more developed beast, although he has an animal nature which resembles the beast's. He belongs to another and higher order of life, and to this the language of chapter i. will be found to correspond in a manner all the more significant that it is not interpreted to us there, but left for the general voice of Scripture to interpret.

It has been made a question of late whether the word used for "creation" necessarily means that. Yet in the first verse of the chapter, where we are told that "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," the bringing out of nothing must

be certainly intended. After this, (with the exceptions to be just now noticed,) the word "created" is exchanged for "made;" and the whole six days' work is characteristically a "making," as in the words of the fourth commandment; a making which is of such importance in the sight of God that it is said, in chapter ii. 3, that He "created *to* make" it. Thus it stands, rightly, in the margin of our Bibles and in the Latin Vulgate, although few ancient or modern interpreters seem to have understood it; "creation," or the bringing out of nothing, being thus distinguished from the "making" out of existing materials. We find that there are but two distinct acts of creation in the six days' work: the first, where the "living creature," or "soul," is introduced; the second, where man is. Thus soul and spirit are distinguished from all modifications of previous existences. They are "creations"—the calling into being of that which before had none: creations successively of higher character until in man at last we find "the offspring of God."

But in man, spirit has its links with lower and preceding forms. He is a living soul, as the beast is; and this soul is the seat, not only of those affections in which it corresponds to what we call ordinarily the "heart," but also of the instincts, senses, and appetites. The *adjective* of soul (for which in English we have no corresponding term) is, in the New Testament, in our Authorized Version, translated twice "sensual." The same word also, both in Hebrew and Greek, stands for "soul" and "life," thus marking the soul, in distinction from the spirit, as the source of this to the body. In man thus, as a "living soul," spirit, or mind, is made dependent upon the soul, or senses, for its

proper furnishing; and thus the body also becomes, in this present condition of things, a necessity to the spirit, and, if it be not in a fit state, a drag upon it—at the best, a limit beyond which it cannot pass. Men “out of the body” are called “spirits,” and not souls; and the body in resurrection is a *spiritual* body, henceforth imposing no limit.

But this link with the body is a matter of great interest in another connection. Before man was in being, a class of spiritual existences had been created—purely such; and of these, many had already fallen away from God. Pride, too, is said to have been “the condemnation of the devil.” Hence the tender care and wisdom of God are seen, in this hedging about the new spiritual creature with restrictions which manifestly tend to “hide pride from man” in this his probationary state. Probation seems to be the rule, and so (as we may infer) the necessity, for moral beings; but the goodness of God is shown in thus fencing man round, as far as possible, with witnesses to him of creature-imperfection, perpetual preachers of humility and self-distrust.

The necessities of this mysteriously compounded nature were another argument in the same direction. In Eden, man had his wants, as out of it. Hunger was his, and thirst, although no distress could result from these, but rather new sources of enjoyment—all the trees of the garden ministering to his need. Sleep he needed for the recruiting of a frame which would otherwise have been exhausted by the putting forth of its own energies—nay, the immortal life, which was his conditionally, another tree was made to minister. He was not taught that it was his by the mere fact of what he

was. He had it not as what was essential to his being, but rather the opposite—a thing foreign to him naturally, communicated by the virtues of that wondrous tree which was perpetually to sustain the waisting bodily frame.

All this was thus to him constant witness of his creature-condition; on the other hand, the constant witness of divine goodness which met all this need with superabundant resources, so that appetite should be but the occasion of enjoyment, and no want be for a moment known. This was Eden, man's garden of delight—for us, type of a greater—where all, as God pronounced Himself, was “good,” and no evil at all existed, nor could exist, save as man introduced it; no hand but his own could mar this beauteous picture. To all but himself it was a citadel impregvably guarded from assault.

But this leads us on to consider what was the prohibition, and what the nature of the temptation to which man yielded.

One thing alone was prohibited to man, lord of all else,—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As to this, the commandment was precise, and the penalty assured: “In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” One prohibition thus served, or should have served, to keep in the mind of one who, as the image of God, was otherwise uncontrolled master of this fair domain, that he too had a Master. “Duty,” as it is the thought of which man alone, and not the beast, is capable, must be necessary to his proper development as man. The moral faculties must have a field provided for their exercise, for man assuredly was from the first a moral being—that is, a being

capable of discerning good and evil. I say *capable*; for the actual discernment plainly came afterward, when, and when alone, evil was there to be discerned. As yet, there was none, and therefore while good was present every where, and its enjoyment not denied, the knowledge of even good was not as yet discriminative—was not *discernment*—when as yet that from which it had to be discerned was not within the field of vision. We are not to suppose a moral incapacity in innocent man which would have put him outside the pale of morality, and render a fall impossible, by leaving nothing from which to fall; neither must we suppose a mind into which the thought of evil had ever yet entered. When solicited by the fruit in the hand of his already fallen companion, "Adam was *not* deceived; but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression." He, at least, with his eyes open thus far—although not yet having eaten of the tree of that fatal "knowledge"—became a transgressor. In whatever sense the eating of the forbidden fruit opened the eyes of both of them, it created no moral capacity which was not there before, implied in the very nature of a spiritual being, such as was Adam by the gift of his Creator.

Righteousness and holiness are another matter. Scripture does not affirm these of the first man. These, in the creature, represent a character which could only be the outcome of spontaneous rejection of the evil when in sight. This character was not and could not yet be found in Adam, when evil there was none in that garden of delight, planted by the hand of God Himself, for the object of His care and goodness. And herein the meaning of all that we call "probation" lies. Probation was per-

mitted—nay, necessitated, not alone by the tree forbidden, or the tempter's assault, but by the very constitution of a moral being—a being who apprehends, and deliberates, and wills.

"ONE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE."

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." (Matt. xiii. 45, 46.)

THE common interpretation of this parable is consistent neither with the context nor with Scripture at large. As to the context, the companion-parable of the treasure must have a parallel application with this, and the central figure and action must be the same in each. If the merchant man seeking goodly pearls be a sinner seeking salvation, or a Saviour, then so must surely the man who for the sake of the treasure buys the field which contains it. What, then, *is* this field? If imagination be permitted, something may be attempted perhaps, but nothing is more dangerous in the things of God. If we keep to the Lord's own interpretation in another parable of the same series, "the field is the world" (v. 38). But how can a sinner buy the *world*, in order to find Christ or salvation?

Moreover, although Scripture does speak of "buying" in connection with the "oil" of the virgin's lamp (Matt. xxv. 9), and with the "wine and milk" of the Old-Testament invitation (Isaiah lv. 1), it is never a selling all one has, but, as the prophet plainly says, "*without* money and *without*

price." But it is not needful to pursue this: the true meaning so simply commends itself to the conscience, and heart of any Christian, is so consistent every way, so fills its place among these pictures of the kingdom, that as soon as one sees it, there is no place for any other. Let us turn to this, then.

In Scripture, it is never we who purchase Christ, but we are purchased by Him, are His redeemed ones. It is "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," that "though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich." It is He who, having found an object for His love, worthy in His eyes of the sacrifice, "went and sold all that He had, and bought it."

If we put this and the preceding parable together, however, there are here two objects, as it would seem, if but one sacrifice. There could be no repetition of the cross. Is there in reality expressed more than one object? The answer must be from Scripture, as all else. What saith the Scripture?

The difference between the two parables is easily seen, and it must be represented in the answer. In the one, the field is bought with the treasure in it,—it is bought for the sake of the treasure: in the other, nothing is bought but the one object—one precious pearl. There are other details also,—the treasure hid, the finding, the rehiding,—nothing of which is said with regard to the pearl. A scriptural answer, which without forcing any thing shall explain all this, must needs be the true one; for if it were not,—if two interpretations, equally consistent, could be given of the same words, then the words would not distinguish, would be defective in significance, as the Lord's words could not be.

We should have no means of discerning between the false and the true: a conclusion which would be the destruction of the power and authority of Scripture; for that whose meaning cannot be known ceases by that fact to have authority.

Now we have only to look in the face of Scripture, to find that there are two plainly marked divisions in it. The Old and New Testaments, as the two languages in which they are written indicate, are addressed to and occupied with two different classes of people. A child might tell us they are Israel and the Church. If we compare these with regard to the future indicated for each, we may speak of them as an earthly and a heavenly people.

Look at the prophets of the Old Testament. Every where, you will find that the blessing to which they look on is earthly blessing: Israel in the forefront, the nations blessed, but owning their supremacy. "In the last days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

This is in the fourth of Micah. You will find, on connecting it with the third, how undoubtedly it is to the literal people of Israel that it is addressed; and depicts this blessing as yet in store for those on whom the predicted curse has already come,—Zion plowed as a field, Jerusalem become heaps,

and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest—given over to a foreign worship.

It is the earth that is contemplated, brought into the blessing which is called millennial, from New-Testament prophecies which specify its duration. How differently, nevertheless, is it pictured here (Rev. xx.)! Its very duration is marked, not by the blessing of Israel, but by the saints' reign with Christ; and we go on in the following chapters to see, not the earthly, but the *heavenly*—the *new* Jerusalem. All this heavenly blessing the New Testament adds, but as the portion of a heavenly people, now being called out of the earth. This is the Church, the body of Christ, with whom the departed saints of former dispensations will share indeed the heavenly place, although as a body distinct.

We have thus two purposes of the Lord's death marked out, which at once throw light upon the two parables before us. We find them associated in a singular way in the evangelist's interpretation of the high-priest's prophecy (Jno. xi. 51),—"And this spake he, not of himself, but being high-priest that year, he prophesied that Christ should die for *that nation*; and not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God which were scattered abroad." This gathering together of the children of God beforetime scattered, brings into existence the Church, which, baptized by the one Spirit, becomes one body—the body of Christ.

I do not purpose to dwell upon the first parable; but it is plainly to be seen, in this view of it, how the identity of meaning of the "field" is preserved with that which it has in the parable of the tares,

and how the world is necessarily thus the sphere of Israel's blessing, as it is that in which they were scattered and hidden as God's "treasure" when the Lord came. He, the repository of the divine purposes, could "find" the treasure thus hidden, and only by selling all that He had,—by the cross,—could He make it His own. This work accomplished, we find, after Pentecost, and the Holy Ghost sent down, the invitation is given publicly to the nation by the apostles to "repent and be converted, that their sins might be blotted out, in order that the times of refreshing might come by the presence of the Lord, Jesus Christ being sent again to them."* This shows us how Israel comes in this manner into parables of the kingdom of heaven, which began only at Pentecost, where first it is announced as come: "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both *Lord* and Christ." (Acts ii. 36.) The parable of the marriage-feast (Matt. xxii.),—also a parable of the kingdom,—recounts this fresh invitation of before "bidden" ones, and how it was refused, and how the message then went out to "as many as ye shall find."

The parable of the treasure breaks off with its story as it were unfinished therefore. There is no account of its being brought out of its concealment, though it is His, when in the counsels of His grace He pleases to do so. In the meanwhile, another purpose of His death is unfolded in the "pearl of great price."

In one sense, it is no wonder that by such a term Christians should imagine the Lord to be of neces-

*This is the purport of Acts iii. 19, 20, where the Revised Version has rightly now, "*that times of refreshing may come.*"

sity intended; but God's thoughts are not as our thoughts. It is the Church which is thus spoken of, and its preciousness to Him insisted on, and explained in measure also. It is carefully put before us that its value is estimated by one who knows fully what it is He values. The figure is no longer simply of a *man* who *finds*, but of "*a merchant man seeking goodly pearls.*" The thing he finds, he is in pursuit of, and with the practiced eye of the skilled craftsman. Notice too that it is intimated *there are other pearls.* This is, however, one whose value for him is above all else: he sells all he has, for it.

It is evident, then, that we have not here the love of God pictured as something inscrutable,—of which we can give no account, except that it is His, but as something of which we can tell—although in measure, surely,—why it is. The merchant, I repeat, is *seeking* pearls, and he finds one of surpassing value. Let us see what is conveyed by this figure, and we shall see what it is that attracts the merchant's eye. It may be, even, that we shall be able to see somewhat of what gives special value to this particular pearl.

What, then, is a pearl?

A pearl is the product of a living being: it is the only gem that is so; and this is the first thing which is surely intended for our instruction in it.

This has struck many. "'Forsomuch,' proceeds the ancient and forgotten poet, 'as the pearl is the product of life, which life, from an inward trouble and sorrow, and from a fault, produces purity and perfection, it is preferred; for in nothing does God so much delight Himself as in the tenderness and lustre of virtue born of trouble and repentance.'"

This is not, we may be sure, the meaning. It is

a very natural one, and gives a hint of the true; but it is not the true. No doubt God delights in repentance, and repentance, too, is the product of life,—a life which He Himself has communicated. It is the Lord's own assurance, that "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." Nevertheless, the pearl has not this meaning.

A pearl is the result of injury done to the animal that produces it. Its material is the *nacre*, as it is called, or "*mother* of pearl," which lines the interior of its shell, and which is renewed by it as often as injured or worn away. A particle of sand getting between the animal and its shell, the irritation causes a deposit of nacre upon it, which proceeds, layer after layer, till a pearl is formed. But "completely spherical pearls"—and these are the valuable ones,—"can only be formed loose in the muscles or other soft parts of the animal. The Chinese obtain them artificially, by introducing into the living mussel foreign substances, such as pieces of mother of pearl fixed to wires, which thus become coated with a more brilliant material."

It is thus an answer to an injury, as we may say,—the pearl; and it is the *offending object* that becomes, through the work of the injured one, this precious and beauteous gem. It is clothed with a comeliness put upon it, as the objects of divine grace are with the beauty and glory of Him we crucified. How simple and clear the figure is! and how bright and lustrous! Yes, we have no difficulty in realizing this heavenly merchant man, seeking goodly pearls. In truth, He seeks nothing else, in coming among us, but objects of His grace. Every soul

saved, Jew or Gentile, in whatever dispensation, is a trophy of this, a specimen of divine workmanship which is to glorify forever the blessed Worker; a piece of dust overlaid with the beauty of Christ! as layer upon layer of the brilliant nacre, till the pearl is formed, so "grace upon grace," till His full image is created in us.

This shows us, what the parable itself clearly implies, that there are other pearls beside the Church. Israel herself, when in the future converted to God, will be one of these. But the "pearl of great price" will not be Israel. We have yet to consider what is meant by it.

And here it is plain that the difference between an ordinary pearl and one of surpassing value is simply a difference of degree. The size and brilliancy depend, not upon the difference of the grain of sand which is inwrapped, but upon the number of the layers of nacre which inwrap it. The sinner, or the number of sinners, to whom grace is shown—that is not the point, but the greatness of the grace is the distinguishing feature. "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" asks the apostle; and he asks it of differences obtaining among those alike saved and children of God. May not God do as He will with His own? Need He have shown grace at all? If men could have required it of Him, then it would not be grace. And if He shows it, may He not bestow it as He will? No doubt the bestowal will be according to His wisdom; for His will is according to His nature—never can deny it. And would not it be even enough to show the wisdom of this different bestowal of grace, that it does plainly show His entire freedom in it?

Thus it shows the grace indeed to be of His own will, and so more precious as coming from His own heart only.

But however this be, different bestowals of grace there are, and Scripture asserts it in the fullest way. The calling of Israel is not that of the Church; the position of the believer in the past, the present, and the future dispensations, although all be of grace, are not all equal. There is to be a "*new earth*," in which dwelleth righteousness," where yet our home as Christians shall not be, but with Christ where He is (Jno. xiv. 2, 3). And though the departed saints of former dispensations will plainly be in heaven where we are, still Scripture again makes a difference between "the church of the first-born ones" and "the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. xii. 23). Is this a difference in nature—a difference in the grain of dust itself, or a difference we have *received*?—a difference of the riches of the infolding, precious grace? Alas! men may cavil now; in the day to come, every one shall find his perfect satisfaction and delight in the sphere in which divine grace has chosen to place him.

It is not a difference, let us remember, as to *salvation*. For the need and guilt of man as fallen, the cross of Christ is absolutely necessary, and provided for all alike. The saint in the new earth will be no less completely *saved* than a saint in the heavenly places; the church of the first-born ones will be no more so than the perfected spirits of just men. It is strange that the question of salvation should be confounded in the minds of any with the positions accorded by grace to those equally and fully *saved*. Yet the confusion exists; and to deny that the Church which is Christ's body includes

the whole company of redeemed men, seems in the eyes of many to question the completeness of their redemption. Yet so we miss entirely this "pearl of great price," made so by the manifold wrappings of the grace which encircles it.

If we look once more at these two parables of the treasure and the pearl,—so like in some respects that their very likeness invites us to consider their points of difference,—we shall find none in this, that he who finds, whether it be the one or the other, sells all that he has to buy it. The comparison, we must remember, in these two parables of the kingdom of heaven is between Israel and the Church alone. The saints of the past dispensation have no place in these, which refer to 'New-Testament times alone. This enables us to see more fully what is before us. Israel and the Church are represented by this treasure and this pearl, and no others. The contrasts are intended simply as contrasts between these.*

Now the contrasts are, the unity of the pearl as compared with the treasure; and that, to possess the latter, the *field* is bought; and the field, according to the Lord's own interpretation of the second parable,—*"the field is the world."* The application is obvious. If the Lord take up Israel, all His promises concerning her assure us He must take up the earth. And though it may be urged, with truth, that *"the earth is the Lord's,*

*The saved of the nations, brought into the kingdom for millennial blessing, have their figure, I have no doubt, in the closing parable of the net. For the kingdom as seen here is not simply christendom, as often said, but embraces the time, evidently, of the Lord's absence till He appears again; and the "just" from whom the wicked are then separated (v. 40) are, without contention, these millennial saints. Except, then, the parable and its interpretation speak of different things, (*and then the interpretation would not be one,*) the conclusion is as I have stated. I do not pursue it here.

and the fullness thereof," yet this in no wise affects the need of purchasing it for this purpose. Only on the ground of the work of the cross could He take up the earth for blessing. Even the heavenly places, defiled by the angels' sin, and although for *them* no sacrifice is offered or avails, are thus alone "purged" (Heb. ix. 23). God must be glorified as to all in which He has been dishonored, and this is what the cross has accomplished. There is now no hindrance, upon that score, to the fulfillment of all those precious promises which give us, as to the scene of so long and appalling misrule, such unspeakable comfort. "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously."

But where the Church is spoken of, there is no buying of a field. And why? Surely for a reason unutterably sweet, and yet perfectly simple, to the heart of the Christian. He who "loved the Church, and gave Himself for it," is going to present it to Himself, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing;" and we shall be with Himself, where He is. "For we are members of His body," "the fullness of Him that filleth all in all"—the complement to our glorious Head, as such. Where can the body be but where the head is?

This gives us the oneness of the parable,—"*one* pearl of great price." Can there be another—another body of Christ—another fullness, or complement, to the Head? Impossible. That word, "fullness," is exclusive of all else. This is a place given us by that baptism of the Spirit into one body (1 Cor. xii. 13) which began at Pentecost, and

not before, even as there was not, before the Lord's ascension, a Head in heaven (Eph. i. 20, 22). Other pearls there may be, and there are; but there is but "*one* pearl of great price," which the Lord has chosen in a peculiar manner for Himself—as we may even say, for His own personal adornment, for His glory forever. Such is the destination of the Church.

Let us consider for a brief moment, as well as we may, and as guided by this figure, what constitutes the preciousness of this "one pearl." We have seen that, whatever it be, it is glory put upon us: the lustre is that of His own grace. If of Israel's beauty He could say, "It was perfect through *My* comeliness, which I had put upon thee," so the figure here still speaks to us. It is "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." This surely is the lustre of the pearl of great price. An Israel blessed on earth was not enough to show the grace that is in God. He must put His gem in a higher place, that it might shine further; so He opens His sanctuary in the heavens, and takes us in to the Father's house. But even that is not enough; we must be members of Christ, and co-heirs with Him. Thus in the eyes of all His creatures God in His grace shall be made known and glorified, and the joy and blessedness of it shall be for all; *every* heart shall be drawn nearer to Him; in *every* soul His full-orbed love shall

shine. As Paul, Cephas, Apollos, all are ministers of His, and thus belong to the whole Church of God, so shall the Church itself at length be minister of His to all, belong to all. And God shall rest in His love, in the blessedness of His own; and we, how shall we rest! As we think of it, the light of a great city seems to rise upon us,—a city by whose light the nations walk,—a city which has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the lamp thereof. Of this city it is written, “And the twelve gates”—the place of exit and entrance, of intercourse with all outside,—“And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of *one pearl*.”

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

Q. 31.—“*My dear brother*, I would ask your reference to Lev. xiv.—the cleansing of the leper. The steps, in order, appear to have been the following:—

1. ^aThe death of the bird in an earthen vessel, over running (living) water; ^bthe dipping the live bird, with the scarlet, cedar-wood, and hyssop, in the blood; ^cthe sprinkling of the leper with blood—and he is pronounced clean.

2. He washes his clothes, shaves off all hair, bathes in water, and comes into the camp; not yet to his tent.

3. After an interval of seven days, he again shaves off all hair, washes clothes and flesh, and is the second time pronounced clean.

4. On the eighth day come the offerings: first, the trespass-offering; ear, hand, and foot touched with its blood; then, ear, hand, and foot touched with oil; then, burnt-offering and meat-offering; and for the third time he is pronounced clean.

What answers now to the sprinkling of blood on the first day?

At first sight, the interval between this first application of the blood and the anointing with oil—during which come in the bathing, shaving, and trespass-offering, with touch of blood to ear, hand, and foot—would appear to justify the thought of a *necessary* interval between the first application of the work of Christ to the sinner, new birth, and the sealing with the Spirit. The question may be of interest to others, and an answer through your pages be therefore valued."

Ans. Our brother's question reminds us, first of all, of the warning not to use a parable to prove doctrine. It is this very type of the leper to which another has appealed, not long since, in an opposite way. He says, "Some would seek to have it that the Spirit could not be there till deliverance was known; to such I would reply, You are making the *state of soul* of the person that which God seals with His Spirit, and not the value of the *precious blood* of Christ in which it stands. . . . *The oil (or Spirit) was always put first ON THE BLOOD, not on the man, when the leper was cleansed (Lev. xiv. 17).* To this agrees all the teaching of the Word of God."

I cannot avail myself of this, for the reason stated, and on this account have not used any proof of the kind; but I cannot decline, on the other hand, to consider the possibility of such an interpretation of a type when suggested by another; and in the type before us, I am unable to see any special difficulty.

In the first place, it is well to remember that the cleansing of the leper speaks primarily of the *restoration of a saint*, and not of the conversion of a sinner. It is one brought *back* to a place once held and enjoyed, from which he had been excluded. This is plain, and it brings an element of uncertainty at once into what at most must be a secondary application. I may say more; for if as a type it applies to one *already sealed with the Spirit*, (as it does,) the anointing with oil cannot speak of another sealing for such an one! This is clear, and it makes a secondary application in this way very hard to conceive.

It is indeed true that in the application of the sacrifices

in Leviticus xiv. we find types of justification, etc., and I have elsewhere so taken the two birds. But this does not mean that the restored saint is afresh justified, but only that he is reminded of the precious justifying work which is the basis of all else for him. If this cannot be, then in the trespass and sin-offerings afterward his sin is a second and a third time met, which is impossible. These are not a second and a third justification, but only a further *apprehension* of the value of the one priceless sacrifice.

Again, the three periods of time here have no more to be reckoned as three distinct periods *in the interpretation* than the four offerings have to be *so* reckoned as four. The seventh and eighth days have a meaning as such, apart from any necessary time to run out in the application; and the three cleansings are not necessarily successive in the application because they are so in the type. To me it is not doubtful that confusion has resulted in many minds by forgetting the Scripture-warning that the "law, having a shadow of good things to come," was "*not* the very image."

A brief glance at what I believe to be the meaning of the type is all that I have space for here. The first cleansing I take clearly to represent the justification of a sinner, and have spoken of it as such elsewhere; but it is seen in the memorial of it here in what it involves for the soul. Not only does the first bird speak of death—the death of the heavenly One, but the cedar-wood, hyssop, and scarlet—all the glory of the old creation—passes away in His death, and the second bird represents Him risen, and alive in His heavenly life to God. In this death of his substitute, he too is dead; in His life, he too is alive in holy liberty. This shows how far the cleansing goes, and why it is the first point of restoration to return to what is indeed involved in our justification itself. The cleansed leper accordingly now washes his clothes, shaves off his hair, washes himself in water, and returns into the camp, but tarries abroad out of his tent seven days.

And why? Because in the power of new creation alone can a man's tent be properly his *tent*; because the truth of strangership can only be endured and maintained by one who has found a scene in which he is no stranger.

Accordingly on the seventh day he once more shaves his hair and washes himself, and is again "clean;" and thus he enters upon the eighth day.

On the eighth day the trespass-offering is offered, the consecration-offering as in the case of the priests (chap. viii. 22-30), which on this account is waved before the Lord, with the oil, the type of the Spirit, by whom alone the power needful could be imparted. (The Levites, when presented to God, are themselves spoken of as a *wave-offering*, Num. viii. 11, *marg.*) The blood is put upon his ear, hand, and foot, that these may be now restored to God; and the oil is put upon the blood, and the rest poured on the head of the restored one. After this, the sin and burnt-offerings are offered, both expressly in atonement for the man; and now he is completely clean.

To me it is plain that if *the order of time* were what is in question, in the way pressed by some, the person would be clean *before* anointing, and would not need to be atoned for *afterward*, in connection with the very same thing. Would any one who knows what the anointing of the Spirit is contend that *after* this the work of Christ, in what is typified by sin and burnt-offering, could require to be applied to the soul?

The real reason for the type of the Spirit coming where it does is to be found in the meaning of the trespass-, the consecration-offering. Consecration is thus only practically effected. Therefore the oil is presented *with* the trespass-offering to God, and put upon the blood of it, the man, as a whole, being then, by the anointing of his head, spiritually strengthened and invigorated. The blood of the trespass-offering is not that which speaks of the attainment of *position*: that of the sin-offering alone brings to God; the burnt-offering alone gives the full acceptance of a soul with God. It is in connection with these the oil should be applied, if it had the meaning sought to be attached to it; instead of which, it is attached to the trespass-offering, which involves the sense of the past failure; and begins now, in the power of the Spirit, the new Nazariteship. It is connected, not with position, but with self-judgment and fresh consecration.

THE LESSONS OF THE AGES.

THE TRIAL OF INNOCENCE.

AMONG all creation beside, there was found no helpmeet for Adam. God makes all the creatures pass before him that he may see *this for himself*,—a fact which we shall see has its significance for the after-history. Adam gives names to all, as their superior, and in the full intelligence of what they are; but for Adam himself there is found no helpmeet.

Yet that “it is not good for the man to be alone” is the word of his Creator as to him. Looking at the circumstances of the fall, he who has learned to suspect God every where may suspect Him here. He provides in the woman one whom Scripture itself pronounces inferior naturally in wisdom to the man, but on the other hand supplementing him otherwise. The rib out of which she is made is taken from the breast; and if man be the head of humanity, woman is its heart. Even spite of the fall, this still is clear and unmistakable; and man’s heart is correspondingly drawn out and developed by her. The awful perversion of this now shows but the fact the more; and the perversion of the best thing commonly produces the worst. For Adam, where all was yet right, here was not only a spiritual being with whom was possible that interchange of thought and feeling which our whole being craves, but also an object for the heart. Pledge of his Creator’s love was this fair gift, in in whom love sensibly ministered to him and drew out his own, redeeming him from self-occupation

as from isolation: surely it was not,—“*is not good for the man to be alone,*” and the help provided was a “help *meet* for him.”

If unbelief still object that by the woman sin came in, and that inferiority of wisdom exposed her to the enemy: she was “beguiled,” and ate;—Adam too ate, though he was *not* beguiled. The woman’s strength did not, and does not, lie in wisdom, but in *heart*: and the instincts of the true heart are as divine a safeguard as the highest wisdom. It was here—as it is easy to see by the record itself—the woman failed, not where she was weakest, but where she was strongest. And with her, as still and ever, the failing heart deceived the head. There is an immense assumption, growing more and more every day, of the power of the mind to keep and even to set right the man morally. It is a mistake most easy of exposure; for are the keenest intellects necessarily the most upright and trustworthy of men? or is there any ascertained proportion between the development of mind and heart? The skepticism that scoffs at divine things revealed to babes is but the pride of intellect, not knowledge. It is itself the fruit and evidence of the fall.

Enough of this for the present, then. Along with all other provision for his blessing we must rank this—too little thought of—that Adam was to be taught *mastery* also, even in a scene where moral evil was not. He was to “replenish the earth and *subdue* it;” to “dress and keep” even the “garden of delight.” The dominion over the lower creatures he was also evidently to maintain, making them to recognize habitually the place of lordship over them which was his. All this implies much

in the way of moral education for one in whose perfect manhood the moral and mental faculties acted in harmony yet, with no breach or dislocation.

Surely we can see in all this a kindly and fruitful training of Adam himself, as in a scene where evil threatened, though it had not come. The full and harmonious play of every spiritual and bodily faculty was provided for, that the man himself, to use language antiquated now, might "play the man;" language truer in its application to him than to any of his natural issue since the fall.

But to that fall itself we must now go on. Its brief but imperishable record is full of the deepest instruction for us, for every day of our life here;—nay, who shall forbid to say, for our life hereafter also? The lessons of time, we may be assured, will be the possession of eternity; of all that we gather here, no fragment will be lost forever. In this history we shall find, too, I doubt not, what we have been considering as to Adam abundantly confirmed.

First, then, as to the instrument in the temptation. Scripture leaves us in no possible doubt that the one who used in this case the actual serpent was the one whom we too familiarly recognize as the leader in a previous irremediable fall—the fall of the angels. Thus he is called "a liar from the beginning," and "a murderer;" "that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan."

The use of the serpent here is noteworthy in another way from that in which it is generally taken. No doubt in the fact that it was "more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made" lay the secret of his selection of it. But why appear under such a form at all? For myself, I cannot but connect it with the fact that

Adam had before named every creature, and found no helpmeet for him among them all. If evil, then, would approach, it was not permitted to do so save only under the form of one of these essentially inferior creatures, refused already as having help for man. It was a divine limit to the temptation itself. Man listening to the voice of a creature over whom he was to have dominion, and in whom there was recognized to be no help for him, was in fact man resigning his place of supremacy to the beast itself. In all this, not merely the coming of the enemy, but the mercy of God also, may be surely seen.

Again, as to the form of the temptation itself. It was a question simply—apparently an innocent one—which, entertained in the woman's mind, wrought all the ruin. Here again, surely the mercy of God was limiting the needful trial. Evil was here also not permitted to show itself openly. The tempter is allowed to use neither force nor allurements, nor to put positive evil before the woman at all until she has first encouraged it. "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"

Here was affected surprise—a suggestion of strangeness, no doubt, but no positive charge of wrong. Such an insinuation, if it were even that, a heart true to God need scarcely find much difficulty in repelling. This was in *paradise*, where all the wealth of blessing which the munificent hand of God had spread around her filled every sense with testimony of His love. Was reason demanded? or did intellect need to find the way through any difficult problem here? Assuredly not. A heart filled with divine goodness would be armor of proof in such a conflict as this. The

effort of the enemy was just to make a question for the reason what ought to have been one of those clear perceptions not to be reasoned about, because the basis of all true reason. As a question for the mind the woman entertained it, and thus admitted a suspicion of the divine goodness which has been the key-note of man's condition ever since.

She thus, in fact, entered upon that forbidden path of discriminating between good and evil, which has resulted in a conscience of evil within, in the very heart of the fallen creature. Around was naught but goodness—goodness which they were not forbidden but welcomed to enjoy. Every thing here had but to be accepted; no question raised, no suspicion to be entertained. To raise the question was to fall. And this was the meaning of the forbidden tree, as it was the point to which Satan's question led. In the midst of a scene where was naught but goodness, there could be no question entertained where there was no suspicion. By entertaining the question, the woman showed that she had allowed the suspicion. Thus she fell.

How differently now we are situated is most plain. In a mingled scene where indeed divine goodness is not lacking, but where also the fruit of the fall, and Satan's work is every where, suspicion becomes continually a duty, and conscience a divine preservative. The knowledge of good and evil is no longer forbidden, but we have our "senses exercised to discern" these. Innocence is gone; but, thank God, who is supreme to make all things serve His holy purposes, righteousness and holiness are things possible, and, in the new creature, things attained.

If we look at the woman's answer to the serpent,

we shall easily find these workings of her soul. "And the woman said unto the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is *in the midst* of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, *neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*'"

Here is the wavering unsteadiness of a soul that has lost its balance, and flounders more in its endeavors to regain it. What tree had God put into "the midst" of the garden? According to the inspired account, it was the tree of *life*. Prohibition—was that at the very heart of paradise? Did every thing there radiate, so to speak, from the threatening of death? Alas! slight as the matter may seem, it tells where the woman's soul is. The first words we hear from her are words very intelligible to us, far gone as we are from innocence. For how easily with us does one prohibited thing blot out of our view a thousand blessings! Alas! we understand her but too well.

And her next words are even plainer. When had God said, "Neither shall ye touch it"? The prohibition has got possession of her mind, and to justify herself as to her conception of it, she adds words of her own to God's words. A mere "touch," she represents to the devil, might be fatal to them. They might perchance be the innocent victims of misfortune, as it would seem according to her. Who can doubt how dark a shadow is now vailing God from her soul? All the more that her next words make doubtful the penalty, and as if it were the mere result of natural laws, as men now speak, rather than direct divine infliction,—"*lest ye die.*"

God's love is here suspected; God's truth is tampered with; God's authority is out of sight: so far

on the swift road to ruin the woman has descended. The devil can be bolder now. Not "ye shall not surely die" is what he says, but "certainly ye shall not die;" and closes with one of those sayings of his in which a half truth becomes a total lie,— "for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, [or perhaps, "as God,"] knowing good and evil."

And there is no more tarrying as to the woman: her ear and her heart are gained completely. She sees with the devil's eyes, and is in full accord and fellowship with him, and the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life come in at once. "And when the woman *saw* that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."

Thus was the fall consummated. Conscience at once awoke when the sin of the heart had been perfected in act. "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons." But we are now in another scene from that with which we started, and a new age now begins, even before Genesis iii. is closed. We shall therefore look at this in its place separately when we consider, if the Lord will, the dealings of God with man under the next economy.

"WHENEVER we look around to shun a mortal's frown or catch his smile, we may rest assured there is something wrong; we are off the proper ground of divine service."

alone man's neighbor fully, serving him in his deepest needs. Here the officers of law—the priest and Levite—have no succor for the conscience-stricken and helpless sinner, while the true helper is one outside of law and under its judgment (a Samaritan), yet the minister of divine compassion, bringing to him, where he is, effectual help. The oil and wine—the glad news of Christ's work made known by the Holy Ghost—heal the wounds of the conscience; the power of the Spirit brings him to the inn, the place of refreshment and ministry on earth, where the same blessed Spirit, as host, has him in charge until Christ comes again. The "two pence" signify the *present* recompense of those by whom He ministers to the need of souls, the witness of further recompense when Christ comes.

The latter part of the parable thus connects with that which follows to the close of the chapter, where Christ's fullness is seen to be the provision for the saint—the "one thing needful:" the "good part," therefore, to be sitting at His feet to hear His word.

(4) xi. *Man's dependence upon the Spirit, and responsibility and judgment for resistance to Him.* Christ is, then, the one sufficiency for the soul, the Holy Spirit the only power for ministering Christ to it. It is this latter truth that is now insisted on, man's responsibility as to it being dwelt on here, as before the Spirit's competence and grace. The chapter divides into four parts.

(a) In the first place, (from v. 1-13,) urgency and confidence in prayer are set before us, while the model prayer itself shows what is to be the spirit of the suppliant. In v. 13, all good gifts are summed up, as it were, in one—the Holy Spirit. "If ye,

have a meaning, if we have heart and wisdom given of God to find it.

(4) ix. 1-17. *Ministering and ministered to.* We now see what the world is for those who are with Christ in it,—a wilderness, but where His grace and power are proved, and make those themselves the subjects of grace its instruments in blessing others. This is, in brief, what this section shows us.

(5) ix. 18-36. *Earth closed and heaven opened.* Next, we have the Lord fully as the One rejected on earth, accepted of God, and glorified. And this for disciples also, as He declares, closes earth and opens heaven. In Luke we have, more than in the two former gospels, the heavenly things dwelt upon, and our portion in them. Thus, while Matthew and Mark say, "After *six* days," Luke dates the transfiguration as "about an *eight* days after" the Lord's promise. Luke also alone gives His decease in Jerusalem as what Moses and Elias spoke of with Him, and of their entering into the "bright cloud" of the "excellent glory," as Peter afterward calls it (2 Pet. i. 17). All this is in full accord with the grace which is the theme of this gospel; and here the full character of its salvation is displayed.

(6) ix. 37-50. After this, it seems to me that we find a supplementary picture of a world in which those who are amazed and wonder at the power of God, owning it in Jesus, can yet crucify Him when delivered into their hands; and where disciples who have not power to cast out devils, because of their unbelief, would yet hinder him who has, "because he followeth not with us." The Lord Himself remains, the available source of power and grace, and who identifies Himself with a little child received in His name.

2. (ix. 51-xii.) *The Ministry of Salvation.*

In the last division, we were following almost entirely in the track of the two former gospels; in the two next we find what is almost entirely peculiar to the present one.

(1) ix. 51-62. *The spirit of the ministry.* The Lord is now on His way to be delivered up. This gives character to all that follows. The Master of all is taking the path of absolute self-renunciation as Saviour of men, and His own must follow Him in this spirit, finding their freedom from the world as brought out of its sphere of death, to preach the kingdom of God among men. *He* is thus to be glorified by those who walk in the freedom of their privileged place, in the spirit of obedience to Him who has delivered them.

(2) x. 1-24. *Its testimony and effect.* The mission of the seventy is more connected than even that of the twelve with the person of the Lord Himself, nor are they restricted to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The power of the enemy is prostrate before the messengers of grace, and babes have revealed to them what wise and prudent cannot attain unto. The object of the testimony is the Son, who, inscrutable in the full glory of His person by man, alone reveals the Father to men. It is thus the kingdom of God becomes a reality in the souls favored with so wonderful a revelation.

(3) x. 25-42. *Divine love to the sinner, and divine fullness for the saint.* The question of a lawyer gives occasion to the story which follows, in which "Who is my neighbor?" is seen as easily resolved by one who has in himself the *heart* of a neighbor. The story thus becomes a parable of Him who is

alone man's neighbor fully, serving him in his deepest needs. Here the officers of law—the priest and Levite—have no succor for the conscience-stricken and helpless sinner, while the true helper is one outside of law and under its judgment (a Samaritan), yet the minister of divine compassion, bringing to him, where he is, effectual help. The oil and wine—the glad news of Christ's work made known by the Holy Ghost—heal the wounds of the conscience; the power of the Spirit brings him to the inn, the place of refreshment and ministry on earth, where the same blessed Spirit, as host, has him in charge until Christ comes again. The “two pence” signify the *present* recompense of those by whom He ministers to the need of souls, the witness of further recompense when Christ comes.

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then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit* to them that ask Him?" As Christ's fullness is the one thing needful, so all gifts must be in fact included in this one, by which this fullness is communicated to us.

(b) From *v.* 14-28, man's rejection of the Holy Ghost is made the subject of the most solemn warnings. As the Spirit glorifies Christ, so the devil will bring in Antichrist for the nation that refuses Him, and thus the unclean spirit (of idolatry) returns to its dwelling-place in Israel, out of which it had gone (*v.* 26). And man, who loves independence, is in fact wholly dependent. For him, if it is not the Spirit of God, he is in the power of Satan to do with as he lists. Only Christ, by the Spirit of God, can effectually bind the strong man, who is not divided against himself. The kingdom of God was thus among men: blessed, above whatever natural relationship even to Christ Himself, were they who heard the word of God and kept it.

(c) The people sought a sign. They would find it in fact too late. For as Jonah (risen as from the dead) was a sign to the Ninevites, so the Son of Man would be to that evil generation (comp. Matt. xxiv. 30). He would be manifested (in the clouds of heaven) to their condemnation. For God had not put the light—its own witness—under a bushel: what was wanting was the eye to take it in.

* We are not, I believe, to think here of that one gift of the Holy Ghost, as a Person dwelling in us, which constitutes the one indwelt a Christian; but, as the persons addressed and the whole context shows, rather of the help and ministry of the Spirit as daily proved. Our reception of the Spirit as indwelling is not dependent upon our prayers; nor having received it, do our prayers become less needed. The context of the passage is here, as mostly, its best interpretation.

(*d*) Then, to the close of the chapter, the Lord exposes the unholiness of the Pharisees and lawyers, the leaders of the people, whose cleansing of the outside only made the inner uncleanness more defiling, "as graves which appear not;" while the lawyers loaded men with burdens they would not touch themselves, and built sepulchres for the prophets whom their fathers slew. They would be tested by new prophets, whom they would slay and persecute, to bring upon that generation the blood of all the prophets.

(5) xii. *A call to sitting loose to the world, as men that are waiting for their lord.* The twelfth chapter contains evidently one discourse; and its burden is that we be free in spirit from the world, as those whose hearts have found another Master. The first twelve verses exhort to confession of Him, and against fear of the world. Thence, to the thirty-first verse, against love of the world and care, the soul being sweetly encouraged to confidence in the perfect love of God. Then, to the forty-eighth, we are bidden to be ready for the coming of our Lord. And finally, in the closing verses, we have the effect of His first coming through the unbelief of men, and Israel going with their adversary—Moses, to whom they appealed—unto the judge, not to depart from prison until they paid the very last mite.

3. (xiii.–xvi.) *The Gospel as Manifesting both God and Man.*

(1) xiii. *Conditions of divine holiness in order to salvation.* Sovereign as is God's grace, there is yet a necessary method in God's rescue of a sinner. It must be such as shall maintain the holiness and

authority of God. This involves the conditions of which this chapter speaks. There are two, which give the two divisions:—

(a) The condition of repentance. The law declares this absolutely as to all: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." The woman with the "spirit of infirmity" then shows that for *weakness* there is abundant help; divine goodness never can be stayed by divine ordinances; and so evident is this, that only manifest hypocrisy could dispute it.

(b) The second condition is, Christ sought and known in a day of grace. When once the master of the house rose up and shut the door, it would be too late. Moreover, outward acquaintance with Christ, and external relationship with Him, would not be enough. Those who were far off would enter from all sides into the kingdom of God, while Jews, of Abraham's seed, would be shut out. Jerusalem, so long rejecting the sheltering wing of God, would now be left of God desolate, until she should say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.

(2) xiv. *Man's supper and God's*. The opposition of man to God in nature and will is now made manifest in the two suppers of which the fourteenth chapter speaks. Resistance to God's grace is the first thing, not for the first time, brought before us; then, man's self-exalting spirit, which He can only abase; then, his seeking his own, in a carnal way, without faith. Hence his refusal of God's invitation: the field, the yoke of oxen, the wife, are more, in his eyes, than all of God's offers; and God must send out to the outcasts,—to the highways and hedges,—and even then "compel" men to come in, that His house may be filled. Yet, if men will keep

to their thought, God must of necessity keep His own; and they must count the cost of discipleship, not take it up lightly.

(3) xv. *God's heart told out in salvation.* And now we come to the three parables so familiar to every Christian heart, but which continually disclose fresh beauty and blessedness to the eye opened to behold it. For it is the heart of God that is seen,—His joy in finding and receiving the lost soul, famine-pressed to seek the bread in a Father's house. Here, Father, Son, and Spirit have one mind in the pursuit of one object.* The sheep simply wanders, is lost, and brought back. The piece of money must of necessity be sought and found. And in the case of the lost son, while he does indeed set out on his way back to the father's house, yet it is as forced by a necessity in which we see, not the will of man, but God's will supreme over it. Coming to work for necessary bread at a servant's wages, he comes to find at once the wealth of a father's love poured out over him,—the kiss, the ring, the robe, the banquet, unconditionally made his own.

(4) xvi. 1-13. *Another's and our own.* The Lord now (to His disciples) speaks of the responsibility in earthly things of those brought into a heavenly

* As the "shepherd" is, of course, Christ, and the Father is spoken of as such, without any figure, so, though much more enigmatically expressed, the "woman" gives us the ministry of the Holy Ghost, acting, doubtless, through the people who belong to Christ, that is the woman. And here I would ask my readers to observe in what section of this book this wonderful display of God in His grace is found. How significant is it that it is placed in the third section of the third part of the third gospel! I would once more very earnestly beg all students of the divine Word to test the truth of these divisions by the meaning of numbers as I have given them in the commencement of these "Key-Notes." If they are indeed not human fancy but of God, it is hard to overrate their importance in the study of the Word. Every number given furnishes a means of testing if it is really so.

portion. Turned off as steward for unfaithfulness as man is with regard to the earth, he yet has in his hands his Master's goods; and as the unrighteous servant in the parable used what he had with a view to his own advantage after he should be dismissed, so grace privileges the believer to use the natural things, from the stewardship of which death dismisses, with a view to what is his eternal interest after death. And this for him is not unrighteousness, therefore: it is in faithfulness to his Master that this eternal blessing is to be found. This the next section emphasizes and enforces by a glimpse of the contrasted portions, of souls beyond death.

(5) xvi. 14-31. *Here or hereafter.* In answer to covetous Pharisees, the Lord draws this picture of Lazarus and the rich man. The latter's case is what is emphasized. To choose one's good things here is to give up eternal blessedness. But here, faith in the word of God—better authenticated than if one returned from among the dead to witness—is what enables one to choose for one's self a portion else unseen. We see in this section that grace does not set aside the "holiness, without which none shall see the Lord;" nor the principle of faith the works which it produces.

4. (xvii-xix. 27.) *The Practical Fruits of Salvation: the Kingdom of God.*

(1) xvii.-xviii. 8. *The presentation of the kingdom of God.* The practical power of the gospel is this, that it establishes the authority of God over our hearts and lives. And it is in Christ He is revealed: grace introduces this kingdom into our hearts. Otherwise, there is but one alternative—

the judgment of God. This gives the thread of the present chapter, which seems to have three parts. In the first (*vv.* 1-10), the grace which is the spring of all right action characterizes, therefore, the walk of the receiver of it. "He cannot with impunity despise the weak. He must not be weary of pardoning his brother. If he have faith but as a grain of mustard-seed, the power of God is at his disposal. Nevertheless, when he has done all, he has but done his duty." Secondly (*vv.* 11-19), it is by the relief of personal need that the glory of Christ is revealed to the soul, and the one who thus finds Him is delivered from the claim of law. Thirdly (*vv.* 20-37), the kingdom of God comes thus among men, (not yet as outward display,) to be received in the person of the lowly Son of Man. But the disciples would soon desire to see one of His days, and would not see it; for He must suffer many things, and be rejected of that generation. From thence, the Lord goes on to speak of His return and the judgment connected with it.

(2) xviii. 9-34. *The character suited to the kingdom.* We have now put before us the character suited for the kingdom. First, the publican, stricken with the consciousness of sin, is contrasted with the self-righteous Pharisee, and goes down to his house justified rather than he. Then the little child, the type of helplessness, is received, "for of such is the kingdom of God;" while the ruler finds in his riches that which excludes him from it, although *salvation* is among the things possible with God, where impossible with men. Peter suggests their own having left what they had, to follow Him. And the Lord, in reply, declares that whosoever had left any thing for the

kingdom of God's sake should receive much more even in the present time, and in the world to come eternal life. But the Master's feet would be foremost on the path in which the disciples were called to follow. He was to be delivered to the Gentiles, put to death, and then to rise again.

(3) xviii. 35-43. *Light through faith.* We now find one who owns the Lord as King—the Son of David,—receiving sight wherewith he follows Him. “Thy faith hath saved thee,” says the Lord. The subjection of faith to Christ is that which gives a single eye; and “the light of the body is the eye.” “He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

(4) xix. 1-10. *God works, and salvation.* The story of Zacchæus then distinguishes carefully between good works and salvation. It is plain that Zacchæus' answer to the Lord is the repelling of the charge that he was (as they said) in a special way a “sinner.” Yet He, while owning him a “son of Abraham,” maintains “salvation” to be a thing apart from any question of works, and for the “lost.” It had come with Himself that day to Zacchæus' house.

(5) xix. 11-27. *The reward of faithfulness and judgment of unbelief.* This section closes now with the reward of works at the coming of Christ. The judgment of the unfaithful servant shows unfaithfulness to be simply unbelief.

“If the eye, instead of resting on our sins and sorrows, could rest only on Christ, it would sweeten many a bitter cup, and enlighten many a gloomy hour.”

ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER XXI.

The other Apostolic Writings.

THERE are but three other books which require now some attention before we close our consideration of Scripture-texts. They are the first epistles of Peter and John, and the book of Revelation.

We must not expect to find here the full development or application of atonement which Paul had especially in his commission to make known. The truth of it is every-where insisted on, however, in due connection with the peculiar theme of each book.

The theme of Peter's epistle is the path through the world of those who, as partakers of the heavenly calling, are strangers and pilgrims in it. Addressed to the believers among the Jews of the dispersion, he brings out the contrast between their Jewish hopes and those to which they had been now begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Already they had received the salvation of their souls, being redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and born again of the incorruptible Word, and were a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. As children of God, they were the subjects of His holy government, under the discipline of a sorrow which He made fruitful, passing through a world through which Christ had passed, adverse to His as to Him. To do well, suffer for it, and take it patiently was their lot,

having Him for their example, and the glory into which He had already entered their eternal rest.

It is not strange, therefore, that it is the "*sufferings* of Christ" upon which the apostle insists; that *He* suffered for *sins*, and that we must suffer, not for these, but for righteousness or for His name's sake (ii. 19-21); that He "suffered in the flesh,"—His only connection with sin being in suffering on account of it; we must arm ourselves therefore with the same mind (iv. 1).

But the sacrificial character and efficacy of His work are fully maintained, for "Christ also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God," and "Himself bare our sins in His own body on the tree,"—the practical end of this being enforced, "that ye being dead unto sins, should live unto righteousness—by whose stripes ye were healed" (ii. 24). And thus we are "redeemed, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold," (alluding to Israel's atonement-money,) "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot" (i. 18, 19). Salvation, and begetting to a living hope, are therefore connected with the resurrection of Christ from the dead (iii. 21; i. 3).

This is so similar to the first part of Romans that it is scarcely necessary to enter into it more here. It gives us only a part of it however, the application being plainly to the practical walk, as that in Romans is mainly to the setting free the conscience before God.

The second epistle of Peter has but one word, which we may notice as we pass on: the false teachers, who privily bring in damnable heresies among Christians, deny the "Lord that bought

them." Thus the plain difference between redemption and purchase is made clear. The Lord has title to the world and all in it (comp. Matt. xiii. 44) by the cross, but we may *buy* what we have no personal interest in. Redemption speaks of heart-interest in the object, and of release, deliverance.

The first epistle of John gives us the characters of eternal life in the believer as now manifested in the power of the Spirit which is in us as Christians. He dwells, therefore, more upon the Godward side of the work of Christ—propitiation for our sins (ii. 2; iv. 10), from which, therefore, we are cleansed by the propitiating blood (i. 7). It is thus that divine love is declared toward us; and this love is perfected with us, giving us boldness in the day of judgment, in the assurance that even now, in this world, we are as Christ is (iv. 17). This falls short of Paul's doctrine, not as to the perfection in which we stand, but only in not bringing us into the heavenly places, or that of being risen with Christ. Its application is to the entire freedom of the conscience by propitiation through a substitute, whose acceptance is therefore ours.

In the last chapter we have another beautiful testimony to the necessity and perfection of the work of Christ. He came, not by water only, but by water and *blood*. And the Spirit also bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. This, without any question, refers to the blood and water that followed the soldier's spear, and of which John by the Spirit bare record (Jno. xix. 34, 35). What, then, is the purport of the record? That out of a *dead* Christ—His work accomplished—expiation and purification flow together for us. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth

alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Thus, as soon as He has died,—as soon as the judgment due has been borne, purification and expiation are found for men, in Him who has borne the judgment.

But, says the apostle, "this is the record, that God has given unto us *eternal life*, and this life is in His Son." In "eternal life" he sums up, as it were, these two things. For "life" is the opposite of judgment, and implies that it is passed. (Comp. Jno. v. 24, 29, where "condemnation" and "damnation" are the same word—"judgment.") While the full extent of man's need as to purification is declared. Life in a new source alone meets it. But God's grace abounds over all man's need. This life is eternal life, and in His Son,—a *divine* spring which guarantees the perfection of what flows from it.

In the book of Revelation, finally, the name the Lord bears everywhere through it shows how central as to all God's ways is the work of atonement. The book of His counsels finds none with title to open it save One who, coming forward in the character of Judah's Lion, is seen, in that which gives Him title, as the Lamb slain. He is therefore at once the object of worship by the elders as the Author of redemption: "For Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation" (v. 6, 9).

The book of life is accordingly "the book of life of the *Lamb slain*" (xiii. 8; xxi. 27); and the being written in this book is the only possible escape from the judgment of the second death (xx. 15).

Thus the saints overcome the accuser by the

blood of the Lamb (xii. 11); their robes are washed and made white in His blood (vii. 14); and this it is that gives "right to the tree of life" and to enter in by the gates into the heavenly city (xxii. 14, *R. V.*).

The throne, moreover, is the "throne of God and of the Lamb" (xxii. 1, 3); and "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of" the new Jerusalem (xxi. 22); and the glory of God doth lighten it, while the Lamb is the lamp thereof (*v.* 23).

Fittingly, thus, does Scripture close its testimony to the atonement and Him who made it. We will not try to define the meaning of these glorious sayings. They shine by their own light. May our attitude be that than which a creature can know no higher: that of the elders in the presence of their Redeemer—of worshipers.

"REJOICE in the Lord always." Certainly it could not be in circumstances, for he was a prisoner. Christians are often a great deal happier in the trial than they are in thinking of it; for there the stability, the certainty, the nearness, and the power of Christ are much more learnt, and they are happier. Paul could not so well have said, "Rejoice in the Lord always," if he had not known what it was to be a prisoner. Just as in Psalm xxxiv: "I will bless Jehovah at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth." Why? "This poor man cried, and Jehovah heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles."

A HOLY DAY TO THE LORD.

"So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, 'This day is holy unto the Lord your God; MOURN NOT, NOR WEEP.' For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. Then he said unto them, 'Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.' So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, 'Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved.' And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them." (Neh. viii. 8-12.)

HOW sweetly, yet rebukingly, does this lesson come to us from the pages of the Old Testament. It is not the "gospel," and yet how much gospel is there in it too, which it would be well if we of a brighter and happier day had fully learnt.

The "gospel" is "good news;" or, good news "of God" (Rom. i. 1); that which comes to us from the heart of the good and blessed God, as the witness of what He delights in. It is the preaching of gladness; and what is the reception of it unto the soul but the reception of gladness? News there is from Him, of such a nature and character that the mere believing listening to it is the one and effectual remedy for all the care and sorrow which oppress us naturally, and are our heritage indeed as chil-

dren of men. Reader, have you apprehended that? And good news, let me add, which God publishes for His own joy and glory, so that we may know and understand *Him* in the message He has sent.

Well He knows, moreover, the people among whom He publishes this good news. It is just because they are what they are His gospel becomes so sweet a declaration of what He is. And He bids it to be preached to every one of them in all the world, and makes it simple obedience, the *first point of duty* to Himself, to "*obey the gospel*" with the "*obedience of faith.*" In other words, to believe and to rejoice!

This is the blessedness of this scene in Israel in the time of Nehemiah. Good cause had they, if any ever had, to weep "when they heard the words of the law." They might claim, if any, amid the ruins of their broken city, and listening to the thunders of that terrible law, which, through their breach of it, had brought in such desolation, that they did well to weep. Would it have been any thing but hardness of heart on their part to have refused their tears to the misery of their condition, and the sin against their God which had introduced the misery?

Yet one voice had title to be heard surely even there. If He against whom they had sinned spoke, surely they were to listen. If He, even now, could preach gladness to them, surely they were to be glad! and glad the more in Him who could make their sin and misery the suited time to display His goodness and His grace. It was not "joy" simply they were called to; it was "*the joy of the Lord.*" If it were hardness in the first instance, then, not to feel their sin and misery, would it not be greater

hardness not to feel His grace now and to rejoice in Him?

And this is what God is calling men to universally, beloved reader, by that gospel which He has sent out every where, to be preached to "every creature under heaven." He is bearing witness to Himself. Has He not title to be heard and to be believed? If He call to "obedience of *faith*" in this good news, is it humble or good to go on mourning as if He had not spoken? Is it good or wise *not* to be confident in the love He has in His heart toward us?

And what a precious thought is this of a holy day kept to the Lord, excluding sorrow, of necessity, as profanation of its holiness! Is it not the very echo of that thought of the apostle, "Now the very God of *peace* sanctify you wholly"? or, of that word which assures us that among the foremost "fruits of the Spirit" are "joy" and "peace"?

Dear fellow-believer in the Lord Jesus, will you let me say to you, in the presence of these blessed scriptures, that *unhappiness* is *unholiness*? that "the joy of the Lord" is alone your "strength," whether for walk or service?

You may ask me, Do you know who I am? Do you know my failures, my sins, my backslidings, the dishonor I have done to the name of Jesus? I reply, I am sure you will do nothing but still dishonor it, if you refuse God's way of help against such dishonor. "God is for us," beloved. Is that because we are for Him, or because of what Jesus is in His presence for us? Could we be nearer to Him by any effort of right-living of our own than we are at this moment as "accepted in the Beloved"? This acceptance, this favor, this delight

of God in His own Son, rests upon us spite of all we are. To know it, believe it, enter into it, live in it, is restoration, blessing, power, for the soul.

You say, My feet are defiled; how can I walk with God? I ask, again, Know you not who it is, who, having come from God, and going back to God, stooped, in the full consciousness of that, to wash the feet of His own, that they might have "part with Him"? Was that cleansing *their* work, then, or His? Was He at a distance from them when He did it, or near at hand? Did the uncleanness of their feet do aught but make Him serve them in more lowly fashion? If you would be clean now, you must sit still now and let Him serve you. "Washing of water" is "by the Word." You must sit and listen and believe. And as He puts before you all the greatness and fullness of His love, and all that love has done for security of blessing to you, you will hear Him say, "Now ye are clean through the word I have spoken to you."

That which no law, no ordinance, no striving, will effect for you, a few moments in His presence will accomplish. You will learn that "there is *mercy* with Him, that He may be feared;" and that "in returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." Yea, "the very God of peace" shall "sanctify you wholly."

And, reader, you who have never yet tasted of this love of His, let me assure you "to you" also "is the word of this salvation sent." There is "gospel" for you: the superscription of my message is, "To every creature." To you, surrounded with as sad evidences of your guilt as ever had Israel, the word of God's grace is still, "Believe

the *gospel*”—“Obey the *gospel*.” It is the “God of peace” sanctifies. It is “the grace of God which bringeth salvation unto all men,” which teaches us and *alone* “teaches us, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.”

Therefore, to you, as you are, is “the gospel of salvation” preached. You can be nothing, do nothing, save as *it* teaches you, even the “grace that bringeth salvation.” Will you listen to it? Will you believe it? For as surely as Christ “died for *sinners*,” that death of His is God’s great treasury of blessing for all such. Every check upon this must be signed with that name, that one name of “SINNER,” which proves your title to the wealth laid up there.

To you, then, a holy day to the Lord is proclaimed”—“an accepted time, a day of salvation.” God, against whom your sins have been, who alone has title to come in with a message of joy into the midst of the ruin and misery of the fall, has come in with the “good news” of “peace” made by the blood of the cross of Jesus, and preached to every creature for the obedience of faith. To believe and obey *that* gospel is to listen to and rejoice in what He is declaring to us.

Reader, will you be as those of whom it is written here, “And all the people went their way, to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, *because* they had UNDERSTOOD the words that were declared unto them”?

THE LESSONS OF THE AGES.

THE TRIAL OF CONSCIENCE IN THE AGE BEFORE THE FLOOD.

WITH Adam fallen—even from the first moment of his fall—we enter upon a new period. Sin and death, now come into the world, necessitate new dealings of God with man, if, indeed, judgment do not bring all to a sudden close. And this was not in His mind, who from the first had foreseen and provided for the rebellion of the creature. Judgment does indeed follow, such as God had previously announced; but that was no final one, but (as we shall easily see,) one anticipative of the mercy to be shown, and which could be made to take itself the character of mercy. It is in confounding the provisional “death,” threatened to and inflicted on Adam and his posterity, as the result of the primal sin, with the “second” and final “death” of the lake of fire, that much error and heresy of the present day finds apparent countenance, Scripture being strained to establish what is a mere foregone conclusion in the minds of its interpreters, and what none can in fact deduce from its straightforward simplicity of statement.

“In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” is defined so clearly, in the Lord’s words to fallen Adam, as to put its meaning, one would think, beyond serious question. “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou *return unto the ground*; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and *unto dust shalt thou return*.”

To read into this eternal judgment is to misread it thoroughly. The death announced, and which we know to be every where in the world, through

the first man's sin, is in reality a thing which, in its very nature, necessitates the *suspension* of eternal judgment until it is taken out of the way. Not till the dead are raised will the white throne be set, and the dead—the wicked dead—be “judged, every man according to his works.” And thus the resurrection of the unsaved dead is as much a “resurrection of *judgment*” (that is, what it implies and necessitates,) as the resurrection of the saved is similarly a “resurrection of *life*.” The final judgment is thus in no wise the result of Adam's sin; it is that in which emphatically each suffers for his own. The second death and the first are in no wise to be confounded—they are incompatible and contrary things.*

Nor can spiritual death, or “death in trespasses and sins,” be possibly what God speaks of in His threatening to Adam. This is indeed the spiritual state which is the result of the fall; but the moral state of a criminal is a very different thing from the judgment upon the criminal. Man's depravity is what he is condemned *for*, not what he is sentenced *to*; and these things cannot be synonymous. “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return” is thus the only possible, as it is the divinely given, interpretation of the announcement, “In the day† thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

* “Dying, thou shalt die” (Gen. ii. 17, *marg.*) is often appealed to as if inferring a second death. Any one who will look at the marginal reading of only the verse before will find that it is but a Hebrew idiom of emphasis. “Thou shalt freely eat” is literally, “Eating, thou shalt eat.”

† Some contend that this makes impossible the thought of returning to the dust, because Adam did not actually die on the day that he ate of the tree; and some have more strangely answered that Adam *did* die on that “day,” for a day with the Lord is a thousand years! The truth is, that not only did Adam indeed begin to die from that day, as cut off from the tree of life, but also that “in the day” does not require so rigid a construction, as see Ezekiel xxxiii. 12, etc.

Yet it is quite true, and to be pressed, that this death, coming not only upon the first sinners, but upon all their posterity—and surely by no mere arbitrary decree on God's part,—marks the changed relation to Him of the now fallen creature. Every where does Scripture recognize this, and in God's ordinances for His chosen people of old it comes fully out. Death is associated ever with uncleanness and defilement. If a man die in a tent, all that come into the tent, and all that is in the tent, are unclean seven days. Every one touching a dead body, a bone, or a grave, is similarly defiled. Nor must we look at this as merely symbolic teaching. The psalm of the wilderness is plain enough in its doctrine here: "For all our days are passed away in Thy wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knoweth the power of Thine anger? even according to Thy fear, so is Thy wrath." (Ps. xc. 9-11.)

Yes, if God had thus to turn to destruction the being over whom, as first created, He had rejoiced with unfeigned delight, surely the state of the creature it was that was thus marked out, not a causeless change in God. Death was the stamp upon the creature fallen away from God, and every sign of its approach a standing admonition to him as a being thus under sentence—not final indeed, or there would be no use in the admonition, but still a sentence of condemnation, which cut him off from all pretension to righteousness, or natural claim to favor, and left him but the subject of

True, he may (alas! he does) resist and strive against the sentence graved upon his brow. He may condemn God, that he may himself be righteous. This changes nothing—no, not a hair of his head from white to black. He may complain of himself as the victim of circumstances, impossible to be “clean” as “born of a woman.” He may plead that he did not give himself the evil nature that he carries with him, but conscience will not be satisfied with this. It will not excuse actual transgressions by any plea as to a fallen nature. We feel and know, every one of us, that we ought nevertheless to be masters of ourselves and of our nature, and that our responsibility has been in no wise destroyed or lessened by the fall. So in the day of judgment also God will render to every man, not according to his *nature*, but his *deeds*, and upon this ground is the whole world brought in “guilty before God.”

Death thus, while introduced by one man's sin, “passes upon all men, for that *all* have sinned.” Were there one man, in the full sense, righteous before God, he might successfully plead exemption from the common doom; but “there is none righteous—no, not one;” and death remains universally a sentence gone forth against man as man, the constant witness against self-righteousness on his part, the constant witness of his need of mercy—absolute, sovereign mercy.

The sorrow of all this is thus God's appeal to man; the trouble to which he is born, as sparks fly upward, becomes the discipline of holy but merciful government. It is of this that God speaks to the man and the woman when He first appears to them in the garden; to the woman, of the sorrow

of conception, and subjection to the rule of her husband; to the man, of the cursed ground, and of its thorns and thistles, with the toil of labor, till he return to the dust. With them, let us notice, He makes no new terms—no other covenant is proposed to them. As helpless and hopeless otherwise, they are made simply to listen to what God announces He will do—to the message of a deliverance He will raise up to them in the woman's Seed. It is to faith in One to come they are invited, in the midst of the ruin they have brought upon themselves. No new trial is proposed. They are left under the salutary government of God, to realize what and where they are before Him, and to embrace the mercy wrapped up for them in the bud of that first promise.

For promise indeed it is, while it comes in the shape of threatening to the serpent; a promise whose broken echoes the traditions of the nations have prolonged, even to our own day. Scripture, which cannot be broken, has alone given us the very words, in their original simplicity and grandeur—the "Let there be light" of a new creative period, exceeding the former as antitype its typic "shadow." The words are for us to-day, to vindicate their imperishable nature, fresh for our souls as the day when they were uttered: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel."

It is the character of the new period we are occupied with, and for this have only to do with certain features of this promise. It is plain enough that Another is here given as the Conqueror of the serpent, the enemy of man, but whose "seed"

nevertheless (as the near future would painfully reveal,) would be found among men. This Conqueror is also the woman's seed, and not the man's. It is no restoration of Adam's forfeited headship, but a new and mysterious beginning, wherein divine power takes up the frailty and mutability of the creature, which has its fullest expression in the woman, to demonstrate divine grace, while not without cost is the victory over the enemy achieved: in bruising the serpent's head, the Conqueror has His own heel bruised.

Thus does the divine purpose begin to be disclosed, asking no aid from, and making no condition with, the fallen creature. From the first, it is seen that all help is laid upon Another—One in whom, though born of a woman, power from God is found; who suffers, and in suffering overcomes; and manifestly in behalf of those of whom He is the Kinsman.

Although, then, the Lord's address to the woman afterward speaks of nothing but pain and humiliation, and to the man himself of toil and suffering and death, yet we read immediately upon this that "Adam called his wife's name 'Eve' [or 'Life'], because she was the mother of all living." Life he apprehends, according to the divine announcement, to be in the woman connected by grace with her victorious Seed; weakness and evil in her thus met and triumphed over, while the headship of the first man is set aside. Adam bows, then, to this sentence, while in faith he receives the mercy; and it is upon this that we find God significantly replacing the inadequate apron of fig-leaves, the first human manufacture, with the coats of skins, the fruit of death itself, now made to minister to their need, and by divine gift, not by human acquisition.

We may thus very clearly see how God accepts the faith of Adam, and in this clothing, how the shame of our moral nakedness is put away forever, clothed, in divine mercy, with Christ Himself, as the fruit of His death for us.

How much of this Adam and his wife might apprehend is another question, and it is one impossible perhaps for us to answer. Instead of unsafe speculation, therefore, it will be better to pass on to that in which, according to Scripture itself, the faith of one of their children is expressed,—for “by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, and by it he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts.” The use of sacrifice thus demands our attention, no single examples merely of which we have in the case of a few early patriarchs, but a thing which we find, in whatever perverted forms, pervading all religious creeds from the beginning. That—unnatural as it is—it could have rooted itself thus deeply in the minds of men, shows its manifest divine institution, as well as the depth and universality of a common conviction to which it appealed.

Nature could never have dictated it. Cain's way was nature's dictation, but not Abel's. How could it be supposed that, admitting man's sinfulness and its desert, the death of an innocent victim could atone for the guilty, or that the blood of bulls and goats could put away sin? Looked at as the product of reason merely, such reasoning were utter folly. Connected with the bruised heel of the Seed of the woman, and perhaps with the skins which clothed the first transgressors, a voluntary Sufferer might be seen, whose suffering and death should indeed have efficacy on man's behalf. And thus we

gain the assurance of a real view which faith had, and which was offered to faith, of vicarious atonement, as linking itself with the suffering Conqueror of the first prophecy, even as we are assured of Abel that his "gifts" had in some way a value in them which God could accept on his behalf, pronouncing him righteous on their account. With Cain also it would seem as if we must read God's expostulation, "And if thou doest not well, a sin-offering coucheth at the door;" thus prescribing a way in which faith, on the part of a poor sinner, might approach Him with confidence. The way of sacrifice was thus openly proclaimed as the way of acceptance; repentance and faith as what, on man's part, this implied, if really apprehended; no legal conditions, no covenant of works, were in any wise imposed; God starts with that which He has now, and once for all, returned to: His first thought is His last—His own thought, in fact, all through, though man's necessity might require, as we shall see, apparent departure from it. Man's necessity is indeed his perversity, and nothing else, which, refusing in self-confidence God's simple way of grace, compelled Him to allow them the experiment of their own way. But for sixteen centuries at least, God abides by what He has said at the beginning. Having made known to man His way of acceptance and approach to Him, He waits to see how man's conscience will respond to the sentence upon him—his heart to the grace which has provided for his need. Alas! His next word has to be a threat of near and approaching judgment. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; but his days shall be a hundred and twenty years."

We see that, after the fall, God purposed no new trial to man whatever. He revealed the coming of that Seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head. He instituted sacrifice, and thus not obscurely intimated the way of blessing and acceptance for man. He declared actually His acceptance of believing Abel, and to Cain the ground of his rejection and the remedy that still remained. But He gave no law; He urged man to no fatal use of his own efforts to work out righteousness. Conscience was to be the teacher of that need which they had as those outside of Eden, whose closed gate was a perpetual witness, as were also the sorrow and death which sin had introduced into the world; while repentance—the truthful acknowledgment of their condition—would be as ever the way out of it, by faith in that which on God's part met it all.

The only test for man was this necessary one, whether conscience would have force to bring him thus to himself and to God. Alas! as to this, we know the result. The figure prominent in the antediluvian world is one in whose person the world, at every period, finds its awful representative. "The way of Cain," as Jude may assure us, has survived the flood, and been followed by the mass through the many generations thence to the present time. It is, of course, the exact opposite of God's way; as its first originator stands before us as the first of that seed of the serpent ever in enmity to the woman's Seed. He is thus the incarnation of satanic opposition to the counsel of God. Abel approaches God by sacrifice, the appointed foreshadowing of Him in whom the conflict between good and evil would find its decisive issue; Cain,

rejecting sacrifice, brings as an offering the fruit of his own labor. Here begins, with him, the self-assertion which required so many ages of trial to beat down,—a “ministration of death” and “condemnation.” It is man himself who raises the question of his ability to meet God and merit acceptance at His hands; and the question being raised must be fully and with long patience entertained, and conclusively settled.

Toward Cain himself, who at once shows how murder can lurk under the specious form of righteousness, this patience is exercised. He abuses it to build a city in defiance of his doom of vagabondage—a city which his sons adorn with arts and appliances, which, like man's first invention, are made to cover from themselves the shame of their nakedness. Adam wove his girdle out of fig-leaves; Cain's sons weave all nature into a web for the awful purpose of self-deception, forcing it into unwilling revolt against God, and idolatrous usurping of its Maker's place. As with their first father, so with these imitators of his apostasy and not his faith, conscience but drives them to hide from the insupportable presence of God, under the cover of His own handiwork. They are pioneers of progress, which, with all its mighty results in the ages since, has never sufficed to lift off the curse from the earth, or take the sting from death, or satisfy the craving heart of man, or deliver from the corruption that is in the world through lust. It has built up luxury, has added burdens to the already burdened, has kindled wars, which come of the “lusts which war in the members.” The last of Cain's family is but Tubal-Cain—“Cain's issue.” Its Lamech, “the strong man,” with his two wives

(first of polygamists) and his argument for impunity because of the long-suffering patience of which Cain had been the subject—shows us clearly and conclusively the moral result.

But Cain and his seed do not fill the whole scene here. The forefront they do; and history at the beginning, like all history since, has little to tell of outside their doings. Yet there is a remnant, beginning with one who, by divine appointment, takes the place of martyred Abel. His son's name, Enos (in a day when names still had meaning), tells us of the acceptance of the humbling reality of man's condition—Enos, "frail man." And "then," we read, "men began to call on the name of Jehovah." God gets His place when man takes his. And so it ever is.

Here, then, a new beginning, as it were, is found; and the divine record, leaving out Cain and his apostate race, gives us now a fresh genealogy, in which we are once more told how "in the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him; male and female created He them; and blessed them, and called their name 'Adam,' in the day when they were created. And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, and called his name Seth." Of the men of this generation it is but noted that they lived and died, although now first we find—what is wanting as to Cain's race—every year of their unobtrusive lives noted before God. Divine interest is shown in what for man has none, and contributes nothing to the world's history.

When, indeed, we come to Enoch, seventh from Adam, God can keep silence no longer, "And Enoch walked with God three hundred years

and Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him." Precious and emphatic commendation of Enoch! Solemn and decisive judgment as to the ruin of all on earth! for the one who walks with God He takes from the earth. How plain an intimation that this pious seed is not as yet to fill the earth! Nay, surely a very clear one that that seed itself begins to fail. This Enoch-walk is as rare as it is precious. Indeed, we know that but two generations later Noah stands the solitary representative of it upon earth. Even in Noah's father, Lamech, though he speaks piously of God, we can detect deterioration. Is he not, even in his name, sadly linked with Cain's race?—another Lamech, a "strong man;" not an Enos, taking his place in self-humiliation before God. It is striking, also, that like his Cainite namesake, he too has his memorable saying. And though at first sight they may seem quite diverse, and in some sense really are, there is yet, spite of all, a striking similarity. For if the Cainite Lamech prophesies impunity to himself for his wrong-doing, from the false argument as to God's long-suffering, the Sethite no less, upon the very eve of judgment, speaks of comfort to a generation soon to be swept away by the flood. "And he called his [son's] name 'Noah,' saying, 'This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.'"

There was truth in this. It was of Noah's day that we read, "And the Lord smelled a sweet savor; and the Lord said in His heart, 'I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake.'" Lamech's prophecy was true, then, as to the "comfort" God had in store for man; false only as to

the application to a generation the survivors of whom were cut off by the judgment that preceded the blessing.

If we go on to the next chapter, the marks of fatal declension are yet more manifest. However we may interpret the "sons of God" of the first paragraph there, it is abundantly evident that Seth's line, as a whole, are no longer exempt from the universal corruption. God declares His Spirit shall not always strive with man, and fixes the limit of present patience to a hundred and twenty years.

Yet it is just here that the world's mighty ones are found, and giants appear upon the earth—men whose fame survives their awful judgment. God on His part saw "that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and that every imagination of the thought of his heart was only evil, and that continually. And it repented Jehovah that He had made man upon the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart."

When at last all flesh had corrupted His way upon the earth, and Noah alone is found walking with God, the flood closed the time of His long-suffering; and the earth, emerging from its baptism, bears upon its surface but eight living persons, as the nucleus of a new world.

"My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

(Phil. iv. 19.)

"FRIEND, doth thy inmost heart believe this word?
Then trust—yea, wholly trust thy loving Lord.
Trust Him each day, each hour, and thou shalt see
Each need supplied: Christ's riches used for thee."

KEY-NOTES TO THE BIBLE BOOKS.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE.—*Continued.*

IV.

CHRIST OUR PEACE-OFFERING. (Chap. xix. 28-xxiv.)

I. (xix. 28-xxi.)

Causes and Consequences of the Lord's Rejection.

(1) xix. 28-48. *The Prince of Peace refused.* We are again upon common ground here with the previous gospels; so that for our purpose it will be only necessary to note the distinctive features. It is characteristic here that the disciples, going farther, it may be, led of the Spirit, than their actual intelligence, hail the coming of the King as bringing "peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." Christ's kingdom is thus victory over Satan, (comp. chap. x. 18,) and thus establishes peace in the fullest way; while His rejection is Israel's refusal of peace for herself (2nd. 42-44).

(2) xx. 1-18. *The secret of the refusal.* Owning themselves unable to discern the true character of John's mission, whether from God or men, the scribes and elders yet undertake to question His. But in truth they know and refuse the claim of the Lord of the vineyard, that they may possess for themselves the earth untroubled by it. The result would be but their own destruction.

(3) xx. 19-xxi. 4. *"Blind leaders of the blind."* The leaders of the people are now exposed to their own confusion. The Pharisees, with their pretended zeal for God, not bowing to His holy government in rebuke of their sins,—they would use Cæsar's money and refuse Cæsar; the Herodians would

give Cæsar what was God's; the Sadducees ignored both Scripture and the power of God. The final test is the person of Christ, as declared in their own prophets. How is David's Son his Lord? goes to the root of their accusations of Him. He then pronounces their judgment.

(4) xxi. 5-24. *Consequences of His rejection.* The consequences of His rejection are next foretold: the destruction of the temple and treading down of their city by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled. False Christs, wars, and persecutions would mark the interim, and in fact no doubt the whole time of His absence, amid which His grace would sustain nevertheless His own.

(5) xxi. 25-38. *His return.* The Lord then passes on to the time of His return, the redemption of His people, the shooting forth of the fig-tree (the Jewish people) and all the trees, as the token of summer-time at hand. Yet as a snare it would come in necessary judgment upon the obstinately heedless world.

2. (xxii, xxiii.) *The Work by which Peace is made.*

(1) xxii. 1-62. *Anticipations of the cross.* The set time is now at hand when the enmity of man and the power of Satan shall combine to effect, after all, God's gracious purposes. First (vv. 1-6), we find Satan getting ready his instrument; then (vv. 7-38), the passover anticipates, from the Lord's side, the blessings to flow from His accomplished work. Here, too, He rebukes the spirit of self-exaltation among His disciples, and commends by His own example the spirit of service. Peter is warned of Satan's sieve and his approaching fall, but yet assured of the grace that should manifest itself

through him when humbled and restored. They are all warned of coming conflict, and to be prepared for it.

Then (*vv.* 39-46) we have Gethsemane, the Lord's anticipation of the cross itself; His being strengthened (in body) by angelic ministry; His sweat as it were of blood; and His warning words to His disciples.

Then begins what the Lord to the chief priests calls "Your hour, and the power of darkness." Betrayed with a kiss, He rebukes the mistaken zeal of His disciple, heals the smitten servant of the high-priest,—smiting their consciences with a deeper wound—and then is taken and led away (*vv.* 47-54). Peter's fall, fulfilling the Lord's recent warning, closes this section.

(2) *xxii.* 63-*xxiii.* 25. *The twofold accusation.* Here we have, as elsewhere, the double accusation, in the high-priest's palace and before Pilate. Before the Jewish council "He waives the question whether He was the Messiah,—that was gone by for Israel,—He was going to suffer; He is the Son of man, but thenceforth only as entering into glory; and He is the Son of God. It was all over with Israel as to their responsibility; the heavenly glory of the Son of man, the personal glory of the Son of God, was about to shine forth; and Jesus is led away to the Gentiles, that all may be accomplished."

Before Pilate the question is as to His being King; and He confesses it. Anxious to escape, if possible, from His condemnation, Pilate sends Him to Herod, whose hardened conscience can allow him to seek the gratification of his curiosity in a display of supernatural power. Disappointed in this, Herod treats Him with insult, and sends Him

back to Pilate. Pilate would take occasion of the passover, when it was the custom to release a prisoner, to deliver Jesus; but the Lord—Himself the passover—could not be thus delivered. The people choose Barabbas, and force the unwilling governor to their will.

(3) xxiii. 26-56. *The cross.* At the cross, the peace-offering character comes fully out. The Lord's prayer is, "Father, forgive them," and the dying thief becomes the pattern of salvation through faith in Christ. The three hours of darkness are but mentioned here, along with the result of a rent vail, the darkness for faith forever passed from the face of God. Again the Lord says "Father," commending His spirit into His hands, and then expires. The centurion's testimony in this gospel is in keeping with its whole character: "Certainly this was a *righteous man*."

3. (xxiv.) *The Proclamation of Peace.*

The resurrection follows, here as elsewhere, as the seal upon His accomplished work; the testimony of Scripture confirmed by and confirming all this to the soul. We have the Lord Himself declaring the fruit of His work; opening the understanding to understand the Scriptures, and sending out the message of the gospel—repentance and remission of sins in His name—to all nations. They are to wait only at Jerusalem for the power of the Spirit. Finally, leading them out as far as Bethany, and while in the act of blessing them, He is parted from them, and carried up into heaven, to assume for them His priestly place. They, worshiping Him, and filled with joy, return to wait at Jerusalem.

NEW CREATION.

"Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth." (Isa. lxxv. 17.)

"If any man be in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things have become new." (2 Cor. v. 17.)

"In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." (Gal. vi. 15.)

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." (Eph. ii. 10.)

"For to create in Himself of twain one new man." (Eph. ii. 15.)

"The new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Eph. iv. 24.)

"The new man, which is renewed after the image of Him that created him." (Col. iii. 10.)

"The First-Born of every creature." (Col. i. 15.)

"That we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures." (Jas. i. 18.)

"The Beginning of the creation of God." (Rev. iii. 14.)

I PROPOSE a brief inquiry as to new creation: in what it consists, how we are brought into it, and its relation to its Head Christ Jesus. In the texts above we have all the passages which directly and in terms speak of it, and from which the doctrine of Scripture must be mainly learnt; to which a very few more which speak of Christ's Headship or compare Him with the first Adam must be added, in order to have before us its full teaching.

One of these other passages, indeed, we may take as the key-note of our inquiry. The purpose of God, we read, is "in the dispensation of the fullness of times to head up"—as it is literally—"all things in the Christ, things in heaven, and things on earth" (Eph. i. 10). Later on in the same chapter the apostle adds that God has raised Christ from the dead and "has put all things under His

feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is His body" (*vv.* 22, 23). And in the fifth chapter the Church is compared to Eve, Adam's own flesh, whom God presented to him, as Christ will present the Church unto Himself. So also in 1 Cor. xv. 45 Christ is declared to be "last Adam," and in Rom. v. Adam to be "the figure of Him that was to come." These passages surely bring us to the heart of the doctrine.

So guided, we may see in the old creation a type of the new, with necessary contrasts dependent on the difference between their respective heads. The first Adam, man merely, yet as that a being in which already there is a union of strangely opposite elements, the breath of God on the one hand, with the body of dust; offspring and likeness of God, yet a "living soul" like the beast;—this first man, how plainly does he figure an infinitely more wondrous "Second Man." The woman formed out of the man, cast into that mysterious "deep sleep" which so vividly pictures the Lord's fruitful death, is thus bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of her head and lord, *before* she is "one flesh" with him by union. So in the Church we must distinguish carefully between these two things, manifestly different as they are,—new creation and union. Over the whole scene the man is set, the woman sharing his sovereignty.

Now, if we turn from the old to the new creation, we need not wonder to find a wider range in the dominion of the last Adam. God's purpose here is to head up all things in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth, as we have seen. The earth is expressly named in Isaiah as coming into this: "Behold, I create new heavens and a new

earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." And Israel is as expressly promised continuance upon it: "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall abide before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain." To this the apostle Peter clearly refers: "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness."

Over this whole scene the Lord is, as Second Man, head and ruler. He is "the first-born of every creature," "the beginning of the creation of God:" terms which speak, not of priority *in time*, but in excellence and power. The "first-born" is of well-known use in this way. Thus God says to Pharaoh, "Israel is My son, even My first-born;" and again, in Jer. xxxi. 9, "I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is My first-born;" and so once more in the psalms (lxxxix. 27), "Also I will make him My first-born, higher than the kings of the earth." The word in Rev. iii. 14, again, although the regular word for "beginning," has very commonly the sense of "principality," and is so translated (Rom. viii. 38; Eph. i. 21; iii. 10; vi. 12; Col. i. 16; ii. 10, 15; Tit. iii. 1).

"The church of the first-born ones" is, in Heb. xii. 23, distinguished from "the spirits of just men made perfect," the company of Old-Testament saints being clearly designated in this latter way. The saints of the present are of course not prior *in time* to those of the old dispensation, while in rank they are, according to the sovereign good pleasure of God toward them. But if ranking as the first-born, there are thus seen to be others of the same family, in the common relationship of children with

them, of the same spiritual descent, as children of God; and with all these the Lord connects Himself as "First-born among many brethren" (Rom. viii. 29). These "brethren" are all believers: "For verily He taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham He taketh hold" (Heb. ii. 16, *marg.*). And "both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (v. 11).

Here the relationship seems different from that between Adam and his race; yet "last Adam" we are fully assured the Lord is, and the Antitype of the first. Are we to consider that the connection of the first Adam and his race is different from that between the last Adam and His race? That there is such a difference as results from that between the first and Second Man themselves, is surely true. "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the Second Man is from heaven:" "the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit."

Thus there is a difference. Yet in the very statement it is most strongly asserted that as the first Adam was in his creature-place, as living soul, a fountain of life to the race of which he was the head, so still more absolutely is the last Adam "a quickening [or life-giving] Spirit." It is not simply *the Lord* here, let us remember, but the "*last Adam*." Surely the force is plain. He is a quickening Spirit: it is divine life, but it is divine life in Christ,—in the last Adam. We are children of God; but none the less are we His "seed," seen as the result of His soul being made an offering for sin (Isa. liii. 10).

It may help us, too, to remember that Adam's race are also called the "offspring of God" (Acts xvi.

29), and that here Adam was but also a *first-born among brethren*; and in this way, the natural type illustrates perfectly the antitype, and there ceases to be really any difficulty.

How we come into the new creation is therefore plain. In the first moment of divine life given to us are we made a new creation. Here Adam himself, rather than any descended from him, is the fitting illustration, because we are not *naturally* separately "created." Spiritually we are: God's workmanship each one, needing nothing less than the forth-putting of almighty power. So the new birth is spoken of as quickening from the dead, or as creation—things which are never effected by any natural process: "we are *His* workmanship, *created* in Christ Jesus unto good works."

Thus, "if any man be in Christ, [it is] new creation," as the Greek may be most literally rendered. This is the plain, unequivocal statement of how we get to be in Christ. Adam at the moment he received life was surely perfectly *created*. He was not first quickened and afterward created! neither is this true spiritually of any saint, in any dispensation whatever. Thus the place in new creation, or under the headship of Christ, is given by that which is common to the whole "seed," or race, and not by that which is the distinguishing feature of one particular dispensation. If it were by the gift of the Spirit we were brought into the new creation, the saints of the Old-Testament and of millennial times would be effectually excluded. Every thing combines to assure us of what is the truth here, and to it there is no appearance even of contradiction from Scripture any where.

But then what follows in the passage just quoted

assures us further that to every one in new creation, or in Christ—under this headship—the work of Christ attaches as righteousness: “old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” This could not be true as applied merely to personal condition. Granted the life received is divine life—the nature, as it must be, perfect; yet my condition is not, cannot be, perfect as long as “sin dwelleth in me,” as in every child of man it dwells. “Old things are” *not* “passed away,” so that “*all* things are become new,” if condition only is in question. Bring in the value of the cross, and then indeed all is clear. The new nature and the new standing, never separated in Scripture, however much they may be in our thoughts, perfectly meet the requirement of the text, and leave no difficulty.

Indeed, if any one will consider the apostle's words in 2 Corinthians xii, and how carefully he distinguishes the “man in Christ,” in whom he will glory, from the “self” in which he will not glory, he will surely see that it is not a state of that self that he has before him in that in which he glories. It is Christ Himself in whom he sees himself. Grace has identified him with that glorious object, putting away all that he was by the work of the cross. Thus he can gaze, and rejoice, and worship.

Thus, “in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, but a new creation” becomes a “rule” to “walk” by (Gal. vi. 15, 16). “As” we “have received Christ Jesus the Lord,” we are to “*walk* in Him” (Col. ii. 6). Position it is that gives the measure of responsibility, and new creation furnishes us with position as well as condition; therefore a rule for walk. We are not only the subjects of a blessed work of God individually, but belong

to another sphere in which "all things are of God" (2 Cor. v. 18). We are to walk as belonging to this, our eyes upon things unseen and eternal, strangers and pilgrims here. We are to "walk in Him," identified with Him by God, and so to identify ourselves. This is what "avails" before God,—“neither circumcision nor uncircumcision,”—neither a Jewish nor a Gentile state,—and these two conditions make up the world: "but new creation."

FRAGMENTS.

"JUSTIFICATION is something not in ourselves, but a position in which God has placed us before Himself; and those who possess this righteousness, those to whom it is applied by God, being the children of the Second Man, possess all that He has and all that He loves. He who has this righteousness of God is born of God, and possesses all that belongs to his Father, who assimilates the rights of His children to those of His Son, who is Heir of all things. So soon as I am a child of the last Adam, I am in the blessing and righteousness in which Christ Himself is found; and just as I have inherited from the first Adam all the consequences and results of his fall, even so, being born of the last Adam, I inherit all that He has acquired, just as I had inherited from the former."—*J. N. D. (Coll. Writ., Vol. xvi. p. 300.)*

"WE find in 1 Jno. iv. 13 an expression nowhere else to be found in the New Testament. It is this: 'He has given us of His [own] Spirit;' an expression powerful enough to make us comprehend

how we are 'made partakers of the divine nature.' (2 Pet. i. 4.)

"The apostle had already said, 'He who keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us' (1 Jno. iii. 24). The presence of the Spirit was felt by the various effects of His power. It was the proof that God abode in Christians; but this passage of 1 Jno. iv. 13 goes much farther. It is evident, not only that God dwells in us, but that we dwell in Him, because He has given us of His Spirit.

"As to Jesus, He says, 'Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me' (Jno. xiv. 11). If He had not said, 'I am in My Father,' one might perhaps have formed to one's self an idea that God dwelt in a man to manifest His presence by the effects of His power. Jesus said, 'In that day ye shall know [not only that the Father is in Me, but] that I am in the Father' (Jno. xiv. 20). He was one with Him in nature, with Him who dwelt in a nature purely divine, without making Himself man. Also, though in another manner, we know that He dwells in us and we in Him, 'because He hath given us of His Spirit.' It was not, in the case of Jesus, a simple manifestation that God was there (this is what the disciples might have supposed), but they had not the idea that Jesus was in God, for this carried with it the participation of the divine nature; and this is what the apostle speaks of (1 Jno. iv. 13, which we have already quoted,) inasmuch as that applies to us, to wit, that the divine nature reproduces itself in the Christian; he has received of the very Spirit of God. It is a man who loves, and God is in him, and he

in God. That which was granted was no less than the communication of the divine life, by which we dwell in Him and He in us, in order that we may be holy and without blame.”—*J. N. D. (Coll. Writ., Ib. pp. 312, 313.)*

THE STYLE OF DIVINE LOVE.

THE love of God disclosed in the gospel is a love which passes knowledge. And yet the story of it is told without glowing expressions to give it effect, or any help, as from language or description, to set it off to the heart.

This is a wondrous thing. Attempts are not made in Scripture to carry the sense of this love to the soul beyond the simple telling of the tale of it. It is told, but told artlessly. This is the style—the general style or method of the Book of God.

Take one instance of this from the house of God to which I have already referred;—take Exodus xxviii, where we get the dress of the servants of that house. These garments of the high-priest, who was the mystic Christ, the Son of God serving in the sanctuary, are full of deep and precious mysteries. They express to the intelligence of faith a love that passes knowledge. And yet, throughout the chapter, there is not the slightest effort to produce an impression correspondent with that—none whatever. The dress of Aaron is simply hung up before our eye, without any description to attract attention to it or command the heart.

Is this human? Indeed it is not. This style is as much above man's as the grace it unfolds.

And this grace in the sanctuary of old was the

very way of Christ in the day of His personal ministry. He never used language, if I may so speak. His style had nothing of a glowing, eloquent declaration of His love about it. There was nothing of ardor either in manner or word to enforce on the disciples the conviction of His affection. But there was ample material for the heart to assure itself of that precious truth. All His way (passed in calmness, and, as far as could be, in silence,) was a material which one who could appreciate it would have used for the demonstration of a love that thoroughly passed all description. Wondrous method of the God of all grace and all perfections! It is the office—the covenant-business of the Holy Ghost to interpret all this mysterious love. It is for Him to take Jesus and show Him unto us. Christ made no effort to persuade us of His love; that was not His way. The Lord of the old sanctuary, as we have also seen, made no such effort. Each of these passed before the eye of faith calmly, and, as it were, silently; but the Spirit and the renewed mind find ample matter to discover and to feed upon a love that passes all knowledge.

J. G. B.

AN EXTRACT.

“**A**S a natural man, I may, on certain indisputable evidence, admit the Bible to be a record from God; I may give to its sublime revelations my firm credence, to its divine character my profound reverence, to its pure ethics my warmest admiration, and to its holy doctrines my strongest adherence and most zealous advocacy; I may be-

lieve Jesus to be no impostor, and His religion no cunningly devised fable, and His name the only name given under heaven whereby we may be saved; and yet remain totally blind to the true glory of the Redeemer! All the while that I am thus examining the outworks of Christianity, or traversing the outer courts of the great sanctuary of truth, I have not yet taken a single step within the sanctuary of my own bosom, exploring its hidden plague, and searching out that direst of all evils that ever tainted and ruined a finite creature—the heart's natural, deep, and deadly enmity against God! Blind to my own guilt, wretchedness, and woe, is it a thing incredible that I should be blind to the true glory of the Saviour, and that to me His obedience, suffering, and death—facts of transcendent magnitude and importance, interwoven with my dearest interests, and kindling an undying light around my every step to eternity—should be to me but as the dreams of my boyhood? So true is it 'the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.'

"But, enlightened by the Spirit of God, the believer beholds the glory of Jesus. . Brought to see no glory in himself—yea, nought but deformity in that on which the eye once so complacently rested, the glory of the Redeemer, as it is reflected in His person and His atoning blood, His infinite fullness of grace to pardon and to sanctify fills now the entire scope of his moral vision, and lifts his soul in admiring and adoring thoughts of the holiness and love of God!"

ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER XXII.

What Christ Suffered in Atonement.

WE have finished our brief review of the direct Scripture-texts. It remains to look at the doctrine as a whole which they declare.

And here, while my purpose is in no wise controversy, it is hardly possible, and I think not desirable, to forget the different views obtaining among professing Christians. They differ, in fact, widely: for as atonement is the very heart of divine truth, so it sympathizes with every part of it; and there can be no material deviation from the doctrine of Scripture without its being accompanied by a correspondingly defective or distorted view of this central one.

I do not propose to give examples now, although we shall find many, no doubt, before we reach the close of these papers. The simplest course seems to be to take up the doctrine as the Word presents it to us, and then compare it point by point, so far as may seem to be profitable, with other views.

That there was a deep necessity for atonement the Lord Himself declares: "The Son of Man *must* be lifted up." No debate as to this can be admitted therefore. It is a thing to be received by faith alone. And this necessity has its ground in the divine nature, as the truth of reconciliation, as we have seen, most strongly declares. "Things in

heaven and things in earth " needed thus to be reconciled. Universalism goes wrong entirely here, in substituting *persons* for things: but the fallen angels are expressly stated to be *not* those for whom Christ's work was wrought: "He taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham He taketh hold" (Heb. ii. 16, *marg.*). But of things in the heavens it is said, "It was *necessary* that the patterns of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these" (Heb. ix. 12). It was in God's sight therefore, as Eliphaz says, the heavens were not clean, and that on account, of course, of the sin of the angels. God's nature therefore—His holiness—demanded the atonement, and thus only could even the heavens be reconciled. How much more, then, as to fallen man!

As plainly it is declared in these very scriptures by *what* alone atonement could be made. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). This is only the echo, somewhat emphasized, of the statement of the law itself (Lev. xvii. 11): "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul."

Clearly it is death therefore—a sacrificial death—by which atonement is effected. The *shedding* of blood means, not merely death, but a violent death; and only such, and that of a designated victim, could provide the altar with what availed before God. No suffering in *life* could at all take the place of this, or be included in it: these two

things are wholly different. As it was death that had come in upon man through sin, so it is death alone by which his condition is met and deliverance found for him. For those under death, death the penalty must be endured.

It is plain, then, at once that God's way of atonement is not by any mere "*substitute* for penalty," as many say, but by the endurance of the penalty itself. But this is much more manifest when we consider what is involved in death as the due of sin. For, as the mark upon a fallen creature, it is the sign of a changed relationship with God the Creator; and, if it be not the end of all, it is (except mercy interpose,) the definitive introduction to a *state* of judgment which must abide as long as that which provoked it abides.

From this we must distinguish indeed the judgment of the great white throne, when every thing is made fully manifest, and the unsaved "dead are judged according to their works" (Rev. xx. 12). This is at a time when death is ended and over, although ended for these only by a "resurrection of judgment" (Jno. v. 29, *Gk.*). But in the meanwhile, the Lord's picture of the rich man, not in "hell" yet, as our ordinary version gives it, but in *hades*, with brethren yet alive upon the earth, assures us of torment already endured there in the flame of God's wrath (Luke xvi.). To this distinction we shall have yet to return: it is sufficient to draw attention to it here.

Death, then, (for the unsaved) introduces into a fixed state of judgment: fixed because the sinful condition which calls it forth is fixed. And of this, death itself is the sign; for it is the removal of the fallen creature out of the place for which he was

created, as unfit to remain there. Death therefore itself preaches of a penalty beyond itself.

Was this, then, part of the penalty upon man which atonement was to meet and remove for the saved? If so, it is necessarily a much heavier part. And if God's way of atonement be not by a "substitute for penalty" but by the endurance of the actual penalty itself, then the cross must be the bearing of wrath as well as death, and this must be emphasized correspondingly in Scripture. And this is in fact the case.

At first sight, indeed, it is not apparent; nay, the appearance is all the other way. "Blood," "death," as we have seen, are insisted on; and as the one need exclusively, we might at first conclude. And the general belief of Christians has been full and clear as to Christ's dying for our sins, much vaguer or less certain as to wrath-bearing. But there is a reason for this character of Scripture-testimony. Death is, as is plain, the plain mark which God has attached to sin, and His wisdom is apparent in it. It brings the sense of judgment home to the hearts and consciences of carnal men, incapable of receiving any more spiritual appeal. God deals in it with men without faith, too blind to see the things unseen naturally, too far away to know the misery of distance. Hence the great public testimony dwells on that which all can feel. Who knows not the awful feeling of that which wrenches from our grasp, and in the most unexpected times and ways, the objects of our dearest affections, and sends us out at last from all the scene and things with which we are acquainted—out, alone, out of the world, naked as we came into it, but now conscious of our nakedness, and with our conscience preaching of

the things beyond? Hence all through the law, as I have elsewhere dwelt upon,* it is death that is taken up, reasoned of, pressed home upon men. Even the text used almost universally in another sense than that intended, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," speaks not explicitly of the second death, but of the first, but of thus dying *in one's sins* indeed, and the future under the dread shadow of this. But upon this it needs not to enter here.

The sacrifices necessarily bear a similar testimony. The death thus pressed on men as the penalty of sin is that which the atoning victim bears, and bears away its sting. This is not all, but it is what is prominent; and even when we come to the New Testament, the style of testimony remains, although it is now in speech from which all obscurity is removed. The plain facts, external and manifest to all, are most insisted on,—that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4).

Faith, with a more earnest look, discovers more. The death of the cross, was it no more than other death? That, the contemplation of which wrung the Lord's soul with agony, was it physical suffering merely, or a martyr's lot? The forsaking of God, which He deprecated yet endured, was it simply the being left in the hands of His enemies, or a deeper reality?

These questions admit but of one answer. The death of the cross had its inner significance, not in being the punishment of a slave or of a criminal,

* "*Facts and Theories as to a Future State*," chap. xxiii: "The Ministry of Death."

though both of these it was, but a death of curse according to the law; and there was in this a design of God in our behalf. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, *being made a curse* for us; for it is written, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:' that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. iii. 13, 14). Surely it is a great mistake which some have made, to suppose that this curse from God is exhausted in the mere fact of the hanging on a tree. This is only the outward sign of it in fact, the reality consisting in the *attitude of God* toward Him who hung there. Nor, if this *be* the reality, could it be imagined that this should have significance only for Israel, as those only under the law. In fact, the Gentiles are directly stated here to be partakers of the blessing flowing from this marvelous humiliation of our Lord. Here, nothing else than wrath-bearing can fulfill the meaning—terrible as it is—of being "*made a curse.*"

Nor could physical suffering, nor persecution of enemies, have forced from Him the bloody sweat of Gethsemane, or been the cup He pleaded not to drink. Many a martyr, strengthened by divine grace, has drunk such a cup, if that were all.

And the forsaking of God,—the very words of the blessed Sufferer guide us to that twenty-second psalm, in which prophetically it is all explained; the depths of His heart are told out here into the anointed ear of faith, and we find indeed that which is the one exception in all God's ways with the righteous. "Our fathers trusted in Thee; they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them; they cried

unto Thee, and were delivered; they trusted in Thee, and were *not* forsaken: but I am a worm, and no man!" Then all the long agony is described by One with no callousness, keenly alive and sensitive to it all; while yet from it all He turns to Him on whom from the womb He had been cast, to deprecate the one sorrow far beyond all others: "Be not far from Me!"—"But be not Thou far from Me, O Lord! Oh, my Strength! haste Thee to help Me!"

There is no question that can justly arise as to whose are these words. David certainly himself had no experiences such as these. The bones out of joint, the piercing of hands and feet, the parting of His garments and casting lots upon His vesture and then the blessing flowing out even to the ends of the earth when finally He is heard,—all this assures us beyond the possibility of doubt as to who really speaks. If we turn to the types we see in the sin-offering, in the victim burned without the camp, and upon the ground without an altar,—figures of which we have already seen the meaning—the shadow of all this; while at the cross itself the three hours of darkness was its answering shadow. God, who is Light, had withdrawn; but the result is for us a rent veil, darkness forever removed, and God in the light for us forever.

In Hebrews, finally, we have the emphatic assurance that only the blood of those victims burnt without the camp was brought into the sanctuary—that is, fully into the presence of God—for sin; and that Jesus, therefore, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate: yet another significant token of the same solemn truth.

Thus the penalty upon men is fully borne. It is not a *substitute* for a penalty that is found in all this, but the actual penalty itself endured. True substitution on the Lord's part is seen, as everywhere witnessed in fact throughout the Word: the iniquity of all His people so laid upon Him that He can say, as in the fortieth psalm He does say, "*Mine iniquities.*" Standing thus as representing them, a true sin-bearer, God's face is hidden from Him. As in the hundred and second psalm, which is again His voice, where He cries out, "Because of Thine indignation and wrath, because Thou hast taken Me up and cast Me down."

It is on the cross, and on the cross alone, that He bears sin, as the apostle says, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body *on the tree*" (1 Pet. ii. 24). It has been attempted to prove that this should be rendered "carried our sins up *to* the tree," and the new version gives this as an alternative in the margin. This has been fully investigated by another,* and I do not propose to enter upon it. Every translation that I am aware of gives at least the preference to the common version; and the doctrine of Scripture admits of no other construction. Contrast the Lord's words in the twenty-second psalm, "Thou hearest not," with those at the grave of Lazarus, "I knew that Thou hearest Me *always*" (Jno. xi. 42); or, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" with those elsewhere, "And He that sent Me is with Me: *the Father hath not left Me alone*; for I do always the things that please Him" (Jno. viii. 29). Who cannot see here the infinite difference? If hearing and

*"The Bearing of 1 Peter ii. 24." (J. N. Darby; now to be found in Vol. viii. of his Collected Writings.)

not hearing, forsaking and not forsaking, are but the same thing, or can consist together, then words have no longer any meaning. The cross is thus distinguished from all the Lord's sufferings beside as the place where "He was made sin for us who knew no sin," and He who "is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and that cannot look at sin," turned away His face from the Sin-bearer.

The distinction between "offering" and "offering up" in connection with the sacrifices is here of importance. These are different words in the original, and different thoughts. The latter is the same as the word "bare" in the passage in Peter, and it is found similarly in Heb. ix. 28: "Christ was once offered to *bear* the sins of many;" where indeed both words are found. It occurs again in Heb. vii. 27, twice: "Who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this He did once, when He offered up Himself." It is found again, chap. xiii. 15: "By Him let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually;" in Jas. ii. 22, "When he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar;" and again in 1 Pet. ii. 5, "To offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." The second word, in much the most common use, speaks simply of "presenting," and is thus applied to "gifts" as well as "sacrifices." It is the common word for "offering" as simple presentation, while the former one is that used for offering in the fire upon the altar.

Now in the passover we find that the lamb was to be killed the fourteenth day of the month at even, having been kept up first four days, being taken on the tenth day. In these typical ordinances

all was significant, the numbers as all else; and they will be found in full accordance with what we find as to the Lord. His life on earth divides into three parts also: thirty years in private, (the Lamb not taken;) between three and four years of public ministry, (the Lamb taken, but not slain;) and then the suffering of the cross. The *ten* days mark the first period as that of His own personal responsibility as man. It is for this reason we have but the very briefest notice of Him in all that time. At the close, he comes forth from His retirement to take up the work for which He had come into the world. He is baptized of John in Jordan, the river of death, to fulfill all righteousness, Himself the only One upon whom death had absolutely no claim. There the Spirit of God seals Him in testimony to His perfection as man, while the Father's voice bears public witness to Him as His beloved Son. He has thus offered Himself for the sacrifice, and the Baptist owns Him as the "Lamb of God" (Jno. i. 29, 36.)

But the "four days" are yet to run before He is offered up; and this number speaks of "proving," now not in private capacity, but in His fitness for the blessed work He has undertaken to perform. Accordingly this time begins with the temptation in the wilderness, and the whole course of it is of what He calls afterward His "temptations" (Luke xxii. 28). But all demands upon Him are only the means of displaying His glorious perfections. It is this which abides for us now in those *four* gospels which have stamped upon our hearts the image of a Saviour. But in them we find therefore, not One under the judgment of God upon sin, (how dark a cloud would that be over so bright a pic-

ture!) but One speaking the Father's words, doing the Father's works, in communion with and manifesting the Father.

Finally, in the garden He delivers Himself up, and is led as a lamb to the slaughter; on the cross iniquities are laid upon Him, and this is marked by the supernatural darkness so misinterpreted by the mass of Christians. Before and after this we hear Him saying, "Father;" in it He says but "My God." Out of it He comes to fulfill what still remains by giving up His spirit to the Father; and dying with the declaration of the complete accomplishment of His work, the blood and water, in answer to the soldier's spear, show expiation and purification to be now both provided—man's need to be fully met.

KEY-NOTES TO THE BIBLE BOOKS.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

THE gospel of John, which presents to us the Lord as the only begotten Son of God, (a divine Person,) come in flesh, the Life and Light of men, divides into three parts; in the first of which He is introduced to us in these personal glories. The second develops to us the life with its accompaniments, in its various characters. The third completes the gospel, as all the others are completed, with the details of the precious work in which we are accepted before God, here seen as the Burnt-Offering.

I.

THE LIFE MANIFESTED IN THE WORD MADE FLESH.
(Chap. i.-ii. 22.)

All the glories of Christ are put before us save those which involve His ascension: for John gives us God come down to man on earth, not man taken up to God in heaven. This latter is Paul's peculiar line. The Church, of all the gospels, is found only in Matthew; John's theme is *family* relationship, although he takes in the gift of the Spirit, as making it an enjoyed reality in the heart. Yet this does not exclude such references to a heavenly position, and even to the Church itself, as we can without difficulty interpret.

This first part is divided again into five sections. In the first (i. 1-18), we have the doctrinal statement, in effect, the divine witness to the Word made flesh; in the second (vv. 19-34), *John's*—the human—witness; in the third (vv. 35-51), the gathering to Christ, first, of a heavenly (vv. 35-42), and then in principle of an earthly company; in the fourth (ii. 1-12), the need of repentance in order to blessing, on the part of the earthly people,—the water changed to wine; and in the fifth (vv. 13-22), the purification of the Father's house by Him whose title is proved by resurrection from the dead.

1. (i. 1-18.) *The Divine Witness to the Glory of Jesus.*

We have first of all the *divine* witness. Who else but God could go back to the "beginning" here spoken of. Then, when the first created thing began to be, the Word—not *began*, but—*was*. "The Word" is the distinctive title of the Revealer; and

the creation of all things by Him shows all creation to be in some sense a revelation. But "life," in the fullness of it, was *in* Him, not created; and this Life was the Light of *men*. Coming into the world in the person of Jesus, it was light for—not a nation merely, as was the law or the Baptist's ministry, but—*every man*.

But this only brought out the state of men, a state which no *light* merely could remove. There is one darkness which it requires *life* as well as light to reach; and this was man's condition, for when He came, the world, which He had made, did not recognize its Creator; the people separated from all others to be His own received Him not. But there were some who received Him: what, then, of these? In them divine power had acted; to them divine life had been given: they were *born of God*, and now too given title to the children's place.

To these, then, the Word made flesh revealed the glory of God, dwelling in the new tabernacle of His manhood, accessible, not hidden, as of old, full of grace and truth. To Him the old covenant in John bare witness as it passed away; while out of His fullness we all have received, even grace upon grace. In contrast with the law which Moses gave, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ in the telling out of the invisible God as Father by the Son in His bosom.

2. (i. 19-34.) *The Human Witness to Jesus— John the Baptist.*

We have now the record of John, and beautiful it is to see the first point of witness. It is to the power of Christ beheld as an object to satisfy the

soul occupied with Him; and by this satisfaction to make it superior to itself. Other objects naturally attractive have disappeared. This "voice in the wilderness" sounds but to give utterance to the abiding "Word," and then to pass away: having no other use, and content to have no other. How great the triumph of divine power which thus can divorce from himself a being such as man is, and make him delight in self-surrender to another! This is the practical power of Christianity, that "they which live should no more live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again." And thus from the belly, which in its craving is their god naturally, flow, through grace, rivers of living water. "Love seeketh not her own," and thus the divine nature manifests itself in the soul new-born. This is the glory of Christ, the witness man is permitted and enabled to give to Him.

Doctrinally, John's testimony is to the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, and to the Son of God, who baptizes with the Holy Ghost. The first is to the depth of a self-humiliation which will finally remove out of the earth the evil which has made up as yet its history. The second is to the glory of One who can raise men from earth to heaven by union with Himself. Together, they give us the depth and height, the length and breadth, of the divine counsels.

3. (i. 35-51.) *The Heavenly and Earthly Gatherings to Christ.*

And now His glory being thus revealed, and His competency to fill and satisfy the heart of man, we are given to see the gathering of the redeemed to Him. These form two companies,—the one, of

those who go in to see where He dwells, and abide with Him; the other, of those who see heaven opened, and the angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man. These are in principle the heavenly and earthly companies of the redeemed.

The first we find in ver. 35-42; and it is represented by two disciples, to whom, the day following, a third is added, the significance of whose name it is scarcely possible to mistake.

They are gathered by the testimony of the Baptist; not the formal testimony, but the fervent expression of his own delight in the Lamb of God. Their hearts awake, they leave their master—best evidence of the success of his teaching—to follow Jesus. The Lord turns and questions them, "What seek ye?" They, taught of the Holy Ghost, inquire in turn, "Master, *where dwellest Thou?*" He says, "Come and see." They come and see where He dwells, and abide with Him that day. This is the portion of the heavenly saints,—“that where I am, there ye may be also.” And this it is their privilege by faith even now to realize. That “they abode with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour,” shows that they spent the night with Him, yet night is not mentioned, for in His presence there is none. Nor is the place named, save as “where He dwelt”—the Christian description of heaven. Inspiration has guided and guarded this narrative throughout.

The next day, Peter is added to this group, and the change of his name and its significance are made known to us. Andrew's testimony is, “We have found the Messiah;” but here, as elsewhere through this account, the Hebrew word is translated into the Greek: the language of faith is com-

ing to be Gentile. And Simon the son of Jonas receives in a new name the token of a more significant change. He is as "Peter" to be a living "stone" in a spiritual building, which is to be God's dwelling-place forever. This is the only place that I am aware in the gospel in which Church-position is intimated; and here it is no more. Matthew alone gives the explicit announcement, "I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church."

We now find another company gathered in Galilee, the place of blessing for the remnant of Israel in the latter day, and *not* as before, by the continuation of the disciples' testimony, but by a *new call* on the part of the Lord Himself. Thus, after the heavenly company are removed will the gathering on earth commence. Philip, himself found of Christ, finds in turn Nathaniel, and the witness is now to "Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write—Jesus of Nazareth, the *Son of Joseph*." Nathaniel, betraying first of all the unbelief of the nation, owns Him when brought to Him as the Son of God and King of Israel,—the two counts of His indictment, and in that order, when rejected by them. The Lord thereupon declares the blessing,—“Ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God”—through whom the law was given—"ascending and descending [in attendance] upon the Son of Man."

4. (ii. 1-11.) *Repentance Needed for Salvation through the Cross.*

The wedding at Cana furnishes us with other lessons of general application, although Israel in the latter day is specially before us. We are still in

Galilee, the place of latter-day blessing, and the mother of Jesus represents the nation in the flesh, of whom Christ came (Rom. ix. 3). The third day speaks of a resurrection-period. Israel's union with the Lord is often pictured as a marriage, once indeed existing, and broken by their unfaithfulness, but to be restored by grace when the nation is raised up, as it were, from the dead. Yet relationships in a higher sphere between the Lord and His disciples are seen here,—“both Jesus was called and His disciples to the marriage.” At the close, their necessity puts Him into the bridegroom's place, as in the coming day their need will bring out His love and grace toward them. But not before the cause of their misery has been exposed. The empty water-jars,—the form of purification without the reality of it,—are a perfect picture of hollow formalism. His mother says to Him, “They have no wine;” but His hour is not yet come till these water-pots are filled with water, and this too His grace supplies. “Fill the water-pots with water,” He says to the servants, and they fill them to the brim. So will the ministry of the Word accomplish the repentance of the people in the midst of their latter-day sorrows; and, brought to repentance, the wine of joy is theirs,—the apprehension of that work of Christ, which (unhumbled,) was their stumbling-block, now that which alone meets their need before God, and declares Him to them.

5. (ii. 13–22.) *The Purification of the Father's House.*

The purification of the Father's house closes this first part of the gospel. His title to do it the Lord bases upon resurrection. “The zeal of Thine house

hath eaten Me up" was surely the very principle of the cross, which resurrection owned as His, "raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father." It carries us back to the hundred and thirty-second psalm: "Lord, remember David and all his afflictions, how he sware unto the Lord, and vowed unto the Mighty One of Jacob, 'Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eyelids, until I find out a place for the Lord, a habitation for the Mighty One of Jacob.'" What were all the afflictions of the true David but the result of this? And as the cross lays the foundation for this habitation among men (1 Chron. xxi. 26, xxii. 1), so as the risen One He will establish it in purity in the midst of Israel, but a true house of prayer for all nations.

For us, there is another and higher application: "Upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy; which temple ye are."

THE LESSONS OF THE AGES.

THE TRIAL OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT.

JUDGMENT was executed and over, and in Noah and his family the human race began anew the history of the world. There are many features of difference from the former beginnings,

whether inside paradise or without. It was now first that on the fallen earth the trial of man formally began—a trial which, as we have seen, man had forced God (if we may so speak) to make. Already He had indeed pronounced, in answer to the challenge of Cain's altar, that "every imagination of the thought of man's heart was only evil, and that continually," and after such a sentence could never for His own sake—as if *He* were in any doubt—institute a fresh trial of such a creature. So, too, when He brings out Noah upon the restored earth, He is at pains to show that He is not possessed with any fresh hopes concerning man. "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake," He says, "for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Thus He could not for His own sake institute trial. But man has need to know himself, and as he will not recognize himself in the subject of God's verdict, he must be permitted to make practical proof. Hence, once more his responsibility is solemnly proclaimed, and with the solemn lessons of the past fresh in his memory, and once more, with the fresh tokens of divine mercy on every hand, he is bidden gird up his loins and begin again his course, to triumph now, if it may be, in the scene of his former disastrous failure.

Before we examine this in its details, as they are given in the divine Word, let us try to realize the meaning of one solemn change which the renewed earth presents from that old one which the flood had swept away. *Paradise is no more to be found there.* Euphrates, Hiddekel, Gihon, Pison, may be there; but the garden from which they once issued is gone forever. Where it was, and *whether* it was, men may now dispute about as they list. The

flaming sword has no need to keep any more the way of the tree of life. The cherubim are also gone. The earth is discrowned and empty.

And must we not connect this displayed glory in Eden, however intimately connected with man's fall and punishment, yet also with the mercy that manifested itself toward him, as we have already seen with other tokens of his condition, in which judgment united itself with and ministered to mercy? Labor and sorrow, and death itself, thus ministered, and do minister; and this flaming sword with its cherubim, like Ezekiel's cloud and fire, speak of that presence of God which is not mere judgment only. So even for Cain there was a "face of the Lord" which he evidently identified with Eden, near to, if still outside of, paradise. "Behold, Thou hast driven me out from the face of the earth," he says, "and from Thy face shall I be hid;" and again we read that "Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden." It is the easier to realize, because after this, as we know, it pleased God to localize His presence thus in Israel, and there also with fire and cherubic emblems. It seems not doubtful that this was but in some respects a reproduction of what had been before at the gate of paradise, where sacrifice (which had so essential a part in the Mosaic economy) confessedly began.

Paradise passes away, however, with the flood, and the presence of God, as displayed there, is gone also. It is simple in principle that while the fall itself had not done so, man's maintenance of his righteousness compels Him to more reserve. For man's sin He had resources, which in the presence of self-righteousness could not be brought

out. This must be met in a way far different from the other; for "the proud He beholdeth afar off." Thus, as Cain before, so man now, (and by his road also), "goes out from the presence of the Lord."

Yet He, as consenting to man's trial, does not withdraw simply, and leave him to himself. On the contrary, He solemnly inaugurates the trial Himself, making men afresh to know His power and goodness, as by their recent deliverance from the otherwise universal destruction, so also by the new condition of blessing into which the earth enters, in covenant with Him. Still His goodness was, if it might be, to lead them to repentance. And this goodness of His it is the apostle refers to as God's perpetual witness in all times and lands.

Nevertheless, if God thus declare His purpose of loving-kindness, He is careful to ground it all upon that sacrifice rejected by Cain, but fully accepted by delivered Noah. "And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings upon the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savor, and the Lord said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth: neither will I again smite any more every thing living, 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."

So clear is it that if God take up man now to go on with him again, it is only upon such a ground as sets him altogether aside that He can do so. Just as afterward, in the giving of the law, it is only on the ground of redemption—to a redeemed people—He can give this. If He allow man thus

the new trial that he claims, He keeps His own ground still, even while allowing it; and proclaims still in man's reluctant ears sacrifice—atonement—as the only way of acceptance, and the impossibility of his standing on his own self-chosen ground.

And now, blessing them as He does so, God delivers into the hand of Noah and of his sons, with something of the old sovereignty, the lower creatures. Significantly, also, death is to be for them the food of life; while the reservation of the blood, the vehicle of life, maintains the divine claim to what God alone can give. Above all, man's life is sacred; the deed of Cain is to go no more unpunished, and man is directly affirmed to be his "brother's keeper:" he is to exact blood for blood, and that as the instrument and vicegerent of God on earth. "And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man: at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, *by man* shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man."

Here, then, human government begins, not as an expedient suggested by man, as so many think it, but as a divine institution. From the commencement of it it could be said, "The powers that be are ordained of God." Not any particular powers, as yet indeed, such as we may find afterward, but "the powers that exist," whatever their form.

There is no need to prove what every one that has a right thought will at once admit, the blessing that there is for man in civil government. Few would doubt that, if it were removed, corruption and violence would overflow all bounds, as it did before the flood, or as in the French revolution of

the eighteenth century. Better the worst form of government the world has seen than absolute anarchy. Darkening of sun and moon, the falling of the stars, and convulsions of the earth are its symbols in Scripture; and these are signs of the near end of the dispensation.

As a moral discipline, subjection to government is of the utmost value. It is seen in the family as what has its root in the divine ordinance by which the whole human race is compacted together. The immaturity of infant years has necessarily to submit itself to the superior power and wisdom by which alone it is able to attain maturity. And this immaturity, so long lasting in the case of man as compared with the lower animals, implies a long discipline of subjection. By the ordinance of civil government the period of this is lengthened to the whole term of man's life. And this subjection is one not merely to the will of others, but in which also *self*-mastery is learned and attained. It is true that man's self-will—the very essence of sin—breaks all bonds that are possible to be devised; and the inadequacy of such means is one of the very lessons—nay, a main one, which these dispensations teach us. Yet were not the means themselves such as *should* be efficacious, their failure would not have the same significance. And amid all the failure this is still apparent.

The failure is on two sides,—that of the governed and that of the governors alike, for both are men. On the part of those in authority is found weakness, the want of *self*-government, as in Noah, which exposes it to the contempt of those who need most the display of power; or, as in Nimrod, the abuse of this, tyranny and oppression. Babel ends this

scene in a general revolt against the source of all power—against God—the issue of which is to bring down judgment and stamp the whole scene, even outwardly, with the brand of “confusion.”

The failure begins with Noah, and this is the occasion of Ham's sin and the curse upon his posterity. The break-up of government is primarily the fault of those to whom God has committed the authority, with the responsibility, of government. God would be with His own institution necessarily to maintain it, if only those to whom it was intrusted did not betray their trust. “If God be for us, who can be against us?” But then subjection to Him is the secret of subordination on the part of the governed. When man gave up his supremacy over the beast, then the beast rose up against him. He had sunk down to their level, practically, by giving up God—for the beast knows not God. “Being in honor and abiding not, he is like the beasts that perish.” Thus, long after this, Nebuchadnezzar is driven to the beasts, until he should know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men. His own account is very striking: “And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar *lifted up mine eyes unto heaven*, and mine understanding returned unto me; and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored Him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation. . . . At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honor and brightness returned unto me; and my counselors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me.”

Noah's departure from God was not what Nebuchadnezzar's had been; but it was as real, if not so manifest. We have in him the beginning,—the root, and not the full ripe fruit. A root is not *manifest*; but it is what the other springs from. Noah's failure is easily read as the unguarded enjoyment of blessings away from the restraining presence of Him whose gifts they are. But this is the very secret of a departure the limit of which is then only with God and not with man. The soul has lost its anchorage, and cannot choose but drift. Noah is drunk, loses his garment, and is naked. In many points it is the Eden-scene repeated. This nakedness is matter of contempt to those who are themselves wholly away from God, and who use it to their own worse shame and ruin. From this family of Ham comes, later, Nimrod, "the rebel;" and the beginning of his kingdom is Babel.

The order is instructive and important. God's thought for man is weakness, dependence, subjection, but so, blessing. To realize this, they are to be scattered abroad upon the earth. But of all things, the pride of man refuses the acknowledgment of weakness, as his will resents subjection. Power and a name he covets. "Union is strength" is his watchword. "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 upon the face of the whole earth.'"

Now God's thought for man is a city too. Faith looks for a "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Cain's city was not original with him, nor is God's thought caught from man's. It is itself the original; only that it must wait for another scene for its accomplishment.

For He cannot build in a storm-vexed and shifting scene, such as the present; and the anticipation of God's time is unbelief, not faith. Man's union is thus confederacy, a compact of selfish wills, of which the cross is the outcome.—“Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.”

Meanwhile, God is digging deep, in the sense of emptiness and nothingness and guilt, Christ as the foundation of a city whose walls shall be salvation, and whose gates praise; where union shall be communion with the Father and the Son, and thus accord with all things that serve God. Jerusalem shall be therefore “the possession of peace.” The outcome of man's confederacy—judgment only stamping it with its true character—is Babel, “confusion.” And this is the beginning of his empire who is the type of the great final “rebel,” who, crushing all lesser wills into his own, shall be at the same time the “lawless one” and the iron despot.

This “man's day” will come to an end, and the kingdom of Christ be seen to be the only refuge; all other kingdoms but its shadow, this the substance. The perfect Man must come—Himself the perfectly obedient One,—in whom shall be no failure; no degradation of power, and no lack of it: whose of right the throne is. Till then the trial of government, however this may be needful (and therefore “the powers that be are ordained of God,” and “he is the minister of God to thee for good”), becomes only one of the things that manifest more and more man's hopeless ruin. He who could not maintain himself in blessing cannot recover himself; nor is there redemption for him in his brother's hand.

PAUL'S GOSPEL.

ON PARTS OF PHILIPPIANS I.—III.

AT the time of the Reformation, man did not get beyond justification by faith. They did not know Paul's gospel, which was the glory of the Christ of God shining down into the heart even of the persecutor, and filling his whole being with its blessed power. This was the root of his walk; his walk was in the power of that light and life—the gospel as tasted and enjoyed by Paul from heaven. I never get thoughts of this in my own soul without becoming very deeply impressed with my shortcomings on the one hand and the immense privileges flowing from out of it on the other. Paul, writing from his cell, guarded perhaps by soldiers, could say, "To me to live is Christ!" Sorrow in his heart he had for the bad condition of things. Still he could say, I have "earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified, whether it be by life or by death." (v. 20.)

Let us see what characterized his state. That Christ should be magnified, he knew not how; by sufferings, or by patience, or by being sent back to work for Him. The desire is one, that Christ should be magnified,—that spite of every circumstance against him, yet that Christ should be magnified in his body. I know no two things so sweet. All that is in Christ, mine; in heaven, His; yet in that cell, in that poor body, He should be magnified. In Saul of Tarsus there was no room for Christ; in Paul the prisoner the Lord magnified His grace, and that immediately—that very night. What lay at the root of this desire that Christ should be magnified? Ah! that "To me to live is Christ! All my motives, Christ; all my energy, Christ; all my end, Christ!" Aye, all his springs in Christ flowing into his soul! And in a body, too, that man could bolt in and leave in prison. Oh! could you

jot down, in any little interval of business or daily work, "To me to live is Christ"? Knowing, in your counting-house, in your homes, Christ as the spring, the motive, energy? Doing all your duties to Christ because He put you there, and all is to be done to Him? Oh! who is thus Pauline—knocking about the world, chained to a soldier, or shut up in a dungeon, and all for Christ—the risen, the ascended Christ; and He is up there for me, so am I down here for Him?

Let us look at the root. Christ so full in Himself—He is the fullness of each. The grand characteristic of Christ was, when here, subjection unto death. The disciple has the same eternal life, and must know the dying daily to get the fullness of blessing. Christ died out of the world. Israel would have had Christ if He would have let His glory out, and taken things into His own hands. The Christian's pathway in the divine life is to obey—to obey in subjection to God. Christ would have nothing except from God's hands. Is it God working in you? God works to will: He claims us. It is a solemn thought, that God has taken us up to desire and to will; and He will enable us to do. Whence can I draw water to turn the wheels of that mill? In Christ up there at His right hand. Paul saw that Christ up there, and his heart turned to delight in Him. Can we see the person of Christ up there and not know desire after Him? I am wishing to show you this Christ working in you to will. Is there a backwardness to give up any thing for Him? What! for Christ? Not to get Christ, but because you have that Christ, and because He has looked down to take your heart, and do you think any thing great to sacrifice for Him when He gives you fellowship with Himself? Oh! could you make a cold calculation as to the worth of that Christ beyond all joy of earth? Am I willing for Christ? Am I acting for Christ?—(*From "Memorials of the Ministry of G. V. Wigram."*)

ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Penalty in its Inner Meaning.

BUT we have now to look more particularly at the penalty which the Lord endured for us. Penalty we have seen it was, and true substitution; Christ dying, not upon *occasion* merely of our sins, but *bearing* them in His own body on the tree—our iniquities laid upon Him, so that He calls them “Mine.” No words could express more plainly a real substitution.

We have seen too that in the penalty upon man there were two parts, separable at least, if not in fact separated: the wrath of God upon sin, and death—not the second, but what came in at the beginning through sin; and that both parts He endured.

Death has its power in this, that it is the removal of the sin-ruined creature out of the place for which he was created. “Sin has *reigned* in death,” as the expression is in Romans v. 21. It is man’s destruction by the judgment of God, as being already self-destroyed.

But the death he dies is not the death of Sadducean materialism, but one in which the sinner abides under the judgment to which it has consigned him. It is a condition of darkness—outer darkness—for God has finally and forever withdrawn Himself. It is torment in the flame of necessary anger against sin. These are the elements of a judgment which will not be altered in character, when in the resurrection of judgment the dead stand before the great

white throne to receive the discriminate awards of the day of manifestation.

Unspeakably solemn is it to consider that the holy and beloved Son of God, Himself knowing no sin, yet as "made sin for us," entered into that awful darkness, and was tried by the fire of God's wrath against it. So indeed it was. He was the Substitute under our penalty, and endured the penalty. Ours it was of course, not His; but He endured it, and endured it as the necessity of holiness, to set His people free.

But there is a point here it is important to guard, and which, guarded, will go far to preserve us from some excesses which people have gone into with regard to substitution. We must not confound the Lord's standing in our place to take for us our dreadful due, with any calculation, essentially lowering as it is to the very righteousness which it is meant to uphold, of *so much suffering for so much sin*. In the day of final award it is indeed said that "the dead" are "judged out of the things which are written in the books, according to their works" (Rev. xx. 13), and this it is, no doubt, that has been carried back as a principle to the day of atonement. It has been argued that if our iniquities were laid upon Him,—if He bare our sins in His body, then these must all have been counted up and weighed, and He must have suffered so much for each one. In this case it is plain we have just so many sins absolutely provided for, and no others. It is a limited atonement of the most rigid kind, and of which it would be impossible to use the language of the apostle, "A propitiation, not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jno. ii. 2). For if the sins of the whole world had

been *after this manner* provided for, no one could be lost, or judged again for what in Him had received its judgment. And this is very far from the truth of Scripture.

A propitiation for the sins of the world means nothing less than such a provision made for them that if the whole world turned to God through Christ, it would find in Him a complete Saviour. But if sins needed thus to be individually taken into account and settled, this would not be true; if they *had* been thus settled, they could not in any case come up in the day of judgment; and this is what some hold—that men will be judged for nothing but for the refusal of grace in Christ: but this is entirely hopeless to prove from Scripture, which declares they shall be “judged according to their works,” and that “every one shall receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor. v. 10). And, as the Preacher says, “God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”

“A propitiation for the sins of the whole world” does not, then, mean such an individual settlement of sins, nor is this needed in order for salvation. Can it, then, be needed for “*our* sins” any more than for the sins of the whole world? or can we make propitiation in the one case have a meaning which it has not in the other? This is surely impossible to suppose in the Word of God. Its faithfulness refuses absolutely all chameleon colors.

The sufficiency of atonement for the whole world we must absolutely receive, or give up Scripture. It will not suffer us to say that this is an *elect* world, for the “whole world” is *not* elect; and here, the

"ours" distinguishes believers from this world, not includes them in it. Propitiation, then, (or atonement—it is the same word,) is for all; and it is the same thing for all: not as actually *availing*, of course, but as fully *available*. It has no limit to its value within the limits of the human race.

Of how that which is available for all avails for any, and how far it avails, I propose to consider in another chapter. Here, I go no farther than this, that the Lord standing in the place of men took the very penalty under which they were,—died, and was made a curse: the value of which must be measured by the infinite value of Him who did this, and the perfection of an obedience so beyond all price.

We are not, therefore, called upon to measure what is measureless, or to conceive of so many sins, or those of so many sinners, weighed out to be atoned for by a particular amount of suffering. Such a commercial idea (as it has been rightly called) of the Lord's wondrous work is an essential degradation of it,—not a high, but a *low* estimate of the requirements of absolute holiness which were to be met thereby. It is not that God must have so much suffering for so much sin, but that His holiness necessitates displeasure proportioned to the evil which awakes it. So even in the final judgment. The deeds done in the body become the manifestation* of the person upon whom the judgment of God rests correspondingly, but *forever* rests; *not* because, as people have wrongly conceived, the sin itself is necessarily *worthy* of eternal punishment, but because the sinner remains eter-

*"We must all be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ" is the true rendering of 2 Corinthians v. 10.

nally with the character which his life manifests.

The error is therefore plain of making the atonement consist in the endurance of so much agony, as if God could measure out that to the holy Sufferer; whereas, beyond all our conception as was the agony endured, the reality and efficacy of atonement lay in the solemn seal thus put upon the divine estimate of sin, when God's own beloved Son stooped Himself to endure its dreadful penalty.

That He "bare our sins in His own body on the tree," and that God "laid upon Him the iniquity of us all,"—these and such like passages which declare a real imputation of our sins to Christ remain in all their solemn yet precious meaning for us. It was for these sins of ours He suffered, and this suffering of His is that which alone removes them from us, and removes them entirely: how perfectly, we shall see more as we proceed. He was the true Sin-bearer,—our Substitute under penalty, as we have seen. He could not have been this had not our sins been laid on Him; but I turn from this, which will come up before us again, to look at another question in connection with the penalty itself.

In what we have been considering lately, it will be noted that of necessity it would seem it is rather wrath-bearing than death we have been dwelling on; and it may be asked, If all this be true, what part exactly in the penalty has death, then? If wrath could be exhausted by the Lord before dying,—if He could emerge from the darkness into the light, and in peace say once more "Father" before he died,—what need, then, even of dying? Was death for *Him* the wages of sin which He had taken?

And it is undeniable that there has been a tend-

ency two ways, according as one class of texts or the other has been dwelt upon, to make all atonement consist in wrath-bearing, or—far more commonly—all consist in dying. Yet both are plainly unscriptural, as we have sufficiently seen. What we want is to realize the relation of these two parts to each other—to find the due place of each in the Lord's blessed work. We have been looking at the meaning of wrath-bearing of late; and it does raise the necessary question, Why, then, His death? Granting, as we must, the necessity of it according to Scripture, yet why this necessity?

The answer is plain only in the realization of a truth which has been overlooked, conspicuous as it is, by the mass of those who have occupied themselves with the interpretation of Scripture: *the setting aside of the failed first man and the old creation*, to bring in blessing under another head and on another and higher plane altogether.

As already said, the solemnity of death lies in this, that it is the removal of man as failed out of the scene of his failure—the solemn sentence upon him as unfitted for the place for which he was created. The lower creatures, indeed, have never sinned,—are incapable of it,—yet they die; and men plead, therefore, that death is natural. But they cannot persuade themselves, whose whole nature cries out against it. The scriptural account is, "The wages of *sin* is death;" and thus, "man, being in honor, abideth not; he is like the beasts that perish" (Ps. xlix. 12).

Yes, the beasts *do* perish. Intended for nothing but a temporary purpose, they enjoy life while it lasts, without a sorrow for the past or a fear for the future. But man is not a beast: he is the offspring

of God, meant to know and enjoy communion with Him forever; and his being leveled to the beasts is the sign of a moral, a spiritual ruin, in which he has forgotten God, and leveled himself to them. He, like them, passes away and is not found; his place knows him no more forever. But not like them, for he has "thoughts" that perish with him, unfulfilled plans and purposes, affections which cling to what they cannot hold, a dread upon his soul which presages a hereafter such as the beast dreads not and desires not, because it has not: "The dust returns to the earth as it was, but the spirit returns to God that gave it."

Such is death for man; and being such, it is the wages of sin. Man in it, as the creature which God made for Adam's paradise, perishes forever,—is set entirely aside. Nor do I forget resurrection when I say so. *Resurrection does not restore him to this.* Job's words are absolutely true here, without bringing in the God-dishonoring thought of annihilation in any wise: "As the cloud is consumed, and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more: he shall return no more to his house; neither shall his place know him any more." God's grace may give him another and a better thing, but it does not reverse the first judgment.

And thus it is that when the Lord takes death for man He takes it as affirming God's sentence upon man, by which the old creation is set aside forever. Let this be well observed, that whereas the wrath of God upon sin, in being undergone by Christ, is removed (*the effect of atonement is removal*), it is not so with a sentence by which the first man is set aside: if the Lord take this, it must

be, *not* to bring him back, but to *affirm his setting aside*. The effect of wrath-bearing is to put away wrath; but the effect of the Lord's dying is that with His death the old creation is confirmed as passing away—is *set aside fully, not restored*.

This is the direct force of 2 Corinthians v. 14-17, not well given in our common version: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if One died for all, *then all died* [or, have died]; and for all He died, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again. Wherefore, henceforth know we *no man after the flesh*; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, [it is] *new* creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

This is an important passage, and needs attentive consideration. It is a positive statement of the meaning of Christ's death as dying for all,—these "all" being expressly shown not to be limited to "those who live," who are distinguished from them as a class in the latter part of the fourteenth verse.

It is directly affirmed, then, of *all*, that if Christ died for them, *all died*. Our common version has it, "then *were all dead*,"—making it a spiritual state; but the Greek will not admit of this, and the sense also is quite different. The point is as to what Christ's death proves men to have been *under* as sentence, not *in* as state; for He came under our sentence as sinners, but not into our state of sin. He died, then, for all; and so all have died. Before God, the world is judged and passed; as the Lord Himself said of the cross, "Now is the judgment

of this world" (Jno. xii. 31). It is not a judgment executed, of course: none could suppose that; but it is a judgment pronounced; and a judgment pronounced is with God as it were executed, so sure and irreversible is it. If Christ, then, died for all, all died. Sentence is not taken away by this, but affirmed.

And this meaning is clearly proved by what follows in Corinthians—"wherefore, henceforth know we *no man after the flesh*." This is the simple and necessary result (for *faith*, not for sight): if all have died, they are in the flesh no longer; we walk amid a world where men are either alive in Christ or but as it were dead men. But not only so: "yea, though we have known *Christ* after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more." Even Christ has not taken up again the life which He laid down. He has not returned (that is,) to His former state upon earth. That is over; and the Christ we know is One who is in resurrection in the glory of God. An immeasurably higher condition, you say. Surely it is; but the former one is passed away, and passed away in that which affirmed God's sentence upon it. Where, then, are we who *live*? In Christ; and "if any man be in Christ, it is *new* creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Thus the sense of the passage is plain and perspicuous. And the meaning of the Lord's taking of death is very clearly set forth. Atonement does not restore the old Adam condition, but affirms its judgment and setting aside. For those saved by it, the darkness of distance from God who is light is passed with the darkness upon the cross. It is thus the gospel of Luke, which gives especially the

effects of the work of Christ for the conscience, connects them: "And it was about the sixth hour; and there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour; and the sun was darkened, and *the vail of the temple was rent in the midst.*" The vail meant darkness, as that in which God dwelled for man; its rending means that "God is in the light" (1 Jno. i. 7).

But with His *death* the apostle Matthew takes especial care to connect what in fact did not occur till after His resurrection: "And the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." The answer to His death is resurrection; not the recommencement of the old Adam life, which is finally and forever set aside.

Thus those alive in Christ are dead with Him also, and as it is specifically stated, "dead to sin," "dead to law," "dead to the elements of the world"—to all that makes it up,—and "not in the flesh." But to that we must return hereafter: our present subject closes here.

BEER-LAHAI-ROI.

Genosis xvi. 13, 14; xxiv. 62; xxv. 11.

THE story of the well with this significant name is told in few words, but full of interest. How in a few touches of Scripture a living, breathing picture is made to stand before you; and, examine it closely, the more its perfection appears; the more your wonder and admiration grow.

God works by wonder, as when He drew aside Moses by the burning bush; but, as in that case, the wonder is never a wonder merely: underneath, if you look further, you will find some deep significance, some pregnancy of meaning—a “sign,” or significant thing. More than that, where there is need,—where creature weakness and dependency are realized,—the “sign” will develop “power:” there will be the ministry of God, the interposition of Omnipotent Love to meet that need. These are the three words which stand for a miracle in Scripture: it is a “wonder,” a “sign,” and a “power;” and in nothing are these found as they are in Scripture itself. It is one of the mightiest of miracles; and the Lord could say, even of the Old Testament, “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded *though one rose from the dead.*”

Now the well Lahai-roi is, I doubt not, the type of Scripture in this very character. It is the “fountain of water” at which the angel of the Lord finds Hagar when she is fleeing from the face of her mistress Sarai, and where, assuring her of the birth and multiplication of her seed, he bids her return to her mistress, and submit herself into her hands. These women are types of which the interpretation is given us. Hagar is the law, which gendereth to bondage, the servant of grace, the free-woman, as God has ordained. And as we find the well first in connection with Hagar, so the first books of Scripture are the books of the law. Yet it is at this well afterward we find, not a child of the bondwoman, but of the free. Isaac *dwells* at the well Lahai-roi: it is his possession, as is the Word that of him who believes through grace; and the Word, as ministered in the power of the

living Spirit; for as the water is a figure of the Word, so the "*living* water" is the figure of the Spirit, as the apostle teaches us (Jno. vii. 39). By the Word the Spirit ministers, and thus it is that, as the Lord says, "the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

Lahai-roi is the Word, thus, with significance and power for the soul, and in which the presence of the living, omniscient God is made apparent. It is so, though under another aspect from that of water, that Hebrews iv. presents it: "living and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, *piercing even to the dividing asunder of joints and marrow, of soul and spirit, a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*" And then what have we? "Neither is there any thing that is not manifest in His sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." This is clearly, in another aspect, Lahai-roi. And how blessed when the Word brings us after this manner into the presence of God, as is its office! Looking at Israel in the type, we may see how in God's meaning, for His children, this is to be no casual or occasional thing. We are to *dwell* by the well. As children we are to *abide* in the intimacy of our Father's presence, under His eye, and in the assurance of His fostering care. Our Lord's words are but another expression of this: "If a man love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and *make our abode with him.*"

This is His thought for us, and to be without it is the "orphanage" which He would not have His people know (Jno. xiv. 18, *marg.*). How blessed where, through the Word and by the Spirit, Father

and Son realize Their presence continually to the soul! How wondrous the intimacy to which we are thus called! Alas, on the other hand, for the feebleness of our actual experience in view of such invitations and assurances! Why do we so fall short? Covet the blessing in its fullness every Christian must: what, then, is the difficulty of attainment, when it is divine grace that is drawing near us? The type before us is very instructive in this particular.

First, Isaac stands before us, not only as the representative of the child of God, but of the child in the child's place,—in the liberty of divine grace known and enjoyed. And this is the first and great prerequisite to the blessing. If grace it is that comes to be entertained, faith it is on man's part gives it entertainment. How slow we are to enter into God's thoughts, to accredit fully His goodness, and "draw near with a true heart, in *full* assurance of faith"! Yet we all know that the *least* grace we could no more pretend to be worthy of than the greatest, and that God is no less true in one word He speaks than in another. "He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

The second point is, that Isaac is not only the child of the free-woman, but also the type of that great sacrifice which in spirit we are called to be conformed to. "Let that mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, and became in the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the

death of the cross." Such is the pattern put before us, and in this twofold manner Isaac is a type. The result to us of the child's place is absolute surrender to the Father's will; and it is the peculiar fruit of faith, in which the soul's return to God is manifested. Being in a fallen world, sin being in us and around us, this fruit is found in surrender—in sacrifice. Yet Isaac does not die, but lives; nor is there a life which speaks more of enjoyment and rest, in the book of Genesis, than his after-life. And so is surrender to God. It is the low-seeming portal to all that is bright and blessed and holy in practical life. Nay, what holiness, what blessedness, what freedom, what life of faith at all, can be known apart from it? It is here that for our troubles we find rest, for doubt assurance, for our weakness an everlasting arm. Yet it is in sacrifice we find entrance into this; for we have, alas! ways and wills that are our own, paths of human wisdom hard to relinquish, and a hostile world around. Faith amid it all seeks God, and finds in Him its rock and hiding-place.

Surrender to God must, however, be entire surrender, or it is not this; and here the real and grave condition of so many appears. They fall short, not in performance only, where all must own shortcoming, but in spirit, in intention also. And this may be with even entire unconsciousness as to the fact. Conscience does not reproach, if even it does not very decidedly approve. A standard not far removed from that of men around has been adopted practically with perhaps a theoretical one much higher at the same time, and there is little to alarm. Is not Christ's yoke easy and His burden light? They are not legal, and thank God for

grace. They know no raptures, but as little disquiet. But Lahai-roi is not reached. The Word is certainly no full spring of unfailing blessing, realizing to their souls the constant presence of a living God. They have indeed no daily need. Ordinarily, they get on as others do; under more than ordinary pressure, they are forced to God.

How different Lahai-roi, where the Isaacs dwell!—the endeared mutual intercourse with God, wherein a soul lives indeed and grows, and like a tree planted by the water-brooks, brings forth its fruit in its season; his leaf also doth not wither, and whatsoever he doeth, it prospers. May you and I dwell here, dear reader, in this sweetest portion outside heaven, and where the joy of heaven is already tasted.

THE LESSONS OF THE AGES.

THE PREFACE TO THE TRIAL BY LAW. ABRAHAM AND THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

AN important period comes now to be considered; not itself forming part of these probationary ages, but having nevertheless the deepest significance in relation to these. The trial by law, it is evident, was the fullest and most detailed trial that man received; as it was the trial of the only religious system that ever was the fruit of man's mind simply. We have seen it in principle already in Cain—a mere natural man, of course; but with the believer also there are thoughts of the natural mind which are no better. God, in the giving of law, does not yet reveal His own way of blessing, but

adopts, for the sake of experiment, man's way ; only supplying the needful conditions that the experiment may be fully made, and the issue such as may not at all be doubtful.

But in a case of this kind, special care would be needed also to guard against the mistake, so sure otherwise to happen, of confounding this adoption of man's way, for a certain purpose, with the acceptance of it by God as the true one, and His own thought. This in fact has happened, because unbelief in man can set aside the plainest testimonies that can be given ; while the systems which set these aside necessarily, in proportion as they do so, deny the simple facts connected with the giving of the law, and which are indeed part of a testimony which He has thus graven upon the history itself.

Thus those who affirm the law to be in any sense God's original thought have endeavored to prove, as it was needful to prove, its universality and its existence from the beginning in a fallen world. Its universality, for that which was God's way of blessing for man, could not be (according to His own design) shut up from the mass ; its existence from the beginning, partly for the same reason, and partly because God's thought would surely be the one first announced by Him.

To establish its universality, they have had to distinguish between a written and an unwritten law ; or, as they assume to call it from Scripture, a law written on the heart. What they mean is in fact conscience, an implicit law which every one has, while the ten commandments are only its explicit form, and as such given to Israel alone. In the same way they prove equally, as they think, its existence from the beginning.

Scripture refuses this, however, utterly. The "law written upon the heart" is only used of Israel's condition when finally converted to God. It is one of the blessings of the new covenant—"I *will* put My laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts;" words which prove conclusively that such a condition is not every man's natural one. While in the passage in Romans often quoted, where at first sight a similar term seems to be applied to the Gentiles, it is in reality a very different one: "Which show," says the apostle, "the *work* of the law written upon their hearts"—not the law written, but its *work* written, as the original text declares without any question. The work of the law is conviction: conscience does this work in the one who has not the law, though far less completely: "By the law is the knowledge of sin;" and this knowledge conscience in measure gives to every one, and in that respect they, "having no law" (so the Revised Version correctly gives it), "are a law unto themselves." *Had* they a law, they would *not* be a law to themselves.

There is no escape from the plain statement of Scripture that the law written on the heart is conversion, and not the natural state; and that if it were, God could not promise to do it for those who already had it done in them. Positive, too, is the statement that the Gentiles have "no law." But beside all this, the introduction of law at the beginning in a fallen world is the subversion of the whole argument of the apostle (Gal. iii. 17), that "the covenant, which was confirmed before of God in Christ [or rather "*to* Christ"], the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, could not disannul, that it should make the promise of no

effect." For "though it be a man's covenant, if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereunto."

He here shows one of the meanings of this Abrahamic period preceding the dispensation of law. No less than four centuries does God require to put between the promise of grace to Abraham and his seed and the legal covenant between Himself and Israel, to prevent the one being confounded with or added to the other. And the importance of this will be seen, when we compare the real universality of the first with the restricted bearing of the second. "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed," God says to Abraham, speaking to him as the pattern man of faith, the "father of all them that believe." For "they which are of faith," says the apostle, "the same are the children of Abraham." And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would "justify the heathen [the nations] through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, 'In thee shall all nations be blessed.' So then," he adds, "they which be of faith are blessed with faithful [or rather, "believing"] Abraham."

Thus God had proclaimed, centuries before the law, that the Gentiles should be blessed upon the principle of faith. Even as, long after the law was given, He had declared by Habakkuk that "the just shall live by faith." "And," adds the apostle again, "the law is not of faith; but 'the man that *doeth* them shall live in them'"—an entirely different and conflicting principle.

Even thus far it is plain that as God's universal way of blessing, the gospel had possession of the field before the law came in at all. But God would

make it more evident; and He confirms this covenant of promise (really) to Christ, when He afterward adds, "In *thy seed* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." This is of course the completion (and therefore confirmation) of the former promise; and its full significance is seen in connection with that offering up of Isaac, and receiving him back (in figure) from the dead, which so plainly find their antitype in Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection. The true Isaac is that One Seed, as the apostle points out, "to whom the promise was made." If "in thee" showed that the blessing was to be by faith, "in thy seed" reveals the object of faith, the Person and work through whom alone the blessing of all nations could in fact come.

Law is excluded from this covenant of promise. It has absolutely no place there. And what proves this, according to the apostle, is just the fact of its having been made and confirmed of God four hundred and thirty years before the Sinaitic. Even a man's covenant made and confirmed cannot be reopened to insert new conditions. How simply impossible, then, to add the law as a condition to the covenant of grace!

Theological systems would come in here to assure us, however, that the law was written upon man's heart from the beginning, and thus upset altogether the apostle's reasoning. Instead of grace having priority of law, as he affirms, according to these, it is the law that has the priority. Either he or they, then, must be in error.

In the epistle to the Romans also he speaks of a time before law. "For until the law," he says, —or rather, "until law"—"sin was in the world." Law did not introduce it therefore, he means to

say; but again they would correct him: according to them, there was no time "until"—that is, *before*—law. And some would doubtless quote the next words of the apostle in proof: "But sin is not imputed where there is no law." The mistake is in supposing "imputing" here to be the same thing as elsewhere in the epistle; it is in reality a different word: "sin is not *put in account*" (as the different items of a bill,) is the true thought. "Sin is not put in account where there is no law; nevertheless death reigned"—proving that sin *was* "imputed," *from Adam to Moses*, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." For Adam had "transgressed;" he had overstepped a positive law under which he was. "From Adam to Moses" is just the time of the most part of the Genesis history; it is the time *until law*, when sin was already in the world, but when it had not as yet this aggravation. The supposition—for it *has* been supposed—that *infants* are in question "from Adam to Moses," is scarcely deserving a refutation.

It is not true, then, that the law given at Sinai was only the explicit announcement of what had been implicitly in existence from the beginning; but on the contrary, law, as a principle of God's dealings in a fallen world, came in then. It is what He was forced into (to speak after the manner of men), rather than desired. Abel, in the world before the flood, declared what was His way from the beginning; and this Noah's altar proclaimed again as His, when those waters had scarcely dried from off the face of the new world.

In this prefatory period of which we are now speaking, the types of the law and its significance

the apostle has taught us to find in Abraham's history. How suited their place there should be surely evident. Hagar is thus the "covenant from the Mount Sina, which gendereth to bondage," and every detail of her history is, I am assured, luminous in this way. That she is but handmaid to Sarah, the covenant of grace, every one owns, of course. Sarah's name is "Princess," for "grace reigns." Hagar is an Egyptian, child of fallen nature; and *her* name is "Fugitive," for, alas! the natural effort now is to get away from God. She is fleeing toward Egypt when the angel finds her at Lahai-roi; and when dismissed with her child in obedience to the divine command, again we find her gravitating toward Egypt. How plainly is it taught, thus, that the law is characterized by "the elements of the world," with which the apostle connects it in Galatians! *As a principle*, it is man's way, not God's; as specific commandment, holy, just, and good; and in His intent in giving it, surely worthy every way of Him. These things alter in no wise the fact that it is man's way—his experiment with himself—taken up by God, and worked out, in His own perfect manner, to a true result.

Thus it should be very plain why Hagar is first *found* by God in relation to Abram, manifestly his own shift, through little faith, to obtain the promised and desired fruit. *Finding* her thus, He appears to her at the well Lahai-roi, and sends her back to submit herself (mark) into her mistress's hands, and to allow the trial already begun to be fully wrought. But while He allows it, He does not leave the issue for a moment doubtful. The fruit of law is the natural fruit. Ishmael shall be

born, but be only the "wild-ass man"—untamed, untamable flesh.

Abraham thus exhibits in his own history the lesson which afterward, for so many centuries, his posterity were set to learn. In his own person, he is the witness of sovereign, electing grace; called out of the darkness of heathenism, as Joshua reminds the men of his generation—"Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods." Here, "the God of glory appeared unto" him, and called him from country, kindred, and father's house, to be the special witness of His name and way.

Before Hagar appears in the history, God gives testimony to Abram, as a man righteous through faith; and it is instructive to see how the apostle, when he brings Abram before us as the pattern man of faith, passes over all the time of his connection with her as so much loss. "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, 'So shall thy seed be.' And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able also to perform. *And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.*"

In the last words, the apostle seems to ignore the facts of history; for Abram's body was not yet dead when God said to him, "So shall thy seed be," and when his faith was first counted for righteous-

ness. It was after this—probably some time after—that Ishmael was born; and *he* was thirteen years old at the time of which the epistle to the Romans speaks. All these fifteen years or more the apostle treats as so much lost time, to bring together the period in which he is first spoken of as having the righteousness of faith, and that when he received the covenant of circumcision as the “seal” of that righteousness. Circumcision means, as the same apostle elsewhere tells us, the “putting off of the body of the flesh;” and they are the “true circumcision” who have no confidence in the flesh.” God Himself thus brings these two periods together; and circumcision is seen to be indeed, as the Lord says, “not of Moses.” In its spiritual meaning, it is the fundamental opposite of law.

How fully in all this the character and purpose of this intermediate time comes out! Even the natural seed—Israel after the flesh—will find their blessing in the end from God according to the grace of the Abrahamic covenant, and not according to the Sinaitic, the only one according to which they have yet received the land. The Abrahamic covenant will thus be in very deed to them a “*new* covenant.” Thus grace still as a nation holds them fast, as it ever has, for future blessing,—a blessing which, when it comes, will alone be the proper fulfillment of the “covenant of promise.”

Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph give us, as types, yet further lessons. Isaac shows us the Seed through whom alone the blessing can come; Jacob, the immediate father of the twelve tribes, in both his character and history foreshadows theirs; and Joseph, rejected by his brethren, and yet at last received perforce as their saviour and lord, shows

in so plain a way their history in respect of One infinitely greater that it needs no insisting on. For our present purpose enough has been already said to prove how in this period prefatory to the law the law itself is guarded from misconception, and grace is declared God's way, and only way, of blessing for man. Even for Israel, God's covenant is the covenant of circumcision. Carnality and unbelief, stopping at the outside, may misread all this from first to last. If those misread it for whom has come the full and final revelation, "the vail is upon their hearts."

KEY-NOTES TO THE BIBLE BOOKS.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.—*Continued.*

II.

THE LIFE AS COMMUNICATED, WITH ITS ACCOMPANIMENTS IN THE BELIEVER. (Chap. ii. 23-xvii.)

THE life now manifested in the person of the Word made flesh is in the second part of the gospel displayed as communicated to man, in its various aspects, and with all its wondrous accompaniments as they are found in the believer in Christ. These are given in regular and perfect order, beginning with new birth in the third chapter, and ending in the thirteenth and four chapters following with the apprehension of the Father and the Son, communion and the fruits in which it issues. Of this part there are four sections, which successively give us, first, chap. iii, iv, the two divine gifts which are fundamental to Christianity—eternal life and the gift of

the Holy Ghost; secondly, chap. v.-vii, the position in which believers are thus placed in relation to the world; thirdly, chap. viii.-xii, the bringing to God in the power of resurrection; and lastly, chap. xiii.-xvii, the practical fruits for walk and testimony.

1. (ii. 23-iv.) *Life in the Spirit.*

There are, in the first section, two distinct but related parts. The first, new birth, the absolute prerequisite to the other, the gift of the Holy Ghost. The one *forms* the vessel, the other fills it: the one sets right the affections, the other satisfies them.

(1) ii. 23-iii. *New Birth.* The last three verses of the second chapter belong evidently in subject to the third, to which they form an important introduction. The condition of man is shown, not in the case of enemies or rejecters, but of those convinced and orthodox in belief, to whom yet as alien in spirit the Lord could not commit Himself. Convinced by miracles, the glory of Christ was yet unseen by them; there was no link of true faith, no response of heart. In Nicodemus' case, while he takes similar ground to theirs—that of the miracles, yet he comes to Christ, showing personal need. The Lord insists on the necessity and character of new birth, man being naturally only “flesh;” a birth which the Word and Spirit unite to produce. Until this is accomplished, man, Jew or Gentile, does not live; and this life is in the sovereign gift of God alone.

But Israel rejected the testimony of One who spoke with perfect knowledge, even when He testified in the line of their own prophets—of earthly

things. And He had more to communicate. How would they receive what would have no authority but His to commend it to them? how would they believe when He spoke of heavenly things? Moreover, not for testimony only had He come, but, as antitype of the brazen serpent, to be lifted up, made sin for sinners, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have eternal life, God having so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son for that purpose. "After these things came Jesus and His disciples into the land of Judea, and there He tarried with them, and baptized." Baptism is burial, and thus the Lord confirms the testimony of the cross as to man's condition. It is life man needs as dead; eternal life that he receives.

The heavenly things the Lord has not yet declared; for as far as He has yet gone, another is permitted to testify with Him. John expressly says of himself, "He that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth," and yet he bears witness of the Son, and of eternal life being the possession of him who believes in the Son. Not, of course, that eternal life is in its own nature earthly, as surely the Son of God is not; but they can be and are received on earth, while Christ's testimony opens heaven itself.

(2) iv. 1-42. *The gift of the Holy Ghost—the living water.* It is now significantly noted that "Jesus Himself baptized not." He confirms the Baptist's witness to man's condition, but not as if it were His own proper sphere of truth. We now find Him, moreover, in Samaria, a Gentile scene. Here He announces the gift of the living water, the Holy Ghost, to an open sinner; for it is the gift of grace, which surmounts, therefore, all legal restrictions

also. The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans; but He is no Jew, but Himself the gift of God to men: of Him, of whom one has but to ask to obtain living water. Moreover, he who drank of this should not merely find satisfaction for a time, as with all mere human joys, but possess the spring of it—for it is not “well,” but “spring”—in himself, perpetual and eternal, “springing up unto eternal life.” Here the indwelling of the Spirit is plainly declared to be forever.

The woman's conscience being now reached by the confronting with her past life, she confesses the Lord as a “prophet,” and then appeals to His decision between Jerusalem and Gerizim. He declares the worship of God apart from all question of locality, and only possible in reality as resulting from the knowledge of an object which could produce it. God must be known, and salvation was that by which He was known, who was the Father now seeking, in His grace, true worshipers. The thought of Messiah springs up in the woman's heart. The Lord declares Himself to be Messiah.

This completes the work in the woman's soul. Christ come, and with perfect knowledge of her, revealing to her heart the Father's love, she leaves what had occupied her to tell in the city her new-found joy, her words revealing the secret—“Come, see a man that told me *all things that ever I did.*” On the other hand, the Lord's joy is revealed in the fact that the disciples, who had left to obtain food for His need, come back to find Him no more ahungred: “I have meat to eat that ye know not of,” He replies to their wonder. “My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.”

The "two days" in Samaria speak, I doubt not, of the present time of grace among the Gentiles. Their apprehension of Him is fittingly as "Saviour of the *world*."

We find, then, here the Holy Ghost as "living water," indwelling, satisfying the soul; Christ revealing the Father in connection with a known salvation, and, as the result, true, spiritual worship awakened in the heart. This testimony among Gentiles, and to the Saviour of the world. This, with the third chapter, gives the two great factors of Christianity.

(3) iv. 43-54. *The nobleman's son, typifying Israel's conversion.* The last part of the fourth chapter seems a supplement to the rest, in which God's grace is seen going out once more to Israel, after the present dispensation is ended. Here we return to Cana of Galilee, marked, too, as the place of the former miracle. We are prepared thus for a connected meaning.

The "nobleman," or "servant of the king," depicts, I doubt not, the nation sunk into the character of courtiers of the world, but now under the judgment of God, as the son smitten apparently to death at Capernaum (elsewhere doomed for the rejection of Christ,) plainly points out. This distress brings him to Christ. The Lord reproves him for the unbelief common to the nation: "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." But the man's need is urgent: "Sir, come down ere my child die." And the ready answer of grace is, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." The deliverance brings both himself and his house to true faith.

ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Redemption and Atonement.

WE now come to look at the efficacy of atonement—that is to say, its connection with redemption. For redemption is not, in Scripture, what it is for many, a thing accomplished for the whole world. No passage which hints at this even can be produced from the Word. Redemption was, for Israel, the breaking of Pharaoh's yoke. The redemption of our body is accomplished in resurrection (Rom. viii. 23). "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. i. 7). Such statements sufficiently show us that redemption is an accomplished deliverance,—that it involves, not a salvable state, but a *salvation*, which the world as a whole never knows. And redemption is "through His blood" shed in atonement: it is that in which the proper efficacy of atonement is declared. "Not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. i. 18, 19).

A difficulty which has divided Christians comes in here. If redemption is by atonement, and atonement—the "propitiation" of 1 John ii. 2,—is for the whole world, how is it that in fact all are not redeemed? The answer to which is given by some that atonement is only conditionally efficacious,

and this is plainly the only possible one if such texts as that just cited are accepted in their natural sense. The alternative is only to explain, as all strict Calvinists do, the "world," as simply the *elect* among Jews and Gentiles. But this is not what "the whole world" means. What would the very persons who urge this think, if when the same apostle in the same epistle says, "We know that we are of God, and the *whole world* lieth in wickedness," a similar limitation were maintained? "We" and "the whole world" are no more contrasted in the one case than "ours" and "of the whole world" are in the other. Or again when Paul declares that "whatsoever the law saith it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth might be stopped, and the *whole world* become guilty before God," if it were contended that this meant anything less than all men, who would admit it?

Take 1 Tim. ii. 1-6 as another statement. Prayer is enjoined for all men, for God our Saviour "will have *all men* to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth; for there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a *ransom for all*, to be testified in due time." Here, the "all men" must be consistently interpreted throughout.

So the gospel which Paul preached to the Corinthians was that "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor. xv. 3), as the doctrine of his second epistle is that "He died for all" (v. 14). Only on this ground, indeed, could the gospel be sent out, as it confessedly is, to "every creature," or could it be spoken of as "the grace of God which bringeth salvation to all" (Tit. ii. 11).

Only a provision actually made for all could

fulfill the fair meaning of such texts as these; and we may not bring into them any doctrine of election, to limit them. They are the testimony of the desire of God's heart for all. They are the assurance that if men die unsaved, the responsibility of their ruin is with themselves alone. They are the encouragement to implicit confidence in a love that welcomes, and has title to welcome, all who come by Christ to God.

But while these texts seem very clear, and the sufficiency and applicability of the atonement are in words allowed by some who contest even the meaning of them, there are others which to many occasion difficulty in regard to a "propitiation for the sins of the whole world." These are the texts which speak of substitution in the strict sense.

Substitution is not found as a term in Scripture, but the *fact* of it is abundantly found. Every victim whose blood was shed in atonement for the sin of him who offered it was a real substitute for the offerer. It has been objected that the word for "substitution" does not occur in connection with the Levitical sacrifices or the Lord's work; but that the "Son of Man came to give His life a ransom for [*ἀντὶ*—instead of] many" is said in both Matthew and Mark, while in 1 Tim. ii. 6 we have the word *ἀντίλυτρον*—a ransom-price. But, as I have said, the doctrine is there where the term is not. If the Lord were "made a curse for us," how could this be but as representing us? If He "bare our sins in His own body on the tree," what else was this but substitution? And there is much of similar language elsewhere, as we shall see. In fact, the difficulty of which I have spoken arises from the way in which it is every-where pressed

that our Lord's work for us was of true substitutionary character.

For while, in a certain sense, the Lord might be said to be a ransom in place of all, it is evident that where faith is not and while it is not the ransom is as if it were not. And there are expressions thus as to the sacrifice which to faith and only faith could apply. Take one from Isaiah liii: "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Here, faith speaks, and the words are surely not true of any other than believers. But then comes the difficulty: was there, then, when Christ died, some special work needed and undergone for the sins of believers?

The same question might be asked, perhaps even more pointedly, with regard to 1 Pet. ii. 24: "Who Himself bare our sins in His own body on the tree." For this "bearing" surely speaks of the removal of them from before God's sight. Would it be possible, then, to say of the world that He bare *their* sins in His body on the tree? Surely not, or they would most certainly be saved. He could not have borne their sins and they yet have to bear them. A strict and proper substitution assuredly necessitates the removal of responsibility from the one for whom the substitute assumes it. It results, therefore, that a substitute for the world the Lord was not.

And the language of Scripture is every-where in accord with this. It does speak of propitiation for the sins of the whole world: it does *not* speak of their sins being "laid on" or "borne" by Christ. These two things have been confounded on the one hand, and made into a doctrine of limited atonement, or of substitution for all. On the other, where the distinction has been noticed, it has been

taken to imply that on the cross there was a work for all and a *special* work for the elect beside—a double atonement, as it were; that it was a propitiation for all, a substitution for the elect. In other words, the Arminian atonement and the Calvinistic atonement are both considered true, and to be found together in the work of Christ. But this leads to much confusion and misreading of Scripture, much manifest opposition to it.

It has led some to speak of salvation as a thing wrought out eighteen hundred years ago,—not simply the blessed work which saves, but actual salvation. Faith serves as a telescope to see what existed before we saw it, and what it had nothing to do therefore with producing. The sins of believers were thus dealt with and removed before they were committed, and people find peace by faith, but are not justified by it. All this is in complete opposition to the Word; yet it is a just consequence of the doctrine of a substitution for the elect, and their sins borne when the Lord Jesus died.

Yet He did bear their sins upon the tree, and Jehovah laid on Him the iniquity of us all. "Ours"? Whose, then? and how does this differ from the doctrine just repudiated? The answer is very simple. These words are the language of faith,—of believers; and of believers as such only is it true. He bare the sins of believers on the tree, and this is equivalent to what we have been saying—that the efficacy of atonement is conditional. It is conditioned upon faith, and His bearing the sins of *believers* is a complete negative of universalism in all its phases. Only their sins are *borne*, although the atonement is for the sins of the whole world; and the duty and responsibility of

faith are therefore to be pressed on every creature. The sins of believers were really borne eighteen hundred years ago; but only when men become believers are their sins borne, therefore. The very man who to-day believes, and whose sins were borne eighteen hundred years ago, not only could not *say* yesterday that his sins were borne, but they were really *not* borne yesterday, although the work was done eighteen hundred years ago. But it was done for *believers*, and only to-day is he a believer. The work of atonement only now has its proper efficacy for him: he is justified by faith.

All this is perfectly simple. It is transparently so, indeed. What has clouded and disfigured it? On the one hand, the importing into it the doctrine of election, which is never done in Scripture; on the other, the thought that our iniquity being laid upon the Lord meant the putting away of so much sin for so much suffering,—so many actual sins of just so many persons being provided for, and no other. But this would make propitiation for the world impossible, and destroy, as we have seen, if consistently followed out, justification by faith. The simple meaning of the texts appealed to involves no such difficulty.

The Lord Jesus, then, was the Substitute for believers, and thus made propitiation for the sins of the world, its efficacy being conditioned upon faith. He stood as the Representative of a class, not a fixed number of individuals,—of a people to whom men are invited and besought to join themselves, the value of the atonement being more than sufficient and available for all who come. The responsibility of coming really rests, where Scripture always places it, upon men themselves.

Now, if it be asked, What is the issue of this invitation? Do any become of the number of His people really except in virtue of a divine work wrought sovereignly in their souls? it is true, none do so. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jno. i. 12, 13). Such is the decisive statement of Scripture. Men are born again to be children of God; and the new birth is not of man's will: the moment we speak of it, we speak of that which assures us that man's will is wholly adverse. For to be born again is never a thing put upon man as what he is responsible for: it is, in its very nature, outside of this. And "Ye must be born again" is the distinct affirmation that on the ground of responsibility all is over. "How often would I . . . ! and ye would not," is the Lord's lament over Israel; and it is true of man in nature every where. Terrible it is to realize it, but it is true.

Man is bidden to repent and believe the gospel. There is no lack of abundant evidence. It is the condemnation, that "light is come into the world, and men *loved* darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." They refuse the evidence that convicts them, and refuse the grace that would save them. "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." That he needs to be born again shows that God must work sovereignly, or the whole world perish. So it is quickening from the dead and new creation. These terms all witness to the utter ruin of man, as they do to the omnipotent grace of God in conversion.

These terms speak all of a new life conferred, and with this life the condition required in order to efficacious atonement is accomplished; there is "justification *of life*" (Rom. v. 18)—justification attaching to the life possessed. The last Adam is made a quickening Spirit (1 Cor. xv. 45), after having gone down to death and come up out of it; and the life He gives brings those who receive it into a new creation, of which He is the Representative-Head. To these He is Kinsman-Redeemer, according to the type (Lev. xxv. 48). The new relationship is their security and entrance into full blessing, to which His work is now their absolute title.

It is here that election does come in; not to limit the provision, nor to restrict in any wise the grace that bids and welcomes all, but to secure the blessing of those who otherwise would refuse and forfeit it as the rest do. The grace to all is not narrowed by the "grace upon grace" to many. The universal offer means and is based on a universal provision, and a provision of exactly the same character for all alike, in which God testifies that He hath "no pleasure in the death of him that dieth," but "will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." It may be asked, as it has been asked, Of what avail is a provision for all which saves not one additional to the elect number? The answer which Scripture would give is, "What if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith [or faithfulness] of God without effect? God forbid." The salvation of men is from God; the damnation of men is from themselves. This all the pleadings, warnings, offers of God affirm. And grace refused is still grace, and to be proclaimed to His praise.

The last Adam is thus the Representative-Head of His people, as in His atoning work He was their Substitute before God. "Upon the seed of Abraham"—that is, believers,—“He layeth hold.” This affirms the work to be for all, conditionally upon faith; and for believers *unconditionally*. “The righteousness of God is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all; and upon”—or “over,” rather, as a shield or sheltering roof,—“all them that believe.”

PEACE.

IS this the peace of God—this strange, sweet calm?

The weary day is at its zenith still,

Yet 'tis as if beside some cool, clear rill,

Through shadowy stillness, rose an evening psalm,

And all the noise of life were hushed away,

And tranquil gladness reigned with gently soothing sway.

It was not so just now. I turned aside

With aching head, and heart most sorely bowed;

Around me, cares and griefs in crushing crowd;

While inly rose the sense, in swelling tide,

Of weakness, insufficiency, and sin;

And fear, and gloom, and doubt, in mighty flood rolled in.

That rushing flood I had no strength to meet,

Nor power to flee: my present, future, past,

My self, my sorrow, and my sin I cast,

In utter helplessness, at Jesu's feet;

Then bent me to the storm, if such His will.

He saw the winds and waves, and whispered, "Peace:
be still!"

And there was calm! O Saviour, I have proved

That 'Thou to help and save art *really* near;

How else this quiet rest from grief, and fear,

And all distress? The cross is not removed;

I must go forth to bear it as before,

But, leaning on Thine arm, I dread its weight no more.

Is it indeed Thy peace? I have not tried
 To analyze my faith, dissect my trust,
 Or measure if belief be full and just,
 And therefore claim Thy peace. But Thou hast died :
 I know that this is true, and true for me,
 And, knowing it, I come, and cast my all on Thee.

It is not that I feel less weak, but Thou
 Wilt be my strength ; it is not that I see
 Less sin, but more of pardoning love with Thee,
 And all-sufficient grace. Enough ! And now
 All fluttering thought is stilled ; I only rest,
 And feel that Thou art near, and know that I am blest.
F. R. H.

THE ATTRACTIONS OF CHRIST.

*"And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten
 of the Father, full of grace and truth." (Jno. i, 14.)*

BUT what attractiveness there would have been in Him for any eye or heart that had been opened by the Spirit! This is witnessed to us by the apostles. They knew but little about Him *doctrinally*, and they got nothing by remaining with Him—I mean, nothing in this world. Their condition in the world was any thing but improved by their walking with Him; and it cannot be said that they availed themselves of His miraculous power. Indeed, they questioned it rather than used it. And yet they clung to Him. They did not company with Him because they eyed Him as the full and ready storehouse of all provisions for them. On no one occasion, I believe we may say, did they use the power that was in Him for themselves. And yet there they were with Him,—troubled when He talked of leaving, and found weeping when they thought they had indeed lost Him.

Surely, we may again say, What attractiveness there must have been in Him for any eye or heart that had been opened by the Spirit or drawn by the Father! and with what authority one look or one word from Him would enter at times! We see this in Matthew. That one word on the Lord's lips, "Follow Me," was enough. And this authority and this attractiveness was felt by men of the most opposite temperaments. The slow-hearted, reasoning Thomas, and the ardent, uncalculating Peter, were alike kept near and around this wondrous centre. Even Thomas would breathe, in that presence, the spirit of the earnest Peter, and say, under force of this attraction, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."

Shall we not say, What will it be to see and feel all this by and by in its perfection! when all, gathered from every clime and color and character of the wide-spread human family,—all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues are with Him and around Him in a world worthy of Him! We may dwell, in memory, on these samples of His preciousness to hearts like our own, and welcome them as pledges of that which, in hope, is ours as well as theirs.

The light of God shines, at times, before us, leaving us, as we may have power, to discern it, to enjoy it, to use it, to follow it. It does not so much challenge us, or exact of us; but, as I said, it shines before us, that we may reflect it, if we have grace. We see it doing its work after this manner in the early church at Jerusalem. The light of God there *exact*ed nothing. It shone brightly and powerfully, but that was all. Peter spoke the language of that light when he said to Ananias, "While it remained,

was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power?" It had made no demands upon Ananias; it simply shone in its beauty beside him or before him, that he might walk in it according to his measure. And such, in a great sense, is the moral glory of the Lord Jesus. Our first duty to that light is to learn from it *what He is*. We are not to begin by anxiously and painfully measuring ourselves by it, but by calmly and happily, and thankfully learning Him in all His perfect moral humanity. And surely this glory is departed! There is no living image of it here. We have its *record* in the evangelists, but not its *reflection* any where.

But having its record, we may say, as one of our own poets has said,—

"There has one object been disclosed on earth
That might commend the place: but now 'tis gone:
Jesus is with the Father."

But though not here, beloved, He is just what He was. We are to know Him as it were by *memory*; and memory has no capacity to weave fictions; memory can only turn over living, truthful pages. And thus we know Him for His own eternity. In an eminent sense, the disciples knew Him *personally*. It was His person, His presence, Himself, that was their attraction. And if one may speak for others, it is more of this we need. We may be busy in acquainting ourselves with truths about Him, and we may make proficiency that way; but with all our knowledge, and with all the disciples' ignorance, they may leave us far behind in the power of a commanding affection toward Himself. And surely, beloved, we will not refuse to say that it is well when the heart is drawn by Him beyond

what the knowledge we have of Him may account for. It tells us that He Himself has been rightly apprehended. And there are simple souls still that exhibit this; but generally, it is not so. Nowadays, our light, our acquaintance with truth, is beyond the measure of the answer of our heart to Himself. And it is painful to us, if we have any just sensibilities at all, to discover this.

"The prerogative of our Christian faith," says one, "the secret of its strength is this, that all which it has, and all which it offers, is laid up in a *Person*. This is what has made it strong, while so much else has proved weak; that it has a Christ as its middle point, that it has not a circumference without a centre; that it has not merely deliverance, but a Deliverer,—not redemption only, but a Redeemer as well. This is what makes it fit for wayfaring men. This is what makes it sunlight, and all else, when compared with it, but as moonlight; fair it may be, but cold and ineffectual, while here the light and the life are one." And again he says, "And oh, how great the difference between submitting ourselves to a complex of rules, and casting ourselves upon a beating heart,—between accepting a system, and cleaving to a Person! Our blessedness—and let us not miss it—is, that our treasures are treasured in a Person who is not for one generation a present Teacher and a living Lord, and then for all succeeding generations a past and a dead one; but who is present and living for all." Good words, and seasonable words, I judge indeed, I may say these are.

A great combination of like moral glories in the Lord's *ministry* may be traced, as well as in His character. And in ministry, we may look at Him

in relation to *God*, to *Satan*, and to *man*. As to *God*, the Lord Jesus, in His own person and ways, was always representing man to God as God would have him. He was rendering back human nature as a sacrifice of rest, or of sweet savor, as incense pure and fragrant, as a sheaf of untainted first-fruits out of the human soil. He restored to God His complacency in man, which sin or Adam had taken from Him. God's repentance that He had made man (Gen. vi. 6.) was exchanged for delight and glory in man again (Luke ii. 14). And this offering was made to God in the midst of all contradictions, all opposing circumstances, sorrows, fatigues, necessities, and heart-breaking disappointments. Wondrous altar! wondrous offering! A richer sacrifice it infinitely was than an eternity of Adam's innocence would have been. And as He was thus representing man to God, so was He representing God to man.—(*From "The Moral Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ," by J. G. B.*)

THE LESSONS OF THE AGES.

THE AGE OF LAW.

IN taking up the lessons of the dispensation of law, we must carefully distinguish two different and, in many respects, contrasted elements. As a trial of man, which, in the highest degree, it was, we have already seen it to be the working out (in a divine way, and therefore to a true result) of an experiment which was man's thought, not God's. God could not need to make an experiment. Man

needed it, because he would not accept God's judgment, already pronounced before (as a fallen being) he had been tried at all, in the proper sense of trial; "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil, and that continually." God's way of acceptance for him had been, therefore, from the beginning, by sacrifice, in which the death of a substitute covered the sinner before Him, closing his whole responsibility naturally in the place in which he stood as a creature.

The "way of Cain" was man's resistance to the verdict upon himself, and so to the way of grace proclaimed. God then undertook to prove him, taking him on his own ground, and bidding him justify his own thoughts of himself by actual experiment.

But this is only the law on one side of it. It was what made it *law*, and gave its character to the whole dispensation. Yet underneath, and in spite of all this, God necessarily kept to and maintained His own way, and to the ear of faith told out, more and more, that way of His, although in "dark sayings," from which only Christianity has really lifted off the vail. Thus, and thus alone, a sacrificial worship was incorporated with the law, and circumcision, "a seal of the righteousness of faith," remained as the entrance into the new economy.

First, then, let us look at the law as law, and afterward as a typical system.

As law, or the trial of man, we find him put in the most favorable circumstances possible for its reception. The ten commandments appeal, at the very outset, to the fact of the people having been brought out of the land of Egypt; it was He who had brought them out who bade them "have no

other gods" before Him. He had made Himself known in such a way as to manifest Himself God over all gods, His power being put forth in their behalf, so as to bind them by the tie of gratitude to Himself. How could they dispute His authority, or doubt His love? His holiness, too, was declared in a variety of precepts, which, if burdensome as ceremonial, appealed even the more powerfully on that account to the very sense of the most careless-hearted. There were severest penalties for disobedience, but also rewards for obedience, of all that man's heart sinlessly could enjoy. The providence of God was made apparent in continual miracles, by which their need in the wilderness was daily met. Who could doubt, and who refuse, the blessing of obedience to a law so given and so sanctified?

A wall of separation was built up between them and the nations round; and inside this inclosure the divinely guarded people were to walk together, all evil and rebellion excluded, the course of the world here set right, all ties of relationship combining their influence for good; duty not costing aught, but finding on every side its sweet, abundant recompense. Who (one would think) could stumble? and who could stray?

Surely the circumstances here were as favorable as possible to man's self-justification under this trial, if justify himself he could. If he failed now, how could he hope ever to succeed?

That he did fail, we all know—openly and utterly he failed, not merely by unbidden lusts, which his will refused and denied, but in conscious, deliberate disobedience, equal to his father Adâ'm's, and that before the tables of the law had come down to him

out of the mount into which Moses had gone up to receive them.

The first trial of law was over. Judgment took its course, although mercy, sovereign in its exercise, interposed to limit it. Again God took the people up, upon the intercession of Moses—type of a greater and an effectual Mediator. Man was ungodly, but was hope irrecoverably gone? Could not mercy avail for man in a mingled system from which man's works should at least not wholly be excluded?

Now this, in fact, is the great question under law, rigidly enforced: it is easily allowed that man must fail, and be condemned. He does not love his neighbor as himself, still less love God with all his soul and strength. Is there nothing short of this that God can admit, then? He can show mercy; can He not abate something of this rigor, and give man opportunity to repent, and recover himself?

And this is the thought that underlies much that is mistaken for the gospel now. A new baptism may give it a Christian name, and yet leave it unregenerate legalism after all. For this—only correcting some mistakes—is what the second giving of the law takes up. It is an old experiment, long since worked out, an anachronism in Christian times. "The law is not of faith;" these are two opposite principles, which do not modify, but destroy, one another.

A second time the tables of the law are given to Israel; and now, along with this, God speaks of and declares the mercy which He surely has: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, for-

giving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." It is the conjunction of these two things that creates the difficulty. We recognize the truth of both, but how shall they unite in the blessing of man? This doubt perplexes fatally all legal systems. How far will mercy extend? and where will righteousness draw the line beyond which it cannot pass? How shall we reconcile the day of grace and the day of judgment? The true answer is, that under law no reconciliation is at all possible. The experiment has been made, and the result proclaimed. It is of the law thus given the second time, and not the first, that the apostle asserts that it is the "ministration of death" and "of condemnation."

One serious mistake that has to be rectified here is, that the law can be tolerant to a certain (undefined) measure of transgression. It is not so. It is not on legal ground that God "forgives iniquity, transgression, and sin." The *law* says, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." If on other ground (in this case, as ever, that of sacrifice,) mercy can be extended, and even forgiveness,—if man be permitted to cancel the old leaf and turn over a new, yet the new must be kept unblotted, as the old was not. "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness," he must do "that which is *lawful* and right," to "save his soul alive." And thus the commandments, written the second time upon the tables of stone, though now by the mediator's hand, were identical with the first. Here, the law cannot give way by a jot or a tittle, and therefore man's case is hopeless. The law is the ministration of condemnation only.

That was the foreseen issue, and the divine purpose in it, and God, to make that issue plain, (that man might not, unless he would, be a moment deceived as to it,) lets Moses know, as the people's representative, that His face cannot be seen. He does indeed see the the glory *after it has passed*—His back parts, not His face. God is unknown: there is no way to clear the guilty, and therefore none by which man may stand before Him.

Thus the law, in any form of it, is the "ministration of condemnation" only. That it was the "ministration of death" also, implies its power, not to produce holiness, but, as the apostle calls it, "the strength of sin." His experience of it—"I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Forbidding lust, it aroused and manifested it. "Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of lust"—thus "deceived me, and by it slew me."

Of this state of hopeless condemnation and evil, that *physical* death which God had annexed to disobedience at the first was the outward expression and seal. In it, man, made like the beasts that perish, passed out of the sphere of his natural responsibility and the scene for which he had been created, and passed out by the judgment of God, which cast, therefore, its awful shadow over all beyond death. The token of God's rejection of man as fallen is passed upon all men every where, with but one exception in the ages before Moses. Enoch had walked with God, and was not, for God took him. That made it only the plainer, if possible, what was its significance. It was actual sentence upon man for sin, and all men were under it as sentenced, not under probation.

If God, therefore, took up man to put him under probation, as in the law He manifestly did, He must needs *conditionally* remove the sentence under which he lay. "The man who doeth these things shall live in them" meant, not that he should die, and go to heaven, as people almost universally interpret it, but the contrary—that he should recover the place from which Adam had fallen, and stay on earth. *Faith* in Abraham, indeed, looked forward to a better country—that is, a heavenly. But the law is not of faith, nor was Abraham under it. *Faith*, owning man's hopelessness of ruin, was given in measure to prove the mystery of what, to all else, were God's dark sayings. To man as man, resisting God's sentence upon himself, the law spoke, not of death, and a world beyond, which he might, as he listed, people with his own imaginings, but of the lifting off of the sentence under which he lay—of the way by which he could plead his title to exemption from it.

Thus the issue of the trial could not be in the least doubtful. Every grey hair convicted him as, under law, ruined and hopeless. Every furrow on his brow was the confirmation of the old Adamic sentence upon himself personally; and the law, in this sense also, was the ministration of death, God using it to give distinct expression to what the fact itself should have graven upon men's consciences. It is this (so misunderstood as it is now) that gives the key to those expressions in the Psalms and elsewhere which materialism would pervert to its own purposes: "For in death there is no remembrance of Thee; in hades [it is not "the grave"] who shall give Thee thanks?"

God would have it so plain, that he might run

that readeth it, that upon the ground of law, spite of God's mercy (which He surely has), man's case is hopeless. "By deeds of law shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

Yet, God having declared His forgiveness of iniquity, transgression, and sin, the second trial by law could go on, as it did go on, for some eight hundred years, till the Babylonish captivity. Then the legal covenant really ended. The people were Lo-ammi, a sentence never yet recalled.

As law simply, then, the Mosaic system was the complete and formal trial of man as man, all possible assistance being given him, and every motive, whether of self-interest or of gratitude to God, being brought to bear on him, the necessity of faith almost, as it might seem, set aside by repeated manifestations of Jehovah's presence and power, such as must force conviction upon all.

The issue of the trial, as foreseen and designed of God, was to bring out the perfect hopelessness of man's condition, as ungodly, and without strength, unable to stand before Him for a moment. But then, the truth of his helplessness exposed, the mercy of God could not permit his being left there without the assurance of effectual help provided for him. In this way, another element than that of law entered into the law, and the tabernacle and temple services, taking up the principles of circumcision and of sacrifice, of older date than law, incorporated there in a ritual of most striking character, which spread before the eye opened to take it in lessons of spiritual wisdom which in our day we turn back to read with deeper interest and delight the more we know of them.

The language of type and parable God had used from the beginning. As yet, He could not speak plainly of what, these bear abundant witness, ever filled His heart. Unbelief in man had damned back the living stream of divine goodness, which was gathering behind the barrier all the while for its overflow. In the meanwhile, the Psalms—the very heart of the Old Testament—declare what faith could already realize of the blessedness of “the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.” Faith tasted and declared, as the apostle could take up such words afterward, to show, not the blessedness of keeping law, but of divine forgiveness. “It shall be forgiven him” was indeed said, with perfect plainness, in connection with that shedding of blood for man, which testified at once to his utter failure, and of resource in God for his extremest need. It was not, and could not be, perfect peace or justification that could yet be preached or known, but a “forbearance,” of which none could predict the limits. Still, faith had here its argument, and, in fact, found ever its fullest confidence sustained.

Very striking it is, when once this dealing of God with faith is seen, how the very burdensomeness of the rigid ceremonial changes its character, and becomes only the urgency of an appeal to the conscience, which, if entertained, would open the way to the knowledge of the blessedness of which the psalmist speaks. These continual sacrifices, if they did indeed, as the apostle urges, by their frequent repetition, proclaim their own insufficiency, nevertheless, by the very fact, became continual preachers, in the most personal way, to the men of Israel, of their ruin, and of its sole remedy, and

how the constant shedding of blood would keep them in mind of that divine commentary, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." (Lev. xvii. 11.)

How striking, too, that circumcision, which was clearly before the law, was expressly the only way by which even the Israelite-born could claim Jehovah as his covenant-God, or keep the memorial feast of national redemption! For, as the apostle says, it was "the seal of the righteousness of *faith*," not law-keeping, as the covenant of which it was the token was "of promise"—the promise of an "almighty God," when in Abraham, almost a hundred years old, all natural hope was dead forever. To walk before that omnipotent God in confessed impotence, trusting and proving His power, was that to which he was called. As yet, there was no law to saddle that with conditions; and in memory of this, in token of its abiding significance, the Gentile "stranger" could still be circumcised, with all his males, and keep the passover as an Israelite-born.

How tender, too, the goodness which had provided that whoever of Abraham's seed should turn to the history of his forefather after the flesh, should find written there, and of this very depositary of all the promises, such plain, unambiguous words of divine testimony as these: "He believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness." Of no other was this in the same way written. What hand inscribed it *there*, just when it should speak most plainly, and to those most in need? Just where, on the incoming of Christian-

ity, I should be ready with its unmistakable testimony to the central principle of Christianity itself. Such is the prophetic character of the inspired Word. The same presaging Spirit who dictated to *Peter*—in men's thoughts, the first authority in the church—those two doctrines which are the death-blow of ritualism, new birth through the word of the gospel, and the common priesthood of all believers (1 Pet. i. 23-25; ii. 5-9), recorded by Moses this testimony as to Abraham. Blessed be God for His infinitely precious Word!

It was in connection with law that all the books of the Old Testament were given, and Israel, as is plain, were they to whom all was committed. It seems, therefore, here the place to speak briefly of their general character as affected by this. There are certain things, at least, that one may indicate as of special importance, in view of many things around us at the present time.

In the first place, it was not yet the time for that "plainness of speech" which, as the apostle says, belongs to Christianity. This we have already seen, but it is not superfluous to insist on it still further. The vail between man and God necessitated a veiled speech also—not, indeed, altogether impenetrable to faith, but requiring, in the words of Solomon, "to understand proverb and strange speech,* the words of the wise and their *dark* sayings." Even as to man himself, while his trial was yet going on, there could not be the full discovery of his condition. We have not yet the New-Testament doctrine of "the flesh," nor of new birth, although there was that which should have pre-

*Not, as in the Authorized Version, "interpretation," but "what needs interpretation."

pared an Israelitish teacher for the understanding of it when announced. Election was only yet national, not individual, and therefore to privilege only, not eternal life. Adoption, too, was national: the true children of God could not yet claim or know their place as such. No cry of "Abba, Father," was or could be raised. The heirs differed not as yet from servants, being under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father. (Gal. iv.) As to all these things, there were preparatory utterances, and all the more as the ruin of man came out, therefore, in those prophetic books which fittingly closed the canon of the Old Testament.

Even the types had in them the character which the apostle ascribes to the law: "having a shadow of good things to come, but *not* the very image of the things." The unrent vail, the repetition of the sacrifices, the successional priesthood, as he points out, had all this character. They were the necessary witnesses that the "law made nothing perfect,"—that under it "the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest." Of these was the intermediate priesthood of Aaron's sons, which was the provision for a people unable themselves to draw near to God; which, with all else, the Judaizing ritualism of the day copies, and maintains as Christian. The apostle's answer to it is, "By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us; for after that He had said before, . . . 'Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.' Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and

living way, which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh, and having a High-Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith." (Heb. x. 14-22.) Sin put away, and distance from God removed, ritualism, in all its forms, becomes an impossibility.

In the second place, as the law dealt with man here and now, and did not relegate the issue of its own trial to another time and place, where its verdict could not be known by men in this life; the earth is that upon which man's attention is fixed, and that whether for judgment or reward. There are *hints* here also of the fuller truths which the New Testament unfolds; but manifestly there is no promise of heaven to the keeper of the law, nor even threat of hell—that is, of the lake of fire—to the transgressors of it. Judgment there is, and eternal judgment, but death is rather the stroke of it—the horror of this shadowing the eternity beyond. Job speaks of resurrection, and the prophets also, though in them it is only applied figuratively to national restoration; yet this shows they held it as admitted truth. Outside of the Old Testament we learn, from the epistle to the Hebrews, that the patriarchs expected "a better country—that is, a heavenly;" but we should not know it from Genesis. Faith penetrated, in some measure, it is clear, the "dark sayings," and found all not dark. A recognized body of truth was received by the Pharisees, which embraced, not only resurrection for the just, but of the unjust also, and spoke, not merely of hades, but of gehenna also—the true "hell." This only makes the more remarkable the constant style even of the prophets.

The confounding of judgments upon the living, by which the earth will be rid of its destroyers and prepared for blessing, with the judgment of the dead at the "great white throne," is one of the errors under which annihilationism shelters itself most securely.

On the other hand, this earthly blessing, still further confused by Israel being (as commonly) interpreted to mean the Church, has been by current "adventism" made to take the place of the true Christian expectation of an inheritance in heaven. And this, too, has linked itself with annihilationism in its extremest and most materialistic forms. We must keep the stand-points of the Old and New Testaments—of Israel and the Church, earthly and heavenly—clear in our minds, and there is no difficulty. "My kinsmen according to the *flesh*," says the apostle; "to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the *promises*." (Rom. ix. 3, 4.) All of these for them *earthly* blessings. Christians are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in *heavenly* places in Christ Jesus." (Eph. i. 3.)

If this should seem at all to take the Old Testament away from us who belong to another dispensation, we must remember two things: first, that if it has not so directly to do with us, it has, most assuredly, with Christ no less on that account. His glories run through the whole; history, psalm, and prophecy are full of Him. But what reveals Him is ever of truest blessing for the soul. Oh to be simpler in taking in all this, in which the Father gives us communion with His own thoughts of His Son!

And then, when we look at the typical teaching, now fully for the first time disclosed, when even the things that happened to the favored nation, and are recorded in their history, "happened to them for types," we find what is in the fullest way ours—"written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come." (1 Cor. x. 11.) How wonderful this! and how sad to think, on the one hand of the disuse, on the other of the reckless abuse, of that precious teaching!

We have now to look at the history of the age of law.

LINES

written when I learned the sweetness of

*"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through
our Lord Jesus Christ."*

MY God, my soul enraptured is
With love and grace divine
Which brought me from my lost estate
And made me wholly Thine.

My cup with blessing Thou hast filled—
I can but Thee adore,
And from Thy ceaseless love to me
My cup doth oft flow o'er.

No effort now to worship Thee—
New life the heart expands,
And praise flows forth to Thee, my God,
And glory to the Lamb.

My heart has treasured up Thy love—
So vast, boundless, and free,
My raptured soul with joy exclaims,
My springs are all in Thee!

A. McC.

NOTES

ON THE EARLY CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

THE DIVINE ACCOUNT OF CREATION.

IT must be self-evident that the Creator alone can answer the questions *How?* and *Why?* which the human mind from earliest infancy gives utterance to, as to our and other worlds. Neither man nor angel—themselves the subjects of creation—can, in the nature of things, supply the needed information. Man can guess, conjecture; angels never do; every act and thought of theirs has *certainty* impressed upon it, for they are “*hearkening* unto the voice of *His word.*” (Ps. ciii. 20.)

Now God has communicated to mankind, through Moses, an orderly and succinct account of creation within the compass of thirty-four verses in the fully inspired and most venerable document in existence—the book of Genesis. The style is so simple that a child can understand; yet so majestic in its very simplicity,—so Godlike the utterances, as to carry conviction to the intellectual faith of the civilized world. The manner, too, in which “creation’s story” is told stamps the narrative as of God. Man would have given labored arguments and ingenious proofs in truth of his assertions. But not so God. His spoken or written word is enough, and the spiritual instincts of *all* say so also. Hence, we have no reasoning, argument, nor proof advanced. Who does not fail to see how worthy, how suitable in God, how unlike man?

Let us note a few of the verbal and other peculiarities of this interesting narrative. The first

three verses of chap. ii. complete the account of creation commenced in the first verse of the Bible; this gives us in all thirty-four verses. The name of the Creator—"God" ("*Elohim*"—plural) occurs just thirty-four times. "Jehovah," "The Almighty," "Most High," etc., are titles. "The LORD," or "Jehovah-God," expressing *moral relationship to the creature*, occurs in chap. ii. eleven times, when man was in *innocence*; while in chap. iii., which shows man in *sin*, it is equally insisted upon, occurring nine times. The circumstances in which the creature may be placed, or in which he may be found, never touch, nor weaken, in the least degree, his direct responsibility to God. *That* truth, so vital to all, and which neither grace, government, nor law can ever set aside, having been established in those two chapters, the relationship-title alone is used by the Spirit in chap. iv. "The LORD," or "Jehovah," is found ten times. It is interesting to observe that Satan is the *first* to deny the moral relationship of the creature to God; the woman followed suit (see *vv.* 1 and 5 of chap. iii. for the former, and *v.* 3 of same chapter and *v.* 25 of chap. iv. for the latter).

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The third word in the Bible, which gives name and character to the first of the sixty-six books of the Bible, is used in some interesting connections. "In the *beginning* was the Word" (Jno. i. 1) refers to eternity; "In the *beginning* God created" (Gen. i. 1) refers to the primal creation of the universe; "From the *beginning*" refers to the incarnation of Christ (1 Jno. i. 1); "The *beginning* of the gospel" (Mark i. 1) refers to the commencement of the public ministry of our Lord.

Thus we have eternity, creation, incarnation, and public service of Christ, each used in association with this word. "God created:" then matter is not eternal, nor has it been produced by evolution. "Created:" certainly pre-existing material is not supposed. The primary meaning of the word "create" is allowed by all to signify the production of what in *no sense* previously existed. The popular phrase is not so far astray in thought as it may be in expression—"something out of nothing." But we greatly prefer the apostle's explanation in Hebrews xi. 3—"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made [or, had not their origin] of things which do appear."

"The heavens and the earth" is an expression for the universe. The "heavens," not heaven. In the first thirty-five verses of the Bible, we have nine occurrences of the word *heaven*, or *heavens*; but in all those various instances of the word, it is in the dual number in the original—two heavens, not the plural three or more.

The first verse of the Bible is a comprehensive statement of weighty truth. Those ten English words rest the human brain, and scatter, like chaff before the wind, the speculations, the baseless theories of ancients and moderns, and sets creation upon a ground worthy of it, for no world has a moral history such as ours. Yet, as to number and magnitude, there are other worlds beyond human ken. They are, says Herschel, "scattered by millions, like glittering dust, on the black ground of the general heavens." But in our planet, small as it is compared to Saturn or Jupiter, the grandest counsels of eternity, the most magnificent facts

of time, have their accomplishment. Here Christ lived, walked, wept, loved, and died. Here the voice of Him who, in majestic tones, said, "Let light *be*, and light *was*," uttered on the cross the morally grander words, "It is finished," and bowed His head in death for sin.

The first verse of the Bible is an absolutely independent statement. It is in no wise a summary of what follows. The *when?* God created is undefined in Scripture, and incapable of solution by science. The first and subsequent dates of Scripture refer to man and his history in responsibility on the earth. (Gen. v. 3.) The antiquity of the globe is alone known to the Creator, and *probably* to angels. (Job. xxxviii. 7.) That the heavens and the earth were created in light, beauty, order,—yea, perfection itself, should not, we suppose, require proof. "God is *light*," and would necessarily create according to His nature. "His work is perfect" is the sure testimony of Scripture, and that whether in the moral or physical worlds. (Deut. xxxii. 4.) Here, several questions suggest themselves to inquiring minds, to all of which we can only reply, We know not. When did God create? How long did the heavens and earth abide in their perfection? Was it Satan who brought the earth into the ruin and desolation as witnessed in ver. 2 of the Bible? We know he effected the ruin of man. How long did the earth exist as a ruin till acted upon by God? In the primal creation of ver. 1, man had no place, nor had he existence in the material ruin of ver. 2. Man, having no existence then, could have no responsibility or blame in the desolation which overtook the primeval earth. We are glad to accept facts from whatever quarter

they reach us, be the source infidel or Christian; but we are chary in accepting the statements of science. We do not fear for the Bible, for the God who made the stones wrote the Bible, and it is an **ABSOLUTE IMPOSSIBILITY** that there can be a conflict between the *facts* of science and *inspired* statements. Man has *not* been found fossil in any strata formed previous to the historical period, and *never will be*, while the state of the rocks clearly enough demonstrates that there were many and successive creations of animal and vegetable life before man was created.

W. S. (Scotland.)

(To be continued, D. V.)

BROUGHT TO GOD.

PETER, the Jewish apostle, tells us that Christ "once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might *bring us to God*." Somehow, this mighty truth, in practical power, has been ignored of late years. The immediate effect of the death of Christ is to bring, in love and righteousness, the sinner to God. Confidence, too, is established in the heart. God is known, and becomes the "rock" of the heart, and one's everlasting portion. (Ps. lxxiii. 26.)

This truth of being brought *now* to God is not to be regarded as a mere abstract statement, nor to be accepted as a cold, doctrinal point of scriptural truth. It is a present, blessed, joyous fact,—one full of richest consolation to the afflicted saint, and of immense moral power in moments of human weakness. Is any thing, great or small, a difficulty

to God? Can any power of evil prevail against *God's* elect? Can our poverty make too many or great demands upon His grace—the grace and love of Him who gave His Son to die? Like Israel of old, we are a people without resources; in the desert, too, without one spring of blessing; in the wilderness, without a path through it. But Israel's God is ours. *He* is our resource; our springs are in *Him*; *He* is our Shepherd and Guide. God with us all along the way and in our midst is faith's grand answer to every human need and sorrow.

W. S. (Scotland.)

KEY-NOTES TO THE BIBLE BOOKS.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

II.—*Continued.*

2. (Chap. v.—viii. 1.) *In, but not of, the world.*

THE second section divides into three parts, which correspond to its three chapters: (1) New life as quickening out of the world; (2) as a practical life of faith in the world; (3) the gift of the Holy Ghost as rivers of living water, flowing forth into the world.

(1) Chap. v. *Quickening out of the world.* In the former section, the believer was looked at simply as an individual, born of the Word and Spirit, and the Spirit in him for his own personal satisfaction and blessing. We now find the world lying in death and under judgment, and eternal life as that which brings out from death, and delivers from the possibility of judgment. The Lord, by whose word men

live, is Himself the Judge; and thus they already have *His* sentence unto life (*vv.* 21-24).

In the beginning of the chapter, the man at the pool of Bethesda is given as an illustration of the powerlessness of the law for salvation, and the deliverance from it of one saved by grace. But the truth goes beyond the figure. It is not merely impotence, but death, out of which Christ brings the soul; and instead of "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come to thee," the Lord says of His own, "He shall *not* come into judgment."

Bethesda is a figure of the law as given the *second* time, not the first,—written by the hand of the mediator, and accompanied by the declaration of "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin;" yet—and here is the impossibility of finding salvation under it—"who can by no means clear the guilty" (*Ex.* xxxiv. 6, 7).

Thus something heavenly, as grace is, is introduced into the law, an opposing element which "troubles" it, as the angel's visit the water here. Yet thus only can salvation be spoken of in connection with it: "If the wicked man turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive" (*Ezek.* xviii. 27). But this is still law, useless if there be not strength. The impotent man, type of all of Adam's race merely, has none. Nor does the Lord help him into the pool, but heals by His word: "Arise, take up thy bed, and walk."

This rouses the opposition of the Jews, and brings out the freedom of the recipient of grace from law; for "the same day was the Sabbath."

The Lord gives the divine argument, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." How could He rest with man's need so great, as He had rested when creation, come fresh from His hand, was only good? The Son, the Word, here as elsewhere, was only giving expression to the Father's heart. Law could not satisfy that; only the activity of grace could do so.

His claim as Son of the Father brings out all the enmity of man against Him; but all the blessing of the soul depends upon it. Thus alone can He manifest God, all things being put into His hand, and power of life or judgment committed absolutely to Him. So he that hears His word, and believes on Him who sent Him, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment. Dead though he has been, the voice of the Son of God has penetrated with life-giving power; and so shall, at His bidding, the body rise to life or judgment (18-29).

The rest of the chapter dwells upon the testimony God had given to Him; for were it His own witness merely, it would lack the character of truth. John had thus borne witness, though nothing short of a divine one would befit Him. There were His works, and the Father's own testimony: the Scripture they professed faith in as life-giving testified of Him, yet they would not come to Him. One coming in his own name (Antichrist) they would receive. Self-seeking in them it was that hindered faith, and turned their trusted Moses into an accuser.

(2) Chap. vi. *Eternal life as a life of faith.* In the sixth chapter, we have the practical character of eternal life as a life of faith in the world, sustained by the bread of life, the antitype of the manna.

Here also we have an introductory scene, in which first the Lord feeds the multitude, and is rejected as much by the would-be homage as by open denial. In fact, the passover is nigh (*v.* 4). He is going to suffer. He withdraws Himself, therefore, from them to a mountain Himself alone. The disciples go over the sea also alone in darkness and tempest. Here we see the voyage of faith through a contrary scene, closed by Christ's coming again. "Then they willingly received Him into the ship, and immediately the ship was at the land whither they were going."

These things are the introduction to the discourse which follows, in which the Lord mainly insists upon the provision for the life of faith, the "meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you; for Him hath God the Father sealed." It is not only that the *life* endures, but the meat endures as long as the life does: it has God's seal upon it, the stamp of His approbation, and that which He seals thus abides forever. Christ, as Son of Man, gives us thus the food of an imperishable life; "the bread of God is He who cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." Here is the human, as in the fifth chapter was the divine, side of this priceless gift. There, the dead heard and lived: here, the perishing sinners of Adam's race receive, and never die. Man's work, to which God calls him, is to believe on Him whom He has sent (*vv.* 27-33).

And yet it is the Father's will which alone secures believers, ("All that the Father *giveth* Me shall come to Me;") as it is that which alone secures the continuance of their salvation—"Of all the Father giveth Me I should lose nothing, but

should raise it up at the last day." When the Jews murmur at Him, the Lord repeats yet more emphatically that men must be drawn, must hear and learn of the Father, to come unto Him. But he who eats lives forever; and the bread is His flesh, which He will give for the life of the world (*vv.* 34-51).

From this point, the Lord insists also on the necessity of His death. Not only must His flesh be eaten, but His blood be drunk, or there is *no* life; where these are, there is *eternal* life, and Christ abides in him and he in Christ. Dependence in intimate relationship characterizes that life: "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me" (*vv.* 52-58).

But this brings out the latent unbelief even in professed disciples. He explains that it is not of literal flesh He speaks: what if they see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? His words are spirit and life. But many draw back and walk no more with Him; so that He turns even to the twelve and asks, "Will ye also go away?" Peter professes the faith of the rest; and the Lord answers that even of these chosen few one was a devil.

(3) Chap. vii. *The gift of the Spirit—rivers of living water.* The seventh chapter gives a striking picture of the world, in unbelief and enmity to God. The Jews are keeping the feast of tabernacles—the thanksgiving for wanderings passed and rest attained in the land; but they had not rest. The Lord therefore refuses to own the feast by going up to it publicly and at the beginning. His time (though in the world He made, and amid His own,) had not come: it was morally unprepared, and how much had He to accomplish for it! By and

by He departs secretly, and in the midst of the feast goes up to the temple and teaches. They wonder at His knowing letters, having never learnt. He declares His doctrine to be of God, to be learnt as such by those who will do His will, and manifested by the glory that it gave to God. He convicts them, on the other hand, of unrighteous judgment, and breaking their own law; and their ignorance of Him as ignorance of Him that sent Him. He warns them then of His departure from them soon, which they interpret of His going to the Gentiles.

The last, the great day of the feast the Lord chooses for His most pregnant word. Men conscious of their need He invites to Him to quench their thirst; and he who believes on Him, not only should find satisfaction, but abundance; out of his belly—the very thing that craves,—should flow rivers of living water. Thus, if rest had not come for men at large, believers should be, in the world, the witness of infinite fullness free to men.

But for this Jesus must be glorified. Not till the work of atonement was accomplished could the Spirit of God thus be in men. Not till the Rock was smitten could the streams flow out. It is a testimony peculiar to Christianity therefore. In Judaism there were partition-walls, and not an outflow.

But this testimony finds out many a thirsty soul, who, realizing his need, realizes the divine character of that which fathoms and meets it. "Many of the people, therefore, when they heard this saying, said, 'Of a truth, this is the Prophet.' Others said, 'This is the Christ.'" But unbelief has ready its excuses, which betray, as ever, only its ignorance: so there is a division because of Him. The officers

sent to take Him come back empty-handed, owning the power of His words. The Pharisees can plead as conclusive their own universal unbelief. Nicodemus utters a timid protest. And every one goes to his own house: He who has none, patient though rejected, to the mount of Olives.

THE LESSONS OF THE AGES.

THE HISTORY OF THE AGE OF LAW.

WE have seen already that at the very commencement of its history the people failed under the law; and this is the one unvarying lesson of all these ages. Under law it was only more plainly marked, as was indeed to be expected of that which was emphatically the "ministration of condemnation." Still the extent of the failure seems after all amazing. I do not even refer to the worship of the golden calf, although it might seem nothing could more show the desperate wickedness of man's heart than this. The very mount which had flamed and quaked in witness to the divine presence bore witness also to this rapid descent into the abominations of the heathen round about, who "changed the image of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to fourfooted beasts, and creeping things." Judgment being executed, God took up the people the second time; not, as we know, under the same strictly legal system, which it had been proved they could not endure, but under a mingled system of law and mercy.

It was in this way that the tabernacle with its sacrifices and priesthood was added to the law, although God, in the display of perfect omniscience which could not be taken unawares, had instructed Moses as to it before the sin of the people (Ex. xxv.—xxxi). And here faith found its provision, and a convicted conscience its pledged forgiveness. These at least, it would be thought, would be prized and welcomed in view of the constant failure which the vigilance of the law detected and condemned. How surpassingly strange, then, that these should have fallen into such utter disuse as God by the mouth of Amos declares they did (v. 25-27). "Have ye offered Me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? But ye have borne the tabernacle of Moloch and Chium, your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves." Thus even Moloch's dreadful altar was preferred to God's, and the gracious provisions of *His* tabernacle dropped into a forgetfulness hard to realize. The failure of the dispensation was already fixed: "Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith the Lord."

Incredible almost would this neglect indeed seem, did not the Word of God itself announce it. And there are testimonies in the history itself which show in a still more striking way the extent of it. Especially is the statement of the book of Joshua (v. 2-7) remarkable as showing the complete breach of the covenant with Jehovah on the part of the people. Nothing was more fundamental to this than the ordinance of circumcision. The uncircumcised man-child was to be cut off from his people (Gen. xvii. 14); and none such could

eat of the passover at all (Ex. xii. 48). Either these laws must have been disregarded or the passover must have been almost entirely omitted toward the close of the wilderness journey, when no one under forty could have been circumcised at all. For the express statement is, "All the people that came out of Egypt that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt. Now all the people that came out were circumcised; but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised." How the patience of the Lord with the people is manifest! but how evident that priesthood and Levitical service must almost have come to an end! If these, as all other of the things that happened to Israel, happened unto them for types (1 Cor. x. 11), what admonition would this convey to us!

Moses, even, dies in the land of Moab for his sin; and of all that came as men out of the land of Egypt, Joshua and Caleb alone remained. An entire new generation enter into the land of Canaan, and here a new order of things begins.

For let us notice, with all the patient goodness manifested toward the people, and which God had declared when He took them up at Sinai the second time, He does not simply continue the trial of them in one form throughout. On the contrary, He varies it in many ways. This, on the one hand, makes it a more perfect trial, as is plain; on the other, it repeats again and again the admonition of a watchful holiness which never lapsed into indifference, while mercy warned of the time of long-suffering, however slowly, still surely running

out. As we, upon whom the ends of the ages have come, look back upon them, it is blessed to see how, in the various forms of this trial, God presents to us in changing aspects typically His one unchanging theme,—Christ as the justification of His long-suffering patience as of His fullest grace. This, faith might even in those days in measure see, though not in the detailed glories in which we see it. For the voice of prophecy, even in the law itself, spoke of a Prophet to be raised up, a High-Priest of good things to come,—yea, a priestly King greater than Abraham, in whom Levi had once paid tithes. And we can rejoice in thinking how God thus could linger over the picture of Him to whom when at last come He would give out-spoken witness: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I have found My delight."

In the land, then, as I have said, a new order of things begins. Moses had been in the wilderness the representative of the Lord, the channel of the divine communications. In the land, Joshua stands before Eleazar the priest, and the priest it is who communicates to him the word of the Lord. He who is confessedly the leader of the people, and standing in Moses' place, is nevertheless not in the same place of nearness with God. Departure has brought in distance, while intercession based on sacrifice is that on which all depends. The link between God and the people is now the priesthood.

Before they pass over Jordan, all their wilderness history is rehearsed to them, that it may be practical wisdom for their new position, and then they are to take possession of the land which God had promised to Abraham; although not yet do

they possess it according to the terms of the covenant with their fathers. They are on the footing of law, and must make good their title to the land by actual victory over the inhabitants of it. "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses." (Josh. i. 3.) Thus the extent of the land, as the Lord describes it to them, they never actually acquire. Only in David and Solomon's time does their *dominion* extend to the Euphrates, the Abrahamic boundary, while they never properly *possess* thus far; Philistines, Phœnicians, Hittites, confine them in fact within much narrower limits. Two and a half tribes they leave on the other side of Jordan, defeated by their own success; just as in Christian times the church has gained by its victories a possession the wrong side of death.

In the land, the Lord delivers their enemies into their hands. But failure is every-where apparent. The sin of Achan, the defeat at Ai, the snare of Gibeon, follow one another in quick succession. They do not drive out the inhabitants of the land, but make gain of their sin by holding them as tributaries, then go after their gods, as the Lord had warned them, and are soon captives in the hands of those they had conquered.

If Gilgal characterizes the book of Joshua, and there the reproach of Egypt—of their slavery there—is rolled away, Bochim (weeping) characterizes the book of Judges, where they return to a more shameful one. The history shows now their broken unity, the inroad of foreign enemies, the uprising of domestic ones. Again and again they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivers them out of their distress. A judge is

raised up, and is the instrument of their deliverance; and as long as he judges, maintaining the authority and holiness of God among the people, the deliverance lasts. But their weakness (which is only their willfulness,) is fully apparent: the judge dies, and once more they wander; there is a new captivity, followed at length (because the mercy of God does not forsake them,) by a new deliverance.

These revivals become, however, more and more feeble and less decisive. At last, the priesthood itself fails utterly, and that when the judge and high-priest are one. Eli's sons make themselves vile, and he restrains them not. The Lord swears that this iniquity shall not be purged with sacrifice and offering forever. And though He raise up for Himself a faithful priest, as He declares, and will build him a sure house, yet the order is again changed: Joshua stood before Eleazar, but now the priest is to walk before God's anointed (1 Sam. ii. 35, iii. 14.)

In the meanwhile, ruin is complete. The Philistines come up against Israel, and smite them; they superstitiously send for the ark of God to deliver them—the ark of the covenant so often broken! They are again smitten, Hophni and Phinehas slain, the ark is taken; Eli falls backward at the news and breaks His neck, and Phinehas' wife, expiring, gives to her son a name expressive of the people's terrible condition. "And she named the child 'Ichabod,' saying, 'The glory is departed from Israel.'" The priesthood, as the link between God and Israel, had come to its final end.

(To be continued.)

ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER XXV.

Resurrection the Sign of Complete Atonement.

FOR the great mass of Christians, the resurrection of Christ has dropped out of the place in reference to atonement which it finds in Scripture. The resurrection side of the gospel has dropped out. Yet God has been graciously reviving the truth of it in many hearts. Let us seek to get hold of what is wrapped up for us in the joyful tidings of Christ risen from the dead.

"If Christ be not risen," says the apostle to the Corinthians, "ye are yet in your sins." The resurrection was the full, open acceptance of the work which alone could put them away. It was God manifesting Himself on the side of those for whom the work was now accomplished. Hence faith rests in "Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;" and it is added, in explanation of this, "who was delivered for our offenses, and raised again *for our justification*" (Rom. iv. 24, 25).

"Resurrection *from* the dead" has always this character of acceptance of the one raised up, and must not be confounded with the simple fact of resurrection in itself. When the Lord, at the Mount of Transfiguration, "charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen until the Son of Man were risen from the dead," the disciples "kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean" (Mark ix. 9, 10). Familiar as

they were with the general truth that the dead should rise, this rising *from* the dead—not from the *state* of the dead, but from among the dead themselves, a special resurrection which would leave the rest unchanged,—was to them a new and unknown thing. “I know that he shall rise in the resurrection at the last day,” Martha’s words as to her brother, was the expression of the faith of every orthodox Jew of that day. Alas! even yet, the general faith of christendom goes no further. But the Lord, in arguing with the Sadducees, speaks of a special class, “those who should be accounted *worthy to attain* that world and *the resurrection from the dead*,” as “the children of God, *being* the children of the resurrection” (Luke xx. 35, 36). The resurrection from the dead approves as accepted of God all that participate in it. Thus is it pre-eminently, then, with the resurrection of Christ from the dead. It is the triumphant demonstration, in the face of His enemies, of God for Him whom they had crucified and slain. “What sign showest Thou,” said the Jews once to Him, “seeing that Thou doest these things?” and the Lord answers, “‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ . . . He spake of the temple of His body” (Jno. ii. 19, 21).

All through His ministry among men indeed the signs of the Father’s approval and delight were openly given. The works which He did in His Father’s name bore witness to Him. The Father’s voice and the descending Spirit had borne witness also. But these were personal to Himself alone. Now, having completed His work on behalf of others, His resurrection becomes the seal of the acceptance of what was done in their behalf. It

is the testimony still of the approval of His own personal perfection, but as standing in a place altogether apart from what was His due personally, and where the holiness of God tested Him as the fire of the altar the sacrifice upon it. In result, all the sweet savor of the sacrifice was brought out by it.

So of the Lord, as had long ago been declared by another prophetically personating Him, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [or "hades"], neither wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption." It was as the *Holy One* He could not see it. "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him *out of* death,"—not, as in the common version, "*from* death,"—"and was heard in that He feared," or as in the margin, "for His piety" (Heb. v. 7). It was this upon which all depended, what under the most perfect, most bitter trial, was found in Him. The white linen garments of the high-priest, the type of spotless righteousness wrought out, were the only ones, as we have elsewhere seen, in which he could enter the most holy place. Nothing else but such righteousness could bring Him in there, the representative of a people accepted in Him.

The declaration of this acceptance waited not, indeed, for resurrection. His testimony before He dies is that the atoning work is "finished" (Jno. xix. 30). He had no sooner died than the rent vail declared it. And the threefold witness of the Spirit, water, and blood answered at once the thrust of the soldier's spear (Jno. xix. 34, 35; 1 Jno. v. 8). Already the record is, that "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 Jno. v. 11). It is only in continuance of these testimonies that

by the glory of the Father He is raised from among the dead, and then in due season "by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. ix. 12).

Blessed it is to see the promptitude of this utterance of the heart of God as to that which is in His sight of such infinite value. At once the rent vail attests that the "merciful and faithful High-Priest" has made "propitiation for the sins of the people" (chap. ii. 17). The *typical* blood must wait until the high-priest himself has entered the sanctuary; but not so the antitypical. The vail could not have been rent had not the mercy-seat been already sprinkled. The typical blood was but the blood of bulls and goats, and required human hands to carry it in; the antitypical needed none such to present it to the omniscient eye of Him to whom it was offered. The difference is one of those suited necessary contrasts between figure and reality, of which there are so many, and which constitute one of the gravest admonitions to caution in the application of the figures.

That it is the *high-priest* who makes "atonement in the holy place" (Lev. xvi. 17), and of whom the apostle speaks in the interpretation, Heb. ii. 10, is indeed a difficulty with those who having learned from Scripture that "if He were on earth, He should not be a priest" (chap. viii. 4) suppose therefore that at the cross He was not. The mistake is natural, but the Word of God meets the difficulty for us in the words of the Saviour as to this, "I, if I be *lifted up from* the earth." At the cross He was no more "on earth," and this is no strain of an expression: He had in fact done with earth,—was passing from it, His place among men gone. And

here, of necessity, His priesthood began; else was there no priestly offering up at all, for assuredly it was not in resurrection that the altar-fire consumed the victim; and the ministry of the altar was exclusively the priest's work. Thus, surely, it is clear how it was our High-Priest who as such made atonement, as it is also clear by the rent vail and the resurrection itself that *before* resurrection the blood was sprinkled on the heavenly mercy-seat.

Resurrection followed on the third day to set the Second Man in His Last-Adam place. It is plain how 1 Corinthians xv. connects this place with the "spiritual body" of the resurrection. "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." The first Adam is plainly himself a living soul with a natural body,—the word "natural" being here the adjective of the word "soul" itself, a body fitted for the soul, as we may say. The last Adam is the pattern of those of His heavenly race, as the first was of his earthly race. Only they are not yet in the image of the heavenly, (as they shall be,) though they are heavenly; and the Lord too is not merely a *living* spirit, but, according to His own necessary pre-eminence, a *life-giving* spirit. This is so beautifully pictured in the scene in the twentieth of John, where as God breathed into Adam at the first, *He* breathes now upon His disciples, that I do not doubt it to be the meaning there. He has taken and is representing to us His last-Adam place. But this I do not dwell on further here.

He rises, then, with a spiritual body,—does not assume it afterward, as some have thought. The

wounds in His hands and side, which some have brought forward to prove the opposite, do as little prove it as Zechariah xii. 10 or xiii. 6 would prove it of a day yet future. Return to His former condition before the cross we have seen He could not. His death means the acceptance of the solemn sentence by which man as first created had been set aside out of his place. Restore this He does not; while He can and does bring in for His people what is infinitely better.

He rises, then, the Representative of His people in their new place of unchanging blessing, in the likeness to which they are to be conformed. He is raised again for the justification of all believers. For *these* His death has *absolutely* atoned, for these acceptance is complete and unconditional; while individually every one comes into it by faith,—is justified by faith. Here is the one condition upon which Scripture uniformly insists, in regard to propitiation no less than substitution: for, be it that He is a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, this is *not* unconditionally; He is a “propitiation by faith in His blood,” as the common version, or “à propitiation through faith by His blood,” as the Revised Version better renders it. The door is indeed open to all the world, but those who enter enter by faith; and only thus is the propitiation really theirs.

The resurrection of Christ is therefore God coming out openly for His people, and Christ risen is the measure of their acceptance. His is theirs. He is accepted for them; they are accepted in Him. *Substitution* ends with the cross, for our place in which He stood ends there; but *representation* does not end with the cross, but the place He

takes in resurrection He brings us into. We are dead with Him is the language of Scripture; we are risen also with Him: we are "accepted"—"taken into favor;" "*graced*," if we may use the literal word,—"*in the Beloved*."

His place is ours; only we must remember that when we say this, we limit it strictly to that of which we are speaking—His place in resurrection. There are glories, it need hardly be said, that are entirely His own,—not only *divine* glories, but as man also. We speak simply now of a *place of acceptance as manifested in resurrection from the dead*; not even as yet of the opened heavens: for when we go so far, we have to remember that not all accepted ones go even to heaven. There will be by and by a new *earth* also, in which dwelleth righteousness. But so far as we have reached, we speak of what is the common portion of saints of all ages, heavenly and earthly alike. In this sense, then, we say His death is ours, His resurrection is ours, His acceptance is ours: we are accepted and find our place in Him; *we are identified with Him*.

SCRIPTURE NOTES.

I.

"*The promise of life which is in Christ Jesus.*"

(2 Tim. i. 1, 9; Tit. i. 2, 8.)

WHEN was this promise given? and to whom was it given? The common thought, I suppose, has been that it was given in eternity, and to Christ; and to this I have been content in past time to adhere. It would be necessitated if the rendering of our common version were exact, "before the

world began," but this is far from being so. The late revision, with an attempt to be absolutely literal, fails more signally. Its rendering is, "before *eternal times*,"—a self-contradiction, according to our usual thoughts. The word used here is indeed the regular one for "eternal," and so far, the translation is justifiable; but there is an alternative which the sense, the context, and the doctrine of Scripture elsewhere alike require—"before the *age-times*," the same word being used in Scripture for "eternity" and for an "age," a period marked by some uniform dispensation of God. These ages are referred to in many parts of the Word, and are in no sense eternal, as see in the Revised Version 1 Cor. x. 11, Heb. ix. 26, etc. *Before* these age-times, then, the promise of life was given.

But, it may be asked, did not these ages begin in fact with the beginning of the world? and does not this bring us back to the same thought as at first? It does, if the time of innocency be reckoned as such an "age;" and as such probably all have reckoned it. In proposing another thought, I must therefore show cause for it; but this will be better done after we have looked at the promise of which the apostle speaks. The "promise of life which"—that is, which *life*—"is in Christ Jesus" is, I believe, no other than the first promise to fallen man of the *Seed of the woman*.

A "promise" seems certainly a strange thing to speak of from the Father to the Son. And when the apostle adds, "which God, *that cannot lie*, promised before the age-times," is it not plain that he is speaking of some word openly given to one who, alas! might doubt Him? Does he not appeal here to some such known and recognized word by

which God had pledged Himself from the beginning?

When in Timothy he speaks of this, he says, "According to His own purpose and grace *given us in Christ Jesus* before the age-times," is it not also clear that he is speaking of a purpose, not merely entertained by Him, but openly avowed? What else means "*given us*"? And "in Christ Jesus"—does not this declare, not simply the way in which the promise had been fulfilled, but the way in which it was given? It was the promise of a personal Deliverer, the woman's Seed, who should vanquish the serpent, destroying him who had the power of death, and giving life to those who had lost it. And of this the next verse speaks:—"But is now made manifest"—a promise in some measure obscure now lighted up with its full lustre,—"*But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*" Is it not the old penalty to which we are carried back, and the scene in Eden?

Christ has brought life to light: the promise, although really of this, was not fully clear as to it. This explains the possibility of doubt even as to the apostle's reference. The truth in its whole magnificence is now displayed. But always the life in Christ Jesus was God's meaning, and through all the intervening centuries there was nothing else that could fulfill the promise but the life in Him. Now it is revealed without a cloud.

The notice of these "age-times" comes out more fully thus. Their probationary character up to the cross—dwelt upon elsewhere in this volume (pp. 15-17)—explains how for so long a time the

cloud rested on the revelation. *Before* them, the promise had been given; now they have ended, the full truth has come out. And this also seems to explain why the time of innocence—too brief indeed to be put down as an “age”—should be left out. It is the trial of fallen man of which the apostle is thinking, as it is of the blessing to fallen man the promise speaks.

One word more only. The actual mention of “life” is not in the promise. The full blessing could not yet be manifested, as we have seen. Yet it is striking that what is not plainly uttered Adam’s faith takes up, and *his* voice utters, upon hearing it, this significant word. “*Eve*” means “*life*,” and it is before the close even of this scene in the garden that it is said (Gen. iii. 20), “And Adam called his wife’s name ‘Eve,’ because she was the mother of all living.” Unbelief, after listening to the sentence just pronounced, would have said, “The mother of all *dying*.” Faith had laid hold upon the promise, however; and blessed it is to see how thereupon God clothes the fallen with the fruit of that very death which had come in through sin.

Thus, then, we have the promise of the life which is in Christ Jesus,—the same life by grace in believers of all times.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 32.—“In *Help and Food*, p. 125, you say,—‘But there were some that received Him; what, then, of these? In them divine power had acted; to them divine life had

been given : they were *born of God*, and now, too, given title to the children's place.' *When* were they born of God ? In receiving Christ ? or does this apply to those who, having been born again before, received Christ afterward ? and can this be now ?"

Ans.—Of course it is true that when the Lord came on earth there were those who, like Simeon, having been born again before, received Him joyfully as so made known to them ; yet even here it was, as is most evident, only the *recognition* of One in whom he had believed before. The real reception had, in the case even of these, then, been before.

But in the words of the gospel referred to, the point is that Christ is received only where there is a divine work in the soul to effect it. There is no statement that those who received Him had *previously* been born of God, but "as many as received Him . . . were born of God." The Lord tells Nicodemus, in the third chapter, that men are "born of water and of the Spirit." And we are taught elsewhere that "the washing of water" is "by the *Word*" (Eph. v. 26). The apostle Peter says plainly that we are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God" (1 Pet. i. 23). Is this without faith in it or in Him of whom it testifies ? Assuredly, no ; for "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have *no* life in you ; whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath *eternal* life" (Jno. vi. 53, 54). "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (1 Jno. v. 1).

It is impossible, then, to be born again without faith in Christ ; and those who were so before His coming still received Him as the One to come. *When* come, faith in these, as in Simeon, *recognized* Him in whom they had believed before.

ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Union and Identification with Christ.

AT this point it becomes necessary to consider the nature of union with Christ, and to distinguish it from what has been confounded with it, though very different,—identification with Him. Scripture, indeed, which speaks of being joined or united to Christ, does not use the latter term; but the equivalent is abundantly given in the New Testament in the expression with which our last chapter closed—"in Christ." This is taken by most Christians as the very term for union. We must look, therefore, the more carefully into the matter.

Identification may also, and will, be in certain respects the result of union. Husband and wife become thus "one flesh;" "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor. vi. 17). Here is, no doubt the origin of the confusion; but it is none the less such. We may speak of identification where there could not be union. We are identified with Christ in His death, not united to Him in it; identified in nature with Him, not united to His nature; identified with Him as our Representative before God, not united with Him as such.

These things are not in fact for us the result of union. "If any man be in Christ, [it is] new creation," says the apostle (2 Cor. v. 17). That is what "in Christ" means—a new creation. At new birth there is dropped into the soul the seed of divine, eternal life. It is not, as so many think, merely a

moral change which is effected; but just as that which is born of the flesh is flesh, so that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Those so born are truly partakers of His nature, and thus not simply adopted but real children of God. Christ is their life, the new "Adam" of a new creation; but in which He is Creator as well as Head, as we have seen.*

But union is never said to be by or in new creation, but accomplished in a very different way. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit;" and the context shows that it is of marriage the apostle is speaking: "For two, saith He, shall be one flesh; but he that is united to the Lord is one spirit." Such a figure is not and could not be applied to new creation. The Creator is not united to the creature, nor the parent to the child; but the head is united to the body, the husband to the wife, and the apostle in Eph. v. 25-33 applies both these as illustrative of the Church's relationship to Christ. A man's wife is his own flesh, his body: and "no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ the Church; for we are members of His body."

To be of the last Adam's race and to be members of Christ are in Scripture perfectly distinct

*It is important to see clearly the exact force of this term "creation," as Scripture uses it. In Genesis i., in the divine work, we have the creation of heaven and earth, of the living soul (the animal), and of man. All else is said to be *made*, and not created. The creation of heaven and earth speaks, of course, of their first origination; but in the case of the beast the soul, in that of the man the spirit, are the successive additions, which justify the term "creation" as applied to them. The beast has a soul (Gen. i. 30), but not a spirit. Man has not only a soul, but a spirit also (1 Thess. v. 23), by virtue of which alone he has the knowledge of a man (1 Cor. ii. 11), and is the offspring of God (Acts xvii. 28; Heb. xii. 9). Yet the beast and the man are said to be "created," and not the soul and spirit only. So the child of God, by this new spiritual life communicated at new birth, becomes "a new creation."

things, though in the minds of many there is sad confusion again as to this. Many belong and will yet belong to the new creation who never belong to the body of Christ at all. We are *baptized* by the Spirit into the body of Christ (1 Cor. xii. 13); and that baptism began only at Pentecost (Acts i. 5; Matt. iii. 11); while the Church will be complete at the coming of Christ, before the thousand years begin of the earth's blessing. But to pursue this would lead us too far from our present subject. It is enough to say that those baptized at Pentecost into the body of Christ were already before this born again and a new creation. And if these things were thus distinct in them, they must be as much so in all others.

"In Christ" is not, then, union; it is identification by virtue of that new life which is received when we are born again, and which connects us with the last Adam our Representative Head. This identification is twofold: first, in the new, divine nature received, so that it can be said, "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all *of one*; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. ii. 11); while secondly, we are identified with Him in the work He has accomplished for us as our Representative. The identification with Him in nature is what is needed to constitute true representation:—"Behold I and the children which God hath given Me; forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part in the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver those who all their lifetime, through fear of death, were subject to bondage; for verily He

taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham He taketh hold" (Heb. ii. 13-16).

We have seen how this death of Christ for His people—because all are truly welcome to become His people—becomes a propitiation for the whole world. A true basis for representation is found in this true brotherhood between the Lord and His own, without narrowing the limits of an atonement for all.

But thus too the various views of ritualists and others based upon the Lord's supposed union with all men in His assumption of the common humanity are completely set aside. Without contending further as to the Scripture thought of "union," it is not a common humanity which establishes relationship between the Lord and the whole race of men. It is by what is in men the *new* nature, not the old, that they become His "brethren." And the new life that they thus receive is, as His own words testify, a life which is the fruit of His death alone: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." This He says of His own death and its results. But for His death, His perfect, spotless manhood could have availed nothing for us. Our link is with Him the other side of death, a death by which the first man and the old creation are set aside forever. Identification and union are both for us with Him risen from the dead.

It is for want of understanding this that the force of the apostle's words in Romans v. 10 is so little seen: "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved through His life." "Who was delivered for our offenses," he

says in the fourth chapter, "and raised again for our justification." Thus it is His risen life that is salvation for us; *not* simply because "He ever liveth to make intercession for us," but because that life is the new beginning of every thing for us. The death and resurrection of Christ are thus the pillars of the gospel: His death the knife to cut the fatal link of connection with the old fallen head; His resurrection the power that lifts us into the new place of acceptance and the eternal joy. Dead with Christ, we are dead to sin (Rom. vi. 11), to the law (chap. vii. 4), and to the elements of the world, and are no longer alive in it (Col. ii. 20). We are not of the world, even as Christ is not (Jno. xvii. 16).

From this it results that "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision,"—neither the Jewish nor the Gentile footing,—"but new creation." And here is the practical rule of Christianity; "and as many as walk according to *this rule*, peace be on them, and mercy" (Gal. vi. 15, 16).

How important, then, in every way is this resurrection side of the gospel! Alike for full deliverance and for a true Christian walk it must be known. Except as dead with Christ, I have no *title* to reckon myself dead to sin: for this is not feeling or finding, not experience at all, but faith; and faith which not only sees that Christ has borne my *sins*, but that He has stood for *me*, in my stead, so that His death has removed me and all the evil of my evil nature forever out of the sight of God, to give me my true self now in Christ in His presence. I am delivered from legal self-occupation, the enemy of all true holiness, and enabled for occupation

with Christ, the true secret of holiness and of power. "We all with open face beholding the glory of the Lord are changed into His image, from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit." The imprint of this glory it is by which we become the letter of commendation of Christ read and known of all men; a letter written, not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God; not on tables of stone, but on fleshy tables of the heart (2 Cor. iii. 18, 3).

Upon all this I must not here dwell; and it has been dwelt upon at length by many. But it shows how in every detail of it the doctrine of atonement connects with all Christian experience and practice together. May its rich and blessed fruits be found in us as in him who said, "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

FAITH WITNESSING AND WITNESSED TO.

4. NOAH (Heb. xi. 7).

WE have had acceptance by faith, and the walk of communion; now we have in Noah the testimony of faith, and its inheritance: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, prepared an ark unto the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

We have, then, faith's *testimony*. Let us observe, then, that it is the testimony of *practical conduct*, not merely of words. No doubt there was the testimony of his lips also. No man so possessed

with the reality of that of which he had been warned could refrain from it. But the testimony of his acts is what the Spirit of God insists on here: "he prepared an ark to the saving of his house." Thus he condemned the world, and thus alone. His ark spoke out decisively his faith in coming judgment, his own assurance of what was his beyond it.

We have before seen what faith is. The apostle puts it after righteousness in his exhortation to Timothy: "Follow righteousness, faith, love, peace." Except a thing be righteous, it cannot be faith; and thus righteousness begins and guards the whole path. But righteousness alone is not enough for us. Faith it is sets the soul before God to be guided by His word, and controlled by the unseen things into which it enters. Noah's ark spoke plainly of judgment coming for the world; but it spoke of it in revealing the way of salvation in which his own soul confided. Noah had "found grace in the eyes of the Lord," and of this grace he was a witness: but it was inseparably united to this other testimony, so that he could not bear witness to the one without testifying to the other also.

So, surely, it is for us. The maintenance of salvation for the believer cannot be separated from the condemnation of the world. The enjoyment of our own things cannot be without the solemn realization of that which hangs over the soul unsaved. If "we know that we are of God, the whole world lieth in [the power of] the wicked one."

Already for the believer, then, the separation is begun, which foreshadows and goes on to the dread final one. An Enoch life unites with a Noah's testimony. Sanctification is separation.

Heavenliness alone is holiness. "The world passeth away with the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

Are we, then, giving the testimony that Noah gave? the testimony, too, not of our lips only, but of our lives? Do men see in us that the coming judgment of the world is a reality? Do they see people preparing for a long stay on earth, or making ready to be gone? Do they understand that ours is an inheritance beyond the flood, and which belongs to the "righteousness which is of faith" alone? How serious is false witness in a case like this! How grave an indication as to the state of our own souls! How ruinous to the souls of others! How dishonoring to the "Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God even our Father"!

THE LESSONS OF THE AGES.

THE HISTORY OF THE AGE OF LAW.—*Continued.*

TWENTY years pass, and all the house of Israel are found lamenting after the Lord. The ark had not indeed remained long in the Philistines' hand, but had wrought its own deliverance apart from the people. It had returned, but not to Shiloh, its former abode, nor to the tabernacle, no more to receive it. Beth-shemesh—a city of priests—to which it had first come, smitten for its irreverence, had had to yield it up to Kirjath-jearim, where it remained in retirement, kept by Eleazar "in the fields of the wood" (Ps. cxxxii. 6) until David

brought it out (2 Sam. vi. 2). All this time was marked thus as a time of disorder and disturbed relation between God and Israel.

This gap of time between Eli and David is bridged by the prophet Samuel, the real link between God and the people even during the reign of Saul. The prominence of the prophets was always a sign of disorder and decline among the people. It was an extraordinary agency, with no provision for succession or permanence at all; in this case, from the first, a note of preparation for the king (1 Sam. ii. 10), whom at last it anoints and makes way for.

Before the priesthood is set aside, Samuel is established as the prophet of the Lord; but through the unbelief of the people, twenty years pass, after the return of the ark, before the value of God's gift is realized. Then Israel gather for confession and prayer to God at Mizpeh, and Samuel judges them there. This brings up the Philistines; but the battle is now the Lord's, and Israel has but to pursue a smitten foe. The Philistine yoke is broken, and Samuel becomes the judge of Israel. We see the prophet here, as never before under the law, building his altars and offering to the Lord, the priesthood quite unrecognized.

But Samuel grows old, and his sons, whom he has associated with himself in the judgeship, walk not in his ways. The enemies of Israel begin again to gather strength. The unbelief of the people becomes manifest. They desire a king, explicitly to be like the nations, from whom God had separated them. Now He intended they should have a king. Moses had spoken of it, anticipating indeed their desire as expressed here (Deut. xvii. 14-20). Han-

nah had spoken of God's king to whom He would give strength. And to Eli, God had told, by His prophet, of His anointed one, before whom the faithful priest should walk (1 Sam. ii. 35). Self-will might here find its excuse, but nothing more. In fact, as they are forewarned by God through Samuel, the rule of a king among them, while it would bring them into a bondage hitherto unknown, would be the sign of God further removed from them—another step downward in the long descent they had been making. It does not affect this that under David and Solomon they were in fact freed from their enemies, and attained a worldly eminence such as they had not enjoyed till then. The characters of the kingdom as Samuel depicts them were none the less fully illustrated in these reigns; and the more the grandeur of the monarchy, the more even might the yoke press, the more the distance between king and subject. But above all, God Himself, rejected as their King, dealt now with the people, not on the old familiar terms, but at a distance, through the king himself. Let David be rejected, and the show-bread, even if just sanctified, is but common bread (1 Sam. xxi. 5).*

That the king was here also the shadow of the King of God's kingdom in a coming day is true, but neither does it alter the significance of the fact literally. Faith here as elsewhere may find tokens of the coming day, and see also the justification of God's long-suffering then. None the less the links between God and His people were more and more being strained. And if this last endured longest of

*The passage is otherwise rendered in the Revised Version, and by other translators. The common version is, however, justifiable, and I believe to be preferred, as see the Lord's use of this incident in connection with the Sabbath and His own rejection (Matt. xii.).

all, it was surely because it *was* the last: there was no other, and God's patience lingered.

Saul, the first king, though chosen by God, is given them as one after their own heart, as his name providentially signifies,—“the Asked.” After being fully tested, he is set aside for the man after God's heart, David. And Saul, though the anointed of the Lord, is never recognized as the true link between the people and God. He is throughout dependent upon Samuel, who as he anoints him to his office announces also his rejection, and before his own death anoints his successor.

David is thus the first king fully owned,—with Solomon, the double type of Christ, the Sufferer-Conqueror and the Prince of Peace. He brings the ark to Jerusalem, appoints the courses of the priests and the service of the Lord's house, for which he provides abundantly the material, and receives the pattern. His kingdom is greatly extended and his enemies are subdued, and Solomon builds and consecrates the house, with “neither adversary nor evil occurrent.”

But “man being in honor abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish.” And all this glory is like the flower of grass; it has scarcely blossomed before it begins to fade. The first love passes, and there is no indistinct threatening that the candlestick is under sentence to be removed. Solomon loves many strange women, and his heart is drawn after their idols. Adversaries are stirred up against him. He passes away, and a sudden rent tears ten out of the twelve tribes out of the hand of his son; and in the fifth year only of his reign, Shishak sweeps down upon and spoils Jerusalem and the house of the Lord. Henceforth, in Israel, with the

worship of the golden calves, it is one monotonous story of evil ever growing worse; in Judah, the descent stopped, indeed, again and again, by the intervention of divine grace acting in an Asa, a Jehoshaphat, a Hezekiah, a Josiah, but still with no recovery really. Blow after blow falls upon them; prophet after prophet warns and threatens in vain: at last, disintegration fully begins. The ten tribes are carried captive into Assyria; Judah, spared for a hundred and thirty years longer, is at last carried into Babylon.

The glory has before this departed from the temple, which the king of Babylon plunders and destroys. The people are now (though not forever) disowned of God. The legal *covenant*, in fact, is over, although the dispensation of law cannot be said to have ceased. "The law and the prophets were until John." But the history of the people as such is closed, although a feeble remnant return from Babylon. But they return only to await in Messiah their Deliverer, amid the tokens of the ruin in which they have involved themselves. The glory does not return. The ark of the covenant, Jehovah's throne in the midst, is gone from their new temple. The Urim and Thummim, by which the Lord had communicated regularly with them in the past, is also gone. Prophets His mercy raises up to them for a brief time, and every one of them is a witness that the moral and spiritual condition is unchanged. This voice soon passes. The history of the favored people ends in blank and total, most significant silence. The throne of the earth is in the hands of the Gentiles. Israel's dominion is passed away; and those "times of the Gentiles" have begun in which we still are, and

which continue until the kingdom of the Son of Man is introduced by His coming in the clouds of heaven.

But the significance of this change we must consider more at length.

KEY-NOTES TO THE BIBLE BOOKS.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

II.—*Continued.*

3. (Chap. viii. 2-xii.) *Brought to God in the Power of Resurrection.*

THE third section divides, like the second, into three parts: (1) chap. viii, the soul in the light,—the presence of God, revealed in grace; (2) chap. ix, x, the light in the soul,—Christ as Object and Shepherd of His people; (3) chap. xi, xii, life in the power of resurrection. The internal connection of these things we shall see better as we examine the chapters in detail.

(1) Chap. viii. *The soul in the presence of God revealed in grace.* To be *now* in the presence of God, whatever the exposure from the light of that presence, *means* grace. The law never revealed God, as it never brought to Him: an unrent veil was the characteristic of that dispensation. This shows the spiritual blindness of the scribes and Pharisees, zealots for the law, who would condemn by it the light for shining. In His presence they find to their own confusion that it does shine, while the convicted sinner whom they bring there finds the only safe place possible for such an one, a refuge

in the grace of the One so revealed.* It is upon this the Lord announces Himself as the "light of the world"—the revelation of God in it. Whoever followed Him should not walk in darkness, but have the light in the only possible way for the dead to have it,—that is, as "the light *of life*," the light attaching to eternal life.

All turns upon the divine glory of His person therefore, which men ignorant of God, judging after the flesh merely, refused, though the Father had openly borne witness with Himself. To those who believe on Him, He adds, that continuing in His word, they should be His disciples indeed, and should know the truth and be set free by it. To the caviling, (plainly of the unbelieving Jews,) He answers in a way which seems to confuse, but in fact designedly identifies, the servant of *sin* and of *law*. "Whosoever committeth *sin* is the servant [bond-servant] of sin; and the *servant*"—the one serving in bondage, the place the law alone could give,—"*abideth not in the house forever; but the Son abideth ever.*" The reference is plainly to Hagar and her child, types of the law and its children, as the apostle shows us: "[The covenant.] from Mount Sinai, bearing unto bondage, which is Hagar. . . . But what saith the Scripture? 'Cast out the bondwoman and her son.'" It is plain the Lord and the apostle are speaking similarly of the footing upon which according to the law men stood with God. It is as plain that the former identifies the bond-servant to sin with the bond-servant to law; and that he who is made free by the Son is

* Whether indeed she found it as salvation for her soul does not seem indicated in the narrative, and is not needed for the lesson intended to be conveyed. Grace was there for her, at least, in all its fullness, if there were faith to receive it.

freed from sin and law together. And so, says the apostle again, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, because ye are not under law, but under grace." It is as brought to God, accepted, and standing in grace, His love in Christ made known to the heart, the tyranny of sin is broken.*

The Lord goes on to convict the Jews of their opposition to God in Him, and to bring out more and more His full glory to whose day their father Abraham had looked on rejoicing. They were no true children of Abraham; much less, as they falsely claimed, of God; but rather of Satan, the liar and man-slayer from the beginning. He that kept *His* saying, on the other hand, should never see death. Here already we have anticipated the doctrine of the eleventh chapter,

(2) Chap. ix, x. *Christ become the Object, Lord, and Leader of the soul.* The next two chapters are self-evidently one, the story of the man born blind being but the usual narrative-introduction to the truths which follow.

The man is *born* blind, as spiritually we all are. In healing him, the Lord once more proclaims Himself the light of the world. The clay made with the spittle is no doubt the figure of His own person in that lowly form which blinded indeed the eyes of carnal men, but which when revealed in the power of the Holy Ghost, the sent One, ("Siloam" means "Sent,") is the entrance of true light into the soul. Here, again, its being the

* The connection of this with the story of the woman taken in adultery in the beginning of the chapter shows how foolish is the criticism which would deprive us of this latter. A gap would be left by its absence, very apparent to one who follows, as we have been doing here, the truth contained in it. And what uninspired hand could or would have written or interpolated here this wondrous passage?

Sabbath testifies to the grace of God apart from law. The Pharisees are once more roused. They question the man, seeking ground for the refusal of what is plainly the work of God. In the face of the miracle, owning too they know not whence He is, they condemn the Lord, and cast out of the synagogue the one who confesses Him to be of God. But so cast out, the man is found of Him, who is in fact leading His sheep out of the Jewish fold, and who reveals Himself to him as the Son of God.

This introduces the discourse in the next chapter, in which Jesus contrasts Himself with all pretended shepherds. Entering in by the door,—in the way of lowly submission to all divine requirements, the Spirit of God gave Him access to the sheep; those that were His own in Israel heard His voice and recognized His authority. He Himself became the door, not into the fold—there was to be no fold any longer,—but of the flock:* by Him, if any one entered in, he should be saved, go in and out, and find pasture. Salvation, liberty, sustenance, would all be found with Him, who had come to give life, and that abundantly, by the giving up of His own. In this flock, Judaism being done away, the Gentiles would have part.

The guidance of a living Leader, whose love known in salvation has attached the heart to Himself, is here substituted for the mere measurement of sin by a code. To follow Him who laid down His life for the sheep is a new holiness, in which liberty is safe. Moreover, His everlasting arms of love are ample security, which the walls of the fold could never give.

*In the sixteenth verse, as is well known, it should be, "One flock and one Shepherd."

The Father's love to the saints is specially dwelt on in this chapter. They are those whom the Father has given to Christ; gave Him commandment to die for them, an act which has drawn out to Him peculiarly the Father's love. And now the Father and Son are both engaged to keep the possessors of eternal life.

(3) Chap. xi, xii. *The power of resurrection-life.* But this eternal life as given to man is life out of death, placing him who receives it therefore beyond death, in a new place outside the world, and which gives character to his life while in the world. This is to the glory of God, by which the Son of God is glorified. Lazarus brought up from the grave is the illustration of this.

The power of death for the disciples is shown in the first part of the eleventh chapter. They cannot understand how the Lord should go back into Judæa, where of late the Jews sought to stone Him; nor His quiet talking of death as sleep. Martha and Mary rise but in their thoughts to this, that His presence would have saved their brother from dying. But now he is dead, and will rise but in the resurrection at the last day—far off for present comfort. The Lord, in reply, brings out the great distinctive feature of the new day which is coming in: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth on Me shall never die."

Here, "he that believeth on Me, though he were dead," speaks evidently of Old-Testament saints; while "he that *liveth* and believeth on Me" speaks of the time now beginning, the characteristic of which is that the Resurrection and the Life has

come. For believers in the past, the power of resurrection can be known only when they are raised from the dead by the coming Lord. For those now alive, there is, on the other hand, a *present* power of resurrection. Such have no death to pass through. All the reality of it has been taken from them. If they go through it, it is in the triumph of Him who has "abolished death, and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel."

Thus the believer of the present time finds his type in Lazarus raised from the dead for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby. In fact, this testimony it is that makes many to believe on Him, as it rouses, on the other hand, the opposition of the Pharisees to its height. Bethany becomes known as the place of resurrection; and there we find, in the beginning of the twelfth chapter, a supper made for Him. The place is significant of that in which He can alone see of the fruit of the travail of His soul: and here Martha serves, Lazarus sits at table with Him, Mary anoints His feet with her ointment: service, communion, worship, have each their representative there where no cloud ever casts its shadow.

But now, if the Lord is to be to others the resurrection and the life, we have to see what this involves for Him. He enters Jerusalem, is hailed as King of Israel; and then certain Greeks come up, desiring to see Him: upon this He announces the approach of the hour in which the Son of Man should be glorified. But in what? "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." No way could life

come for us but out of His death; resurrection-life out of death accomplished. And with this, judgment is come for the world, the prince of this world's doom, to be cast out; Christ lifted up from the earth is yet to draw all men unto Him.

The chapter closes, as so many others, with warnings because of their unbelief. The greater the blessing, the sadder to be lost; the more the mercy, the worse the judgment for its rejection; and even as the last miracle which attests the Deliverer is the water turned into blood, so says the Lord, "He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

NOTES

ON THE EARLY CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

THE DIVINE ACCOUNT OF CREATION.

(Continued.)

WE had occasion, some time ago, to consult a good and useful work on *The Hebrews*, by Arthur Pridham, and were astonished, in reading a lengthy note at foot of page 305, to find the following sentence; marked, too, by all the emphasis of italics: "'In six days God created,' etc. Such is the express testimony of the Holy Ghost." Now this is a singularly inaccurate expression, and is neither the "express" nor even indirect "testimony of the Holy Ghost." The words of Moses are plain enough: "For in six days the Lord *made* heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is" (Ex. xx. 11). The evident reference is to the six *literal* days'

work described from the third verse to the end of the first chapter of Genesis. It is no-where stated in Scripture that the earth was *created* in six or any number of days. People have confounded *creating* and *making*; they are carefully distinguished in Scripture: thus "created to make" (Gen. ii. 3, marg.). Again, "These are the generations" (an expression occurring ten times in the book) "of the heavens and of the earth when they were *created*"—referring to the first verse of Genesis—to that primal creation of which no particulars are given, the fact alone being stated—"In the day that the Lord God *made* the earth and the heavens" (Gen. ii. 4); this part of the verse refers to the six days' work detailed from ver. 3 to ver. 31 of the first chapter of the Bible. Carefully observe that when it is creating, the order is "the *heavens* and the earth;" but when it is making, he says, "the *earth* and the heavens." The word "created" occurs five times in course of the narrative—once in reference to the universe (v. 1), once to the sea-monsters (v. 21), and thrice to man (v. 27).

God "called" occurs five times:—"day," "night," "heaven," "earth," "seas," were severally named by the Creator. Thus human language was ordained. The next who distinguished things by names was Adam (vv. 5, 8, 10; chap. ii. 19). In naming these things, the ground-work was laid in which the beauty, order, and life of creation were to be displayed.

"God said"—a simple yet withal majestic expression—is repeated ten times in course of the chapter. There is no elaborate preparation for so mighty a work, no means employed or assistance given. Power went with the word. "He spake,

and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." The third and sixth days were the most important: in the former, the earth is raised up and out of its watery tomb, and then covered with luxuriant vegetation,—thus we have life out of death and judgment, surely the great lessons of the third day; while the latter or sixth day shows two creations of life,—first, of land animals, and lastly, of man. It is the importance of the creative-acts of those days which accounts for the sublime expression "God said" being used *twice* for the third day and *four* times for the sixth day.

In that creation-psalm civ. we meet with a beautiful expression—"The Lord shall rejoice in His works" (v. 31). Hence, in our chapters the Creator's delight in His work is repeatedly signified in the six repetitions of the word "good." God saw that it was "good;" and when all was made, it was pronounced "*very* good." It is interesting, however, to observe that the word is omitted on the second day, while it occurs on the third day twice: the reason being that the third day was needed to complete the work of the second; hence, till completion was reached, the Creator's note of approval in His work could not be uttered.

It is interesting to observe that all aquatic creatures and winged fowl (v. 22), man (v. 28), and the seventh, or Sabbath, day (chap. ii. 3) are "*blessed*" by God. Why are land animals an exception to the bestowal of their Creator's blessing?

Before passing on to a brief consideration of the work of making, forming, and beautifying this earth as a home for man—preparing it as a sphere for the display of the moral principles of good and evil—a platform on which God, man, and Satan

were to be the chief actors,—it may be well to inquire if there is scriptural authority for contrasting two distinct material creations, generally spoken of as “the *old* creation” and “the *new* creation.” These expressions are not to be found in the Scriptures; it would be as well to discard them, therefore, in our theological writing. The use of them has done harm. It seems to us that the effort to prove a re-creation of material heavens and earth involves the idea of the annihilation of the present physical system—a thought utterly foreign to Scripture.

But does not Isa. lxx. 17, 18—“I create new heavens and a new earth . . . I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy”—teach a fresh creation of physical worlds? Certainly not. The grandest of the Hebrew prophets is treating of the *moral* change which the presence of the Messiah will accomplish. The whole moral system, in the celestial and terrestrial spheres of glory, will be changed. Jerusalem, its centre, will become the joy of the Lord, and He will fill it with rejoicing. It is the millennium, in which, *we know*, the *PRES-ENT* heavens and earth will exist to display the glory of the Nazarene, that is before the mind and the prophetic gaze of the seer. It is equally certain, however, that the “new heavens and new earth,” without the troubled sea—the sepulchre of countless millions—referred to by Peter and John, are to be understood as physically new—the new homes through eternity of the heavenly and earthly families of God (2 Pet. iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 1). But then these are *made*, not created: “Behold, I *make* all things new” (Rev. xxi. 5) What Scripture does teach is that the heavens, earth, and elements which

are will be destroyed (*not* annihilated,) by fire, then new ones made adapted to the eternal condition of things. So far, then, there is contrast; not, however, between what *was* and what *is*—that is old and new creations; but the contrast is between the *present* material universe and the *future* one. The eternal new heavens and earth are never termed “new creation;” in fact, the word “creation” is not used of them at all. God will “make,” not create, the new heavens and earth of eternity.

Now Scripture does not say, so far as we know, that we Christians are brought into a “new creation” either by life or by the Spirit. The term occurs but twice in the New Testament (2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15, *see Gk.*). If in Christ, you are “new creation;” not, mark you, brought into *it*. The new and spiritual race “in Christ” *are* it—*i. e.*, “new creation.” The term is applied to *persons*, not to things, which greatly simplifies the subject we are considering.

We will not enter the new heavens and new earth for more than a thousand years. Our anxious desire is to “hold fast the form of sound words;” shunning, too, those peculiar phrases and expressions which have grown up amongst us, and which will not always stand the rigid application of God's Word. Then Christ is said to be “the beginning of the *new* creation of God,” and comments are freely made upon this supposed beautiful scripture, but they lack the merit of scriptural correctness. The Word reads, “The beginning of the creation of God” (Rev. iii. 14)—that is, the present material system. The expression, “Creation of God” is probably more comprehensive than even that recorded as the creative-work of God in the

first chapter of the Bible; and of this vast created system Christ is pre-eminent in time, rank, title, and glory. What comfort, what strength, is thus ministered to our souls in these Laodicean times and ways! God "*made* the earth, and *created* man upon it" (Isa. xlv. 12). The earth was not "*created*" as a home for man; it was "*made*" out of the chaotic state and condition of ruin into which it fell subsequent to its creation, and the six days' work prepared it as man's dwelling; so the race in Christ are "*new-creation*," and for which God will "*make*," not create, an eternal home.

W. S. (Scotland.)

(To be continued, D. V.)

EDITOR'S NOTE.—For the contents of this, and all papers to which initials are appended, the writer is understood to be alone responsible. A somewhat different account of new creation is given in this volume (pp. 103-108). I would here add that it is not at all denied that in Isa. lxy, lxvi, the scene which is *dwelt* upon is *millennial*, as is clear. The prophet just gives the "*promise*" of the new heavens and new earth which Peter appeals to and Revelation describes the fulfillment of—surely not as *millennial*,—and then goes on to what was more within the Old-Testament range of vision.

Let it be considered also that Scripture speaks of no creation of *matter simply*, but of *heaven and earth*; and that after the dissolution Peter speaks of, the word "*create*" would seem appropriate. It is a change, at least, the nature of which we know little of. Neither the beast nor man were *altogether* produced from nothing when "*created*."

The "*rule*" of new creation (Gal. vi. 16) seems difficult to apprehend also in the way our brother uses it. If it mean the rule of belonging to another scene, it is evident. We have to walk as outside the world. If the scene be the same, (no new creation at least of *it*,) no separation seems enforced.

If our readers will weigh all in the presence of God, there will be only good from the comparison of views. And our beloved brother's desire in this paper will be attained. Scripture must judge us all.

SCRIPTURE NOTES.

II.

"Justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. vi. 11.)

THE truth of justification is variously given in Scripture, nor is it always the same thing. It is always a sentence of righteousness pronounced in favor of the person justified, but in different ways and at different times. Paul's justification by faith without works is, for instance, entirely different from James' *by* works; and to confound them is the destruction of both. Paul inserts a note, as if it were on purpose, to guard against such a mistake. "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but *not before God*" (Rom. iv. 2). James, on the other hand, asks of the same person, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar?" (Jas. ii. 21.) The *time* of which they speak is different. Paul speaks of Gen. xv; James, of Gen. xxii. But also Paul speaks of justification *before God*, and denies James' justification by works to be *before God*. The latter speaks of justification *before men*: "A man may say, Show *me*." And there is no confusion.

The "justification" of our text is neither of these, but a third thing distinct from either, and I think in our day little understood. The passage that explains it is 1 Tim. iii. 16, where the same expression is used of our Lord: "was justified in the Spirit." The preposition is the same in both passages, the instrumental "in," or "by." This clearly refers to the descent of the Spirit upon Him at His baptism, when the Father's voice testified its

delight in Him. He Himself speaks of this as the Father's seal: "Him hath God the Father sealed" (Jno. vi. 27). It was the divine confirmation of what He was,—His *public* justification thus.

If this be so as to the Lord, our own justification as given here is by the *Spirit received*: the seal of the Spirit is the witness given by God to us, of course, and as is said here, "in the name of the Lord Jesus." But what precisely does this mean? The apostle's sermon on the day of Pentecost furnishes the answer. Peter there takes Joel's words for his text, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." He proclaims Jesus the Lord: "God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both *Lord* and Christ." They are pricked to the heart, and cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" He answers, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you *in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*." Baptism is "unto the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts viii. 16). They thus call on the name of the Lord, owning Jesus as this, and in His name receive remission of sins,* and the gift of the Holy Ghost in confirmation of it.

We have only to remember now that in Cornelius' case—the first Gentile, and pattern for the Gentiles afterward, the gift of the Holy Ghost is not *dependent upon* baptism, and that the apostle of the Gentiles (the first preacher of *justification*,) is not sent to baptize, and this text in Corinthians becomes quite plain. The person owning Jesus as

*Of course, only the authoritative *witness* to it on earth, and conditioned upon the reality of their confession of Christ (comp. Acts xxii. 16; Jno. xx. 23).

his Lord is justified in His name and by the reception of the Holy Ghost, then and there bestowed, the mark set on those who belong to Christ.

GRACE.

IF there be in us any anxiety of conscience as to our acceptance, we may be quite sure that we are not thoroughly established in *grace*. It is true there may be the sense of sin in one who is established, but this is a very different thing from distress of conscience as to acceptance. Want of peace may be caused by either of two things—my never having been fully brought to trust in *grace*, or my having, through carelessness, lost the sense of *grace*, which is easily done. The “*grace* of God” is so unlimited, so full, so perfect, that if we get for a moment out of the presence of God, we cannot have the true consciousness of it—we have no strength to apprehend it; and if we attempt to know it out of His presence, we shall only turn it to licentiousness.

If we look at the simple fact of what *grace* is, it has no limit, no bounds. Be we what we may, (and we cannot be worse than we are,) in spite of all that, what God is toward us is LOVE!

Grace supposes *all* the sin and evil that is in us, and is the blessed revelation that through Jesus *all* this sin and evil has been put away. A single sin is more horrible to God than a thousand sins—nay, than all the sins in the world are to us; and yet, with the fullest consciousness of what we are, all that God is pleased to be toward us is love! It is vain to look to any extent of evil. A person may

be (speaking after the manner of men,) a great sinner or a little sinner, but that is not the question at all. *Grace* has reference to what God is, and not to what we are, except indeed that the very greatness of our sins does but magnify the extent of the "*grace of God.*" At the same time we must remember that the object and necessary effect of *grace* is to bring our souls into communion with God,—to sanctify us, by bringing the soul to *know* God and to *love* Him. Therefore the knowledge of *grace* is the true source of sanctification.

J. N. D.

ABBA, FATHER.

TAKE Thine own way with me, blest Lord," I said,
Kneeling in prayer at midnight by my bed;
And then upon my heart there fell deep dread.

What if He take me at my word, and lead
Into the wilderness, from verdant mead
And pastures green in which His flocks do feed?

What if His way winds o'er the desert sands,
A road of pain and loss, through sun-scorched lands,
Where not a palm with grateful shadow stands?

A whisper came: "Not *loss*; there may be pain,
But all His dealings must be to their gain
Who are His own." My trust surged back again.

"To shaded Elim He doth lead." Once more
Peace swept upon my soul, as on the shore
A noiseless summer-tide. The dread passed o'er.

I spake the words again, and faith said "Yes;
The Father's loving hands can only bless,—
God for His own hath naught but tenderness!"

ATONEMENT.—(*Concluded.*)

CHAPTER XXVII.

God Glorified and Glorifying Himself.

WE have seen the work of atonement as a work needed by man, applicable and applied to him for his complete justification and deliverance. And this involves, as we have seen, God's satisfaction with the blessed work done on man's behalf, of which the rent vail and the resurrection are the prompt witnesses on His part. But we have reserved to this place, as the fittest for it, the full divine side of the cross, so far as we can utter it. In our review of Scripture, it has necessarily often occupied us; but in this sketch of the doctrine—now very near conclusion,—it needs to be afresh considered and put in connection with it. It is indeed, and must be, the crowning glory of the whole.

We begin, naturally and necessarily, with that which meets our need as sinners, and yet even so that need is never rightly met until we have seen, not merely our sins put away, but whose hand it is that does this. Nor must we stop here even with *Christ* for us. It must be "*God* for us." "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."

Quite true, if we have come to Christ we have come to the Father; if we know Christ we know the Father: and so our Lord replies to Philip's words which we have just quoted. But we need to understand this. It is no long road to travel, from the Son to the Father. The Father is perfectly and only revealed in the Son. Yet many

stop short of this for long; using Christ's work more as a shelter *from* God than a way *to* God: like Israel on that night in Egypt when God says, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you;" but how different from the Psalmist's deeper utterance—"Thou art my hiding-place." To be hidden *from* God, or hidden *in* God—which is our faith's experience, reader?

It is evident that in these two thoughts God is in contrasted characters: to pass from one to the other involves a revelation. And as Philip's words truly say, nothing but this last suffices the heart. God has made it for Himself: nothing but Himself will satisfy it.

It is true "the Son of Man must be lifted up:" here is a *necessity*. Yes, but "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son:" here is God Himself revealed. It is the cross in each case that is contemplated, but how differently! And it is this divine side of the cross that is now to occupy us.

God *glorifies* Himself in *revealing* Himself. He shines out. Clouds and darkness no more encompass Him. He is in the light, and in Him is no darkness at all.

And we, blessed be His name! are in the light. The darkness is passing, if not wholly passed. The true light already shines. Through the rent vail of the flesh of Jesus the divine glory shines. It is of His cross our precious Redeemer says, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; if God be glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will straightway glorify Him." These words may well serve as the text of all we have to say.

"Now is the Son of Man glorified." No ray of glory shone *upon* Him: all was deepest darkness, profoundest humiliation; yet in the cross the Son of Man was glorified. Well might He say to Peter, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now." Who but Himself could have gone down into the abyss where was no standing, to lay again the misplaced foundations of the earth? Who but He could have borne the awful trial of the fire of divine holiness, searching out all the inward parts, and in that place have been but a sweet savor to an absolutely holy God? Who but He could have assumed those sins of ours which He calls in the prophetic psalms "My sins," and risen up again, not merely in the might of a divine person, but in the power of a thoroughly human righteousness?

Yes, verily, "the Son of Man was glorified;" but more—"God is glorified in Him." There are two ways in which we may look at this.

First: God was glorified by the perfect obedience of One who owed no obedience, as He had done no wrong. He restored what He took not away. He confessed fully a sin He had Himself to measure in infinite suffering and alone. He confessed and proclaimed a righteousness and holiness in God to which He surrendered Himself, vindicating it against Himself when God forsook Him as the bearer of sin. And He presented to God a perfect humanity, fully tried and beyond question, in which the fall was retrieved, and God's thought in man's creation brought out and cleared from the dishonor the first man had cast upon it. And goodness triumphed in weakness over evil; the bruised foot of the woman's seed trod down the serpent's head.

But secondly: when we think of the mystery of His person, it is God Himself who has taken—truly taken—this earthen vessel of a pure and true humanity, that He might give to *Himself* the atonement for man's sin. It is *God* who has coveted and gained capacity for weakness, suffering, and death itself, that He might demonstrate eternal holiness, and yet manifest everlasting love to men. It is God who has "devised means that His banished should not be expelled from Him." And it is God who has cleared up all the darkness of this world by this great joy found at the bottom of a cup of awful agony; who has brought out of the eater meat, out of the strong sweetness, out of death and the grave eternal life!

It is this revelation of God in the cross that is its moral power. In all that He does, the Son of God is doing the Father's will, keeping the Father's commandments, making known the Father's name. The gospel is the "gospel of God"—His good news,—in which "glory to God in the highest" coalesces with "peace on earth, delight in men." And so it is "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." Every way it becomes true, "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son." This is that moral power of the cross which some would make the whole matter, but which can only be when found in a true atonement for our sins. Mere exhibition would be theatrical, not real, and could not do the work designed in it. A real need really met, a just debt paid at personal cost, guilt measured only and removed by such a sacrifice,—this alone can lay hold upon the heart so as to be of abiding control over it. And this *does* control: "O

Lord, truly I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant and the son of Thine handmaid; *Thou hast loosed my bonds.*"

But the moral effect of the cross, the power of the display of divine glory in it, is not to be measured merely by what it accomplishes among men. Scripture has shown to us, clearly if not in its full extent, a sphere which is far more extensive than that of redemption. Into the "sufferings of Christ and the glories which should follow," says the apostle Peter, "the angels desire to look." And while by it the Redeemer, "gone up on high," has "led captivity captive," and "having spoiled principalities and powers, made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it,"—on the other hand, "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." And more precisely the same apostle speaks of God's "intent that now *unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places* might be known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God." (Eph. ii. 4-7; iii. 10.)

Not to us only, nor only for our sakes, is the glory of God revealed! Would He hide from others the glorious face which has shone upon us? On the contrary, if "the Lamb" be "the light of" the heavenly city of the redeemed, the light of the city itself is "like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;" for He that sits upon the throne is "like a *jasper* and a sardine

stone," and the city has the glory of God (Rev. iv. 3; xxi. 11). "Unto Him," says the apostle, "be glory *in the Church*, in Christ Jesus, through all generations of the age of ages" (Eph. iii. 21).

God, then, being glorified in Christ, glorifies Him in Himself, giving Him a name above every name. "By His own blood He enters in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. ix. 12). Not simply as the divine Person that He always was does He enter there, but now as the One who has by Himself purged sins He sits down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (chap. i. 3). He is Head over all things, Head of all principality and power, Head to the Church which is His body (Col. i. 18; ii. 10; Eph. i. 22). His request is fulfilled: "Father, glorify Thy Son," and the end in which His heart rests He names, "that Thy Son also may glorify Thee" (Jno. xvii. 2).

The end and object of all is the glory of God. It is perfectly, divinely true, that "God hath ordained for His own glory whatsoever comes to pass." In order to guard this from all possibility of mistake, we have only to remember who is this God, and what the glory that He seeks. It is He who is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,—of Him in whom divine love came seeking *not* her own, among us as "One that serveth." It is He who, sufficient to Himself, can receive no real accession of glory from His creatures, but from whom—"Love," as He is "Light,"—cometh down every good and every perfect gift, in whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Of His own alone can His creatures give to Him.

The glory of such an one is found in the display of His own goodness, righteousness, holiness, truth;

in manifesting Himself as in Christ He has manifested Himself and will forever. The glory of this God is what of necessity all things must serve,—adversaries and evil as well as all else. He has ordained it; His power will insure it; and when all apparent clouds and obstructions are removed, then shall He rest—"rest in His love" forever, although eternity only will suffice for the apprehension of the revelation. "God shall be all in all" gives in six words the ineffable result.

Christ, then, is the One in whom God has revealed and glorified Himself—glorified by revealing Himself. Upon Him all the ages wait: "all things were created by Him and for Him." He is the "Father of eternity:" Head of the Church His body; last Adam of a new creation.

And in this eternal purpose of God we have our place, therefore, and how blessed an one!—"chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. i. 4). "That in the ages to come He might show forth the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus"—"God, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

The cross of Christ was an absolute necessity for the salvation of men; but it is more,—it is an absolute necessity for the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose to show forth the exceeding riches of His grace. In it already has been accomplished that which is the wonder and joy of heaven, the fullest song on the lips of her adoring worshipers. But

the grace in this must have full expression—the fullest. He who has become a man for our salvation cannot give up again the manhood He has assumed. Service is the fruit of love. He has taken the place of service, and will keep it: the love is not temporary, but eternal, in His heart; the expression of it should be as eternal as the love.

And if He come down to this place, and as man lead the praises of His people, men must be in the nearest place to Him; that it may be, not merely compassion seen in Him, but love; and love, free, unearned, divine, the exceeding riches of the grace of God.

Thus, too, the cross is honored, exalted, lifted up before the eyes of all the universe. That He died; for what He died; how gloriously the work has been achieved. While the arms that thus are thrown around men encircle all: for it is God in Christ who has done this, and who is this,—God, the God and Father of all.

There are various circles and ranks among the redeemed in glory. There are earthly and heavenly, and differences too among these. This of course implies no difference in justification, in the atonement made alike for all. A common salvation has been taken generally to mean a common place for every one of the saved; and the special place and privileges of the body of Christ have been assumed to belong to all of these. But Scripture is as plain as need be that this is not so. There will be, of those whose names are written in heaven, a church of first-born ones, as there will be a company of "spirits of just men made perfect"—a suited designation of Old-Testament saints (Heb. xii. 23). There will be a new *earth*, in which dwell-

eth righteousness, as there is an "inheritance reserved in *heaven*" for believers now (1 Pet. i. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 13). I cannot dwell upon this here, and yet if it is not seen, there must be real and great confusion. But all in these different places are blood-washed ones alike: the same sacrifice has been made for all; His name under whom Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely will be, for them as for us, "The Lord our Righteousness" (Jer. xxiii. 6). Yet Israel's promises are earthly, and not heavenly. We see, then, that to have "Christ made unto us righteousness" involves no necessary place in heaven.

And yet the cross is the sufficient justification of whatever place can be given to a creature; and it has pleased God to take out of the Gentiles a people for His name, to make known the value of the cross and show forth the exceeding riches of His grace. In Christ we are already seated in the heavenly places, and where He is is to be our place forever. This we know; and it is part of the blessed plan in which God in Christ shall be fully made known, to the deepest joy and adoration of His creatures.

We are reminded here of the unequal offerings of the day of atonement,—the bullock for the priesthood, and the two goats for the nation of Israel. They are types of the same sacrifice, but in different aspects; and the priesthood clearly represent the heavenly family, as the holy place to which they belong represents the heavenly places themselves. We have considered this already, however, in its place.

And now we may close this brief and imperfect sketch of an all-important subject by reminding

our readers of the way in which the Lamb—the atoning victim—fills the eye all through the book of Revelation. Not only by the blood of the Lamb the saints' robes are washed and the victors overcome; not only is it the Lamb that the redeemed celebrate, while the wicked dread His wrath; but He is the opener of the seven-sealed book, the interpreter of the divine counsels; His is the book of life, and the first-fruits from the earth, and the bride the Lamb's wife; the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of the city; the glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light; while the river of the water of life flows eternally from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

“Soon shall our eyes behold Thee,
 With rapture, face to face;
 One half hath not been told me
 Of all Thy power and grace.
 Thy beauty, Lord, and glory,
 The wonders of Thy love
 Shall be the endless story
 Of all Thy saints above.”

NOTES

ON THE EARLY CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

THE DIVINE ACCOUNT OF CREATION.

(Continued.)

THE first verse of the Bible tells us of an undated beginning when God created. Millions of years ago the earth *may* have existed in light and perfection. We say *may* have been; but most certainly no human voice was ever heard, nor human foot trod its walks. Scripture does not inform us

as to the antiquity of the globe, but it does as to the age and origin and history of the race.

Perfection characterizes the earth of ver. 1: *ruin* as certainly distinguishes the earth of ver. 2. The former was the creative act of God; the latter, the result of judgment. The weeping prophet, Jeremiah, uses the very terms of ver. 2 to describe the utter judgment and desolation of Israel. (Jer. iv. 23.) "I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was *without form, and void*." While Isaiah as distinctly informs us that God did not create it so. "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in *vain* (or void), He formed it to be inhabited." (Isa. xlv. 18.) The conclusion seems plain, the evidence irresistible, that the earth was created in perfection; then, from causes unrevealed, it came under the just judgment of God, which is not so as to the heavens. Now we have the shapeless, waste, desolate earth, submerged in the restless, heaving mass of waters—a dark and lifeless scene, yet the subject of intense regard and of loving interest to the Spirit of God, who "moved upon the face of the waters."

What a beautiful idea is here suggested! The Spirit of God—not a breath, impulse, wind, or influence, but a divine Person—"moved," rather "was hovering," or "fluttering" over the awful desolation. It is the same word and thought as in Deut. xxxii. 11—"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, *fluttereth* over her young," etc. How this sweeps aside the cold and heartless thought that the making and preparing of this earth out of chaos, *merely* (!) displays the sovereign power of the Creator!

First day's work (vv. 3-5). The first day of the

world's history was ushered in by one of the finest utterances ever penned or spoken. The first historical utterance of our God, "Let light be, and light was," for power and sublimity, there is nothing we know of like it. Both light and sun—the work of the first and fourth days, were created long before, being part of the system which in the beginning God created (*v.* 1). It is evident, too, that the celestial luminaries are not the source of light, but simply the home or receptacle of it. The light was the distinguishing work of the first day; the luminaries, of the fourth. For three days the earth enjoyed light apart from the sun. Scripture says it was so; science demonstrates the possibility of it, and infidelity retires from that old battle-field—her strength in the early part of last century—utterly discomfited. The light instantly produced was full and brilliant, and was at once called "day." We need not say any thing about the nature of light—others have done so.

Second day's work (vv. 6-8). Light revealed the utter desolation. The earth stood a confessed and hopeless ruin before the full blaze of day. Now heaven is formed. The restless, heaving mass of waters are divided, and an expanse formed between. The atmosphere—absolutely indispensable for the life and growth of the animal and vegetable kingdoms—naturally precedes the interesting work of the third day. The earth was not formed by the concourse of particles of matter,—all matter lay in the stillness of death till "moved" or acted upon by the Spirit of God; nor was the atmosphere produced by the action of the sun's heat,—it was a distinct work of the Creator.

Third day's work (vv. 9-13). In the previous

day, the waters were *separated* by the heavy atmosphere, consisting of a body of invisible fluids, enveloping the whole earth, revolving with it, and which extends upward for forty-four and a half miles, and which presses upon every square inch of substance—living or inanimate, with a weight equal to about fifteen pounds. The dark, heavy clouds of rain and mist, formed by evaporation, were pressed upward by the weight of the atmosphere. Now, however, the third day opens with the waters beneath being *bounded*; restraints are put upon their course, and they flow in their divinely appointed channels; "they are gathered together unto one place," forming about one hundred and thirty-eight millions of square miles, to about sixty millions of dry land. The second action of this resurrection-day (as the "third" implies), is the resurrection of the earth out of its watery tomb, where it had lain buried for, perhaps, countless ages. This, like all else, was accomplished instantaneously by the fiat of the Creator, for as yet there was no sun's heat to dry the earth, or to harden it into needed consistency. All this demands the divine note of approval, "God saw that it was good." But the third action of the third day is surely a grand and fitting close to the first half of the creative week. The earth is now clad with rich and luxuriant vegetation. Life in its lowest form is now produced, but produced in perfection. This must have been so, for "there was no man to till the ground," and as yet no sun to contribute, by light and heat, to the growth and maintenance of the vegetable world. The order of vegetation is on the ascending scale—from the lowest to the highest: grasses, herbs, and fruit-trees—all appear

in maturity, and all as parents, having seed in themselves. This beauty and fruitfulness was preparation for the higher forms of life created on the fifth and sixth days, of which man was the perfect type. The vegetable kingdom would be needed to sustain *all* animal life. The fecundity of certain plants is truly amazing. The botanist tells us that there are thirty-two thousand seeds on a single poppy plant. Wilkinson discovered a vase, hermetically sealed, in an Egyptian tomb, and which contained, amongst other things, certain seeds, supposed to be three thousand years old; yet the germ of life was there. They were planted under favorable conditions, and in course sprung up bearing fruit. It is believed that there are from eighty to one hundred thousand different species of plants. Again, the Creator pronounces His work "good."

Fourth day's work (vv. 14-19). This day opens with the usual creative formula, "And God said"—ten times repeated. In ver. 3, it is "Let there be light;" here, it is "Let there be lights, [or luminaries]." The language does not imply that the solar system was then created, but merely that it was assigned a special place in the heavens, and appointed to perform certain functions toward the earth and especially to man. "He made the stars also" is a kind of incidental expression. The adjustment of the celestial orbs to the new and physical conditions of the earth,—set in mathematical precision as to distance, etc., so as to secure *just* the necessary heat and light by the revolutions of our planet, seems to us the leading idea presented in the work of the fourth day. They are also God's indicators of time. The sun is the centre of a

mighty system. It has a fixed place, as a centre should, although it has a revolution on its own axis every twenty-five days and ten hours. It is ninety-five millions of miles distant from the earth. Our planet performs its daily journey on its own axis once in twenty-four hours,—thus we have day and night. She travels, too, attended by her pale and beautiful satellite—the moon, on her yearly circuit round the sun at the rate of fifty-eight thousand miles an hour, and performs the journey in three hundred and sixty-five days and six hours,—thus we have “years” and the various seasons (see chap. viii. 22). Thus we have “seasons, days, and years” accounted for. But why for signs?—signs of what? Yes, the sun, moon, and stars are not only faithful indicators of time, lamps too of light, and sources of heat; but they are signs, to the terrestrial world, of God’s glory (Ps. xix. 1–6); silent yet eloquent teachers of Jehovah’s faithfulness to Israel (Jer. xxxi. 35, 36); signs of the enduring character of Messiah’s kingdom (Ps. lxxii. 17), of Christ in His majesty and glory (Rev. i. 16). The stars also tell their tale, and point to Him who alone is worthy (Num. xxiv. 17), etc., etc. It will be observed that the light of the first day is now gathered up, and makes the sun her palace and her home.

Fifth day’s work (vv. 20–23). We come now to the creative wonders of the animal world. The seas, oceans, and rivers have been prepared for their aquatic inhabitants; “the open firmament of heaven,” with its rare combination of gases, compounded with a nicety which bespeaks the skill and wisdom of the Creator, becomes one vast aviary for every species of winged fowl. As we near perfection, it is positively beautiful to trace,

in the progressive character of the work, the admirable wisdom, the infinite skill, displayed in the most minute act of these marvelous days of creation of which Moses unfolds the historic origin, while John discloses the prophetic close.

Here, then, for the first time after the primal creation (*v.* 1), we meet with the word "created" (*v.* 21), which in itself would be sufficient to show the *special* importance attached to this day's work. Life alone belongs to God. Hence, He creates from the largest sea-animal, about three hundred feet in length, down to the tiniest insect. It will be observed that there are two distinct creations of life—fish and fowl; the point in *ver.* 20 is the respective spheres assigned to each—the seas and the open firmament. It is worth careful notice that the words "after his," or "their kind" occurs ten times in the course of the narrative. It is three times used of the vegetable world, once of species of aquatic creatures, once of every winged fowl; and five times of all land-animals and creatures. Most certainly, all attempts to cross the numerous forms of life, whether in the vegetable or animal world, has no support in Scripture, and such practices should be shunned by all obedient to the Word; besides which, these attempts to improve the species only tends to their deterioration. God's order is always best. Propagating power is not inherent. The extraordinary multiplication of fishes and fowls is due to the expressed blessing of the Creator (*v.* 22). Of existing species, there are about four thousand kinds of fish, and about three thousand kinds of birds.

Sixth day's work (*vv.* 24–31). Here, as might be supposed, the record is more full, more lengthy.

The first week of the new world's history is drawing to a close, and what a fitting conclusion to such a work is the creation of man, in the image and after the likeness of God—the Creator's vicegerent and representative in authority on the earth. The seas swarm with life, while many a bird of song and beauty wings its way in the open firmament of heaven. The earth, too, is clad with its carpet of green; the trees, fruit, and flower fill the balmy air with their delightful aroma. As yet, there is no seared leaf, no withered rose, no taint on the beauteous scene. Now again God works, or rather creates, so as to fill this beautiful world with life. As on the previous day we had two creations of life—fish and bird, so we have here two distinct creations, only of a much higher order and character of life than before. It will be observed that the divine word of power, “God *said*,” occurs on the sixth—the closing day—four times. This is interesting, as it is purposely intended to bring into prominence the special acts of that unique day. “God *said*,”—and instantly the earth was occupied with creatures of every shape and size and species (*vv.* 24–25). “God *said*,”—and man—the noblest work of the Creator, and subject of special God-head counsel, “Let *Us* make,”—takes his place of intelligent lordship over the ordered scene (*vv.* 26–27). “God *said*,”—and the fruitfulness and multiplication of the species are thereby assured, as also the continuance of man's dominion over the animate creation (*v.* 28). “God *said*,”—and the resources and wealth of the vegetable kingdom are placed at the disposal of man and animal for food (*vv.* 29, 30). It may be remarked in passing that this latter appointment remained in force for six-

teen hundred and fifty-six years—till the flood. Only vegetable food, and that for *all*, was the provision for the ark-inmates (Gen. vi. 21). Flesh-meat to man only was added after the flood (Gen. ix. 3).

The threefold order of land mammalia is, first, "*cattle*"—domestic animals; second, "*creeping thing*"—invertebrates; third, "*beast of the earth*"—animals of prey. Each are created after their kind. The theories of evolution and of development have not been proved by science, and Scripture condemns them, for each species of vegetable and animal life was created "after his kind."

The creation of man completes the work of God. There is now a creature intelligent, morally responsible, and competent, moreover, to represent the Creator in the vast and sinless scene. One who could lead creation's praise, enter into the moral perfections displayed by God in His beautiful workmanship, and be the vehicle of the divine thoughts to the lower creation. Surely, it was fitting that a moral link should be established between the Creator and His work! The whole terrestrial sphere came under the gaze of its Creator: all was perfect and sinless. He beheld it with complacent delight, and pronounced the whole "*very good*." "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." We may remark that while an "evening" is said to precede the distinct creations of each day, it is not so as to man. No *evening* is said to precede his creation: in kind, in character, in purpose, it was entirely unique, and quite distinct from all else. We take the eleventh verse of the twentieth chapter of Exodus as conclusive proof that the creative week

consisted of six literal days—days of twenty-four hours each. On the seventh, God rested, blessed, and sanctified it. It is not said to have been a day consisting of an *evening* and a *morning*—Jewish and eastern mode of reckoning. Sin came in, and misery with it. God then wrought in love and righteousness in midst of evil, and holds out to faith the grand and eternal state as “His rest.”

W. S. (Scotland.)

THE LESSONS OF THE AGES.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES.

THE “times of the Gentiles” is the Lord’s own expression for the whole period of their divinely appointed supremacy over Israel (Luke xxi. 24). It is the period, therefore, of Israel’s rejection nationally, and begins with Nebuchadnezzar’s destruction of the temple and city when Judah was carried away captive into Babylon, and ends with their deliverance from the assembled nations by the coming of the Lord from heaven (Zech. xiv. 3, 4, 9).

It is the time of the four Gentile empires seen in the visions of Daniel and the king, with a noteworthy exception which we find in the book of Revelation, that there is a time in which the last empire “is not” (xvii. 8), before its final appearance and complete overthrow. In this gap we stand, for none of the great world-empires exist, and all the political effort of the present is to prevent any possibility of the revival of such a thing. Napoleon’s history is a warning of how easily God can

break through these human counsels, and bring about what He has ordained.

For the history of the times of the Gentiles we are dependent largely upon prophecy, even although much of this be now historical fact. But the history of the Old Testament almost ceases with the subversion of the kingdom of Judah, and no mere human hand can supply the deficiency. It is God's view of things we are seeking, and "the Lord seeth not as man seeth." Thus man's history would be likely by itself to lead us only astray from the divine view, which alone has any real significance. We should hold fast, then, to prophetic scripture as to our sure guide through the mazes of human history.

But prophecy, while it throws light upon the darkness of the present, hastens ever onward to the accomplishment of God's counsels in the time before us, and indeed mainly in revealing this declares the present to us. The end is the time of manifestation, for the tree is known by its fruit. We misjudge constantly by anticipating this, mistaking the true harvest-time which it is the glory of Him who knows the end from the beginning to make certainly known.

This will prepare us for a character of prophecy to miss which will leave us in continual perplexity. All prophecy connects with the end, and by this means with every other prophecy. None is its own interpreter, as that passage in the second of Peter, so commonly perverted, really means.* And why? "For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they

* "No prophecy of Scripture is of *separate*"—*literally*, "its own"—"interpretation."

were moved by the Holy Ghost." It is all one plan, one counsel. To separate one part from the rest would be to make a rent in a seamless robe. Every seeming by-path connects at any rate with some road that ends not save in the city of the Great King. And as we approach this, the highway widens, the view lengthens, road after road comes in and pours its contribution into the swelling stream that hastens onward whither all ends—at the feet of the King Eternal.

It is to prophecy that we mainly turn, then, and for our present purpose especially to Daniel and its complement, the book of Revelation. And the fact that the history is at the present time prophetic has a significance which we must now consider.

With Israel in the Old Testament man's history morally ends. The law has given its judgment as to him. "There is none righteous,—no, not one" is the verdict it renders. If true of the favored nation, true then of all, for "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man."

There is indeed another trial to be made here, but for which we must pass on to the pages of the New Testament. Will he not, now convicted and exposed, be ready for grace when it is offered him? Will not the prisoners of hope turn to the stronghold,—to the Mighty One on whom God has laid help? The answer to this is but the cross; and in this the full and final judgment of the world is found. In the meanwhile, the law has already, and to leave him thus shut up to grace, given its verdict. Man's history closes with Israel's ruin. The *record* closes. God may predict the future of him with whom He has now parted company; *but He has parted company.*

It was the throne of the Lord upon which Solomon had sat (1 Chron. xxix. 23), and the ark of the "God of all the earth" had long before passed through the dried-up Jordan to the place of His rest. But now the glory of God had passed from the mercy-seat, and Ezekiel had seen its lingering sorrowful departure from the city (Ezek. xi. 23); and now God's title is in the books which speak of this time, the "God of heaven" (2 Chron. xxxvi. 23; Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel). The *God of heaven* gives Nebuchadnezzar the kingdoms of the earth, and the Gentile kingdom widens out soon into an empire such as never had been seen in Israel. Nebuchadnezzar is thus a king of kings,—a petty image again of Him who will be *the* "King of kings and Lord of lords;" somewhat also in the absolute authority possessed by Him. But there the resemblance ends. How different the character of the one who possesses this power, and how rapid the degeneration of it!

To him whom God had raised up He appears, that he may know the hand that had raised him up; making him debtor too for the interpretation of his dream to one of the scanty remnant of the people he had overthrown, that he may learn the vanity of his false gods in the presence of Him to whom they are opposed. This dream makes him aware of the fact that He who had placed can displace, and of the continual degradation of power in the kingdoms which succeed his own until at last they all together come to an end, smitten by a kingdom which becomes really world-wide, and which stands forever. About this final kingdom little is said; only that it is of no human shaping, but set up in a peculiar way by the God of heaven Him-

self, that it destroys all others, and abides. It is the vanity and corruptibility of all mere earthly power that is insisted on: a homily against pride and independence of heart read to one who is in the greatest need of it.

In this view of the kingdoms, the debasing of material shows the decay of power in the successive forms. The Babylonian was the head of gold, owing no allegiance save to God Himself. In the Persian—the silver,—the law when made, although the king might make it, could not be altered even by himself. The kingdom of Alexander—the “brazen-tunicked Greeks”—had risen on the ruins of a pure democracy, of which it retained many elements; while Rome, which succeeded this, though strong as iron, was in principle entirely such, the power of the emperors being gained by their assuming to themselves a number of democratic offices. Finally, in the latter days of the divided empire, the inroads of barbarian nations mixed the iron with clay. There was no real cohesion, and the heterogeneous elements falling apart, the kingdoms of Europe arose out of this division. But this was not the smiting of the image with the stone. This belongs to a still future time, as we shall see, if the Lord will, as we proceed.

The next four chapters of Daniel show, step by step, the character which these world-powers assume, and are the preface to the seventh chapter, in which they are viewed prophetically in their history as before God, the history in which these features are manifested. The third chapter shows the assumption of control over the conscience, which has characterized man's rule wherever he has had the necessary power. Nebuchadnezzar's

image is marked as that which *he has set up*. To refuse to worship in the prescribed way is rebellion, therefore, against himself. How invariably, we may say, has the civil power assumed to be the religious also, wherever it could. Liberty of conscience,—precious as the boon is,—is in our days the sign of the decay of absolute authority, and it will not last, but give way finally to the worst form of spiritual despotism which the world has ever seen. But this, as in the case before us, surely leads into opposition to God in the persecution of His people. Others may escape by submission, but not they; although the Son of God is with them in the furnace.

The fourth chapter is the descent of the kingdoms from what has at least the form of a man, as in the second chapter, to the beast-form in which they are seen in the seventh. It is the pride of power which forgets God which levels man with the beast which has none. Nebuchadnezzar claims the great city over which he rules as built by his own power and for his own glory. In the same hour he is driven to the beasts, until he has learnt that the "Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." Then he is restored, but the lesson remains, not, alas! to avert the doom of the Gentile empires, but as a note of warning for him who has the secret of the Lord.

The fifth chapter shows us the moral declension still progressing unchecked. Belshazzar openly lifts himself up against the Lord of heaven, exalting above Him the senseless idols of silver and gold, and fingers of doom come forth and write his sentence before his eyes.

Thus the Babylonian empire runs its course, and is followed by the Persian; but the Persian we see also, in the next chapter, brought in to complete the terrible picture of decline, ending in complete apostasy. The king exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, making a decree that for thirty days no petition is to be asked of any god or man except himself. That Darius himself is not the real author of this decree, and is personally very different from what it would imply, does not alter the significance of this terrible act,—the presage of that last antichristian blasphemy for which the Gentile powers come to an end, while Israel, like Daniel, is delivered from the paw of the lion.

The seventh chapter now gives these empires, seen in the prophetic vision, as four wild beasts. But attention is concentrated upon the last, and that, too, as seen at the time of the end. It has already its ten horns, corresponding to the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image, and then there arises another little horn, on account of whose blasphemous words, the beast is destroyed, and his body given to the burning flame. But the kingdom now becomes His in whom meet the characters at once of the Son of Man and of the Ancient of days; and "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, that shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Thus when Israel's course is ended for the present in utter ruin, God takes up the Gentiles, (not as yet to reveal Himself in Christ to them—that is another and totally different thing, as will, I trust, in its due place appear,—but) to give them their trial also. This will seem strange and contra-

dictory at first sight, for has it not been just said that with Israel in the Old Testament man's history morally ends? That is surely true also. In all this history of the Gentiles, there is no fresh stirring of that question. No law, no moral code, is given to them. No revelations at all are made, save only Nebuchadnezzar's vision; although Cyrus speaks of a charge which God had given to him to build Him a house in Jerusalem. This he might readily have found in Isaiah's prophecy (chap. xlv. 28), and probably was shown it there. At any rate, the founders of the first two empires were made perfectly aware from whom it was they had received their greatness. Here all personal communication ends. God does not bring them nigh, as He had brought Israel. He has significantly left the earth, putting it afresh, in the most decisive way since Noah's time, into man's hand, but with scarcely a word as to its government. There was His written Word, indeed, if they had heart for it; for ignorant He took care, as we see in Cyrus, that they should not be. And there He leaves it.

(To be continued.)

"HE LED THEM FORTH BY THE RIGHT WAY."

(Ps. cxli. 7.)

IT was not the smoothest, or the shortest, or the one most frequented, but it was the best. It was the only right way. He intended to prove them, and to display His wonders, and the way afforded an opportunity for both. Thus it is with all His people. He has marked out the way in His unerring wisdom; He guides them into it, He tries them by it, He leads them along it, and glo-

rifies Himself by doing so. God's way is always contrary to that which flesh and blood would choose. We want ease, plenty, pleasure, and honor; but the Lord intends that we shall have faith, humility, patience, fortitude, and confidence in Himself alone. His design is to empty us, and strip us, and humble us, and break us down before His throne; to endear the Saviour, sweeten the promises, and make the good land more desirable. And this He effects by sanctifying the trials, the losses, the disappointments, and the troubles we meet with in the way. Beloved, is yours a rough way, a trying path; a perplexing road? It is *the right* way. The Lord leads you, and He never leads wrong. He brings into the wilderness before He brings into Canaan.

"In the desert God will teach thee
What the God that thou hast found,
Patient, gracious, pow'rful, holy,
All His grace shall there abound."

(*Selected.*)

"HUMBLENESS OF MIND."

(Col. iii. 12.)

THIS is one of the Christian ornaments which the elect of God are exhorted to put on and wear. How much we have to make us humble, and yet how little effect it has upon us! If we reflect upon our origin, and look unto the rock whence we were hewn; if we consider the course we pursued before conversion, even the course of this world; or if we remember what we have been and done since the Lord called us by His grace, one would think we should see enough to make and keep us humble.

(*Selected.*)

"IN CHRIST."

2 Cor. v. 17, 18.

IN Christ Jesus! What position!
Once "in Adam," ruined, lost!
Now redeemed! (O changed condition!)
By His blood! Amazing cost!

In Christ Jesus! Blest transition!
"Old things [now] are passed away."
"All things new" in Faith's wide vision.
"All things are of God" for aye.

In Christ Jesus! Who in heaven
Stands, our Advocate and Priest!
Conscience purged, and sins forgiven,
There He bears us on His breast.

In Christ Jesus! Midst the lilies,
Where His pasture is, we feed;
And our song of rapturous thrill is,
He supplies our every need.

In Christ Jesus! Yet the mystery
Lies beyond, still unrevealed!
For the half the wondrous history
Is untold—in Him concealed!

In Christ Jesus! Swiftly nearing
Is the hour of blest record,
When the saints, at His appearing,
Shall be like our glorious Lord.

In Christ Jesus! Throned in glory!
Sons of God! With Christ coheirs!
Sequel, this, to Calvary's story:—
All things with His own He shares.

C. F. B.

NOTES OF GOSPEL ADDRESSES

AT THE

St. Croix Meeting, Aug. 27th to Sep. 3d.

I.

"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true: but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high-priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 22-28.)

THERE are three expressions used in these verses to which I would call your attention. "He *hath* appeared" (v. 26); "Now to appear" (v. 24); "He *shall* appear" (v. 28).

It is a question of the past, present, and future. In each, it is Christ—Christ from beginning to end. When Israel were starting on their journey out of Egypt, there was a question raised between God and them,—there was a controversy between God and them to be entered into ere they took a step of their journey, and that controversy was about their sins. This had to be settled ere God could take His place among them, to dwell there. The settlement was made by the blood of the slain lamb: the angel of death could not pass into the house sprinkled by the blood; and so the blood of Jesus Christ shelters every believer, however weak, from

the wrath to come. Again; when, near the end of their journey, they had sinned and been bitten of the serpents, the brazen serpent was lifted up on a pole, that they who looked might live. This is Christ again. Thus we learn that the moment it is a question of God and man, it is Christ who, from beginning to end, can meet both the claims of the glory of the One and the desperate needs of the other.

In our scripture is taken up, not merely the salvation of a sinner, but that of a Christian. What is a sinner? I walk into a nursery, and the gardener shows me a bed of beautiful little trees. "What kind of apples are these?" I ask. "They are only natural trees," the answer is; "their fruit would be worthless. Before they can bear good fruit, each tree must be taken by itself, cut off close to the root, and a little twig from a good tree inserted." Such is the sinner. He is by birth a natural tree, unable to bear fruit for God; he must be born anew. He needs to be cut down and grafted with a new life in order to bring forth fruit unto God. You who are what Scripture calls "sinners"—"unconverted," don't dream about turning over a new leaf and doing better. I like to hear of a person doing it, however, for it testifies they are troubled about the back leaf. What do you, then, *need*? Christ; but Christ in what aspect? for here are three aspects:—

- (1) "He hath appeared to put away sin."
- (2) He is appearing to make intercession.
- (3) "He shall appear without sin unto salvation."

You need Him in the *first* aspect—"He hath appeared to put away sin."

From early childhood, my life was clouded by the prospect of judgment to come,—death at the

end of all down here, and then after that the judgment,—and I could not rest until I found this blessed answer to it.

When the Son of God came, what did He come for? If a great person comes into your village, you are led to inquire, What is his business? What was the business of the Son of God in this world? What is His object down here?—what has He come here for? "*To put away sin.*" From before whom? Not from before you. As to myself, I care not for your judgment of me: I am as good as you. I care not as to *your* judgment of my sins; but in the presence of God, there they are a trouble. The Lord Jesus Christ's mission was not to condemn, but to save, and before He could save, He must put away sin from before God. He offers Himself to God for us as a sweet-smelling savor. People say, "I am not sure that I have received Christ aright." I answer, Has God offended you? or is it you that have offended God? Had Christ to offer Himself *to you* to be accepted of *you*, or *to God* to be accepted *of God* for you? Christ offered Himself to God, and God has accepted Him, and He is satisfied, glorified in Jesus Christ about our sins. That is the gospel. Will you receive it to-night? or will you set it lightly by and continue to live in your sins? Live in them, grow gray in them, die in them, be raised in them at the last day, stand before God in them, and be judged for them? Well, you will not find fault with God's judgment *then*, I am sure. The rich man described in Luke xvi. as lifting up His eyes in hell finds no fault with God for being cast in there. He is in hell suffering for these sins. He refused to bow down to Jesus and confess them so as to be saved, and now he is

getting his portion there, and he owns it is his *right* portion. The Lord Jesus did not expatiate on the terrors of hell, but solemnly stated the fact of it. A thing that God has spoken has no need of forcing. They who resist it resist at their own peril.

Look back to Adam. God says to him, I make you lord of all this creation: all is under you. I only am above you, and as a reminder of it, I have put one tree in the garden which I forbid you. Eat not of it, or thou shalt surely die. Only God for his Master! How grand, how noble a place! He disobeyed that Master and got another by it. And now see the effect of it: Sickness, death, murder, misery, anguish, cries of distress on every hand, Satan the master of man instead of God,—all this by one act of disobedience. How awfully solemn is every word of God! Let the lessons of the past have their due weight over our souls, beloved friends, for not one jot or tittle of what has come from His mouth can be violated with impunity. He will not repeat it: He will execute it, and He will now in grace leave its simple statements to impress the heart and command our faith.

This Word of God, which hath never been broken nor ever can be, what is it to us now? Jesus "hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Has it entered your soul? I *believe* it, and therefore I *know* my sins are gone from the presence of God. What a thing is this grace of God! It brings *salvation* now to us *where we are*. In a place where I was laboring lately, I was asked how long it took one to repent—how long to go through repentance so as to be saved. I replied, "Would you take my word for it?" "Yes," was the answer. "I believe you know."

"Then I will not give you my opinion, but the testimony of One who cannot lie. Let us turn to Scripture." We turned to the dying thief. Matt. xxvii. 44 says, "The thieves also which were crucified with Him cast the same in His teeth." Luke xxiii. says only one reviled Him; but the other, confessing his guilt, turned to Jesus, pleading to be remembered by Him when He came in His kingdom. Of course, both statements are true; and so, in the short space of time between the crucifying of the three and the dying of Jesus, a poor criminal has repented, and received from the Lord's own lips, "*To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.*"

Take another case—the jailor at Philippi. He has done his cruel work—made the apostles, whom he has beaten, secure in the stocks, and gone to his rest. They, though dishonored by stripes, had been honoring the Lord, and so, filled with His Spirit, they praise God at midnight. God answers by an earthquake, which makes His enemies tremble. The jailor awakes; he is terrified, and about to commit suicide. Then he hears the voice of love—"Do thyself no harm." It melts him, and he cries out, "What must I do to be saved?" He owns he is lost. That is repentance. Then he hears the gospel—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house." He believes and is saved there and then. He was a proud sinner last night: he is a humble Christian this morning. Before the day-break, he has repented, believed the gospel, been baptized, washed their stripes, set meat before them, rejoiced in God with all his house. He had believed the blessed fact that Christ "hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

This is the same news to you now. Will you rest on this work, owning yourself a sinner?

Now another thing for us, beloved brethren. Do we no longer need Christ because the question of our sins can *never*, NEVER, NEVER, be raised again? Is sin committed by a man against whom "there is now no condemnation" less obnoxious to God than when committed by one who is still under the curse? Can God pass over the sins of His people as if they were nothing? Verily, no! Sin is ten thousand times worse in our hands than in a stranger's. When God had, by the blood of the lamb, redeemed Israel out of Egypt, He made them His dwelling-place—the people among whom He took His abode, to walk in them. How could He have continued with them all the way when they sinned so often and so grievously against Him? Would it not have been giving up His own character—His righteousness and holiness? It would. Therefore He made provision for this as He had made to deliver them out of Egypt: He ordained a priest who, as a type of Christ, could always, in his perfect person and by virtue of his perfect offering, present the people always perfect before God, being the one in whom the redeemed people were thus represented. That is Christ's present service before God for us. *He now appears* in the presence of God for us—His redeemed people. Thus "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." Thus it is our constantly defiled feet are constantly cleansed by Him, and the consciousness of that both humbles and strengthens. Oh, child of God, cheer up! You may be discovering the evil of

your own heart and the crookedness of your ways. The more the better. It will make you appreciate the full provision God has made for us in Christ. The work of repentance goes deeper and deeper as we go on, and it is well. "To whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much." Never lose courage. Jesus is there before God for you, and because of that, He can always look upon you with the love of a Father. How cheering to know that whatever happens, Jesus is there!

As *lost* sinners, we needed Jesus as a *Saviour*; now, as *saved* sinners on their way to the glory above, we need Him as a *Priest*. Such is our weakness, our sinfulness, our inability to stand for one hour before such a holy God as our God, that we could no more get on with Him without Christ as our Priest than we could have been brought to Him without Christ as our Saviour. But as the secret of salvation is in the sinner's believing that Christ "hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," so the secret of a holy life is to believe that He now appears "in the presence of God for us." Brethren, do we believe it? do we feel the need of it? Is it the comfort of our souls to have our feet in His hands for the constant washing they need? Our souls at perfect peace with God through Christ's past service at the cross, are we not in danger to forget or think little of our incessant need of His *present* service? If we do, pride of heart comes in, and a fall follows. But even then, it is His grace allowing the fruit of our departure to appear, that, like Peter, we may go out and weep, and learn in a new way our need of His service.

"ONCE offered," mark; not twice. Men die once,

and then the judgment. Having lived and died in sin, their doom is sealed; they cannot return to try it over. So Christ having lived and died *for* sin, the blessed result is sealed forever in them that believe on Him: "Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time WITHOUT SIN unto salvation." The question of sin was settled forever when He appeared to put it away, and now we who believe can calmly, happily, longingly, lift our eyes to heaven, and, in answer to His parting words, "Surely, I come quickly," respond, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Rev. xxii. 20.) O ye lost men who are in this audience, what a Saviour is Jesus for you! What a salvation! what a supper spread before you! What grace!

One thing more. "*As* it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: *so* Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (vv. 27, 28).

"In the *beginning* God created." This is a fact it is wasting time to prove. So here is an incontrovertible fact,—"*As* it is appointed unto men once to die." He takes that fact—which none can deny—and makes its certainty to illustrate this one fact that "Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many"—for rebels. What love toward men who deserve judgment! Believe, and live; or turn away from it, and add to your many sins the greatest of all—the most terrible of all, that of refusing pardon from Him who alone can pardon, and who, to deliver us from the wrath to come, had to pass through it Himself on account of our sins.

O ye saved men who are in this audience, what a Saviour we have found in Jesus! He served us by

dying for our sins. He serves us now by washing our feet. He is going to serve us again, when He returns from heaven, "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.)

And does His service close there? No; we could not do without Him even in eternity. Hear His own words: "Blessed are those servants whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching; verily I say unto you, that *he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.*" (Luke xii. 37.)

"Glory, glory everlasting,

Be to Him who bore the cross,—

Who redeemed our souls by tasting

Death, the death deserved by us!"

P. J. L.

THE LESSONS OF THE AGES.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES.—*Concluded.*

WHAT, then, can be the new test when God takes up the Gentiles? He has not left us without plain intimation as to this, and it must be our endeavor now to trace it out.

Two reasons the Word of God gives for the delay of Christ's coming. For why should God delay in what was nearest to His heart? The need of the discovery of man's need fully is the reason assigned. "When we were yet without strength,

in due time Christ died for the ungodly." So there was a "due time;" and to what this has reference is plain from the apostle's statement. It refers to the trial of man morally in Israel under God's righteous law. This had been proved to have no help for man. Where it had found him, there it had left him—ungodly, and without strength. He was shut up to Christ, then: there was no hope but in Christ.

In 1 Corinthians, the apostle gives us another side of this delay. The *Jew* had had the law,—true; but what about the Gentile? Had God altogether left him out? The book of Daniel, if nothing else, would prove the contrary. Even God's silence, moreover, must have its significance. There must be a meaning even in "the times of ignorance" which "God winked at." And so the apostle declares. "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of the preaching"—not the manner, but the matter—"to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom." But "hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" Yes, wisdom as well as righteousness, for Gentile and for Jew alike, are found in Christ: "who is made unto us wisdom from God, righteousness as well as sanctification and redemption:" "that *no* flesh should glory in His presence," but that "he that glorieth should glory in the Lord."

Here, then, is the secret of the matter. The question of man's wisdom was for him an excessively grave one. Where had he got it? Alas! a "tree to be desired to make one wise" was the bait which Satan held up before the woman, and by

which our first parents were seduced and fell. "Ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil," says the tempter. "The man is become as one of Us," says the Lord God, "to know good and evil." What, then, is the value of the wisdom he has attained? Taught of necessity, into which he has now got, he has "sought out many inventions." The apron of fig-leaves was only the first of a long line which is not ended with the steam-engine and the telegraph; and all, if it be considered, are but inventions to cover his nakedness, or like John Bunyan's "wholesome instructions," of which cart-load after cart-load the slough of Despond swallowed up, and was nowise bettered after all.

What blanks man's wisdom? We shall find it in the Old-Testament "preacher," clothed in sack-cloth though a king. For God has given us, as I have elsewhere said, side by side, in two Old-Testament books, the two questions we are looking at. A divinely pronounced *best* man, Job, is the preacher of repentance: a divinely pronounced *wisest* man, Solomon, is the preacher of vanity. Yes, the vanity of wisdom, if it be only human, more than all. For the beast has no regrets and no sad anticipations; finds his place in a world of change, enjoying the present, and never thinking of the future. But man, if he does not *know*, anticipates and dreads; cannot bear his every-day burden and lie down in quiet. Death levels all; and what beyond death? Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward? Yet the heart says, "God judgeth the righteous and the wicked." Here we stop, the one thing certain our ignorance, with eternity in the heart and no sure outlook beyond time,—except God give it. Human wisdom

fails: we must await, says one of the wisest of the Greeks, God's revelation.

But "vain man will be wise, though he be born a wild ass's colt." Even yet he prefers a guess to the truth,—the first being his own, the latter God's.

It is strange and significant, in that blessed Word where all is significant, that in these two books of Job and Ecclesiastes, the Jew takes up the Gentile question, the Gentile Job takes up the Jew's. Thus the same truths are applied to all the world.

Notice, too, that Solomon is not only the wisest of men, but the richest and most powerful. Man's wisdom needs plenty of material to work with. God gives him all he can desire. When He takes up the Gentile, He gives him just the same things. The Gentile is to be the possessor of the world, and the controller of it.

But he only forfeits his power and loses it, runs through the portion of goods that falleth to him, and leaves his crown to his successor. The Babylonian leaves and the Persian enters; the Persian thrusts at the Greek, and falls by a back-thrust; the Greek power breaks into fragments, and is devoured piecemeal by the Roman. When Christ comes; after the predicted sixty-two weeks of silent waiting (Dan. ix. 26), the Roman is already issuing his mandate that all the world shall be registered, although he does not know that God is making him move all the machinery of his empire to bring a Jewish woman to Bethlehem, that her child may be born there, and then for years will stop the census, which is not taken up again till Cyrenius is governor of Syria. So must the world wait after all upon Christ.

And He comes, He lives among men, He dies,

He ascends to heaven, and the Holy Ghost is sent down at Pentecost. The Church is formed, and the world is dropped. Since that time, the world has had no history. Even prophecy in the meantime is silent. The empires are for God already gone, although their history yet for a space will be taken up again after the Church is gone from earth, and when the harvest of the world is come.

THE NEW BEGINNING.

THE voice of Old-Testament prophecy does not cease without predicting the time of the coming of the Deliverer, in whom now plainly is man's only hope. The seventy weeks of Daniel, to which we shall have to return hereafter to consider more fully, foretell this as to take place sixty-nine weeks (of years—483 years) after Nehemiah's commission to restore and to build Jerusalem. This plainly reaches to the time of Christ's public ministry, after which the prophecy declares He would be "cut off." Before this, the Gentile empires have already reached their fourth or final form; the Jewish Maccabean revival has shown itself to be but the flash of an expiring flame; politically, the people lie helplessly under the foot of the oppressor, while the law is over-weighted by human observances, in the vain attempt to patch with new cloth their rags of legal righteousness.

It is at this time, when utter failure and hopeless ruin are every-where manifested, that we reach a new beginning,—the beginning of what is not susceptible of failure or decay at all. A new, a second Man,—since Adam, there had been no second,—appears upon the scene, to be the "last Adam" of

a new creation, "the Beginning of" what God can identify as His thought from the first—"the creation of God."

Man, true and perfect Man, is here: holy and righteous, not merely innocent; perfect in obedience in the scene of the first man's failure—not in a garden, but in a wilderness, which sin has made the world. To man at first, the trial had been made as light as possible: to the Second Man, every thing that could make the trial full and searching to the utmost was ordained. With miraculous power freely used in behalf of others, He never uses it to minister to His own need, or to take Himself out of the condition of absolute dependence upon God, which is the necessity of the creature. "Tempted in all things like as we are, sin apart" (Heb. iv. 15, *Gr.*). He not merely walks by faith, as the people of God in all ages have done, but is "the Leader and Perfecter of faith" (chap. xii. 2, *Gr.*). One who fills the whole possibility of such a life in His own person. Moreover, as He lives not in a scene like the first paradise, where all ministers to Him, so He does not walk as One who is served, but who serves. The law of His life is that of sacrifice. He closes it with laying down of Himself what none could take from Him. His one principle throughout is, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God."

Such, then, as He is, He is no product of His times—no outgrowth of preceding generations. Light does not develop out of darkness, nor life out of death. And in Him the Eternal Life is manifest; not that He *has* it merely, struggling, as in His people, with many discordances; He *is* it,—the Eternal Life itself.

But this brings us where to know is to worship. It is God who is come down to us. He who visited man's abode in goodness at the beginning, to prepare it for him, has now visited it after another fashion; and "we beheld His glory," says the apostle, "the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Here, indeed, is a new beginning, and who shall tell the blessedness of it? God, always Light, is now in the light. Exactly when it is fully proved that man can never find his way into the presence of God, His glory is unveiled, and in grace, not in judgment. Judaism is plainly over. God's grace can never be manifested side by side with law. The hopelessness of all attempt to develop any thing out of man for God has been made apparent. And the light now come into the world, although not come to condemn the world, but for its salvation, yet only confirms the solemn fact. God's own Son, come in grace, awakes man's heart only to enmity and rejection of Him. It is not mere ignorance, "They have both *seen* and hated both Me and My Father."

He comes with His hands filled with the blessing which He has to communicate. With Him "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Let them own but to what palpably their sins had brought them, and He was there on God's part with remission of their sins. The power ready to banish from among them the effects of sin already showed itself. Sickness removed, Satan's power destroyed, death itself made to give way at His word, what more evident than that in Him God was reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them? Paradise was once more opening the way

to the tree of life, where no flaming sword forbade their access. Would not the blessing under their eyes prevent their refusal of Him who thus by every tie of interest would bind them to Himself? So one might surely reason. Alas! such is man's enmity to God that not even blessing will win him to receive Him in whom alone it can be found. "For my love, they are my adversaries: . . . they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love." Of this the cross is the fullest proof. They can taunt Him there with that good itself—"He saved others, Himself He cannot save."

Jew and Gentile have their part in this. It is the commencement of that grand conspiracy which the second psalm predicts, and it ends not until the Lord asks and obtains the world for His inheritance, the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. And how then must He make good His claim? "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." This is of course when He comes again; and the opposition, although at times more covert, only ceases then. "Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thy foes Thy footstool." Still we know He sits there; and when He actually comes forth (as Rev. xix. depicts it), it will be when the enmity of the world has blazed out again most fiercely, and there is no concealment of it any longer.

The cross, then, is the expression, on the one side, of the world's hatred: "The mind of the flesh is enmity against God." Thus it is the judgment of the world—a judgment pronounced, but waiting execution. On the other hand, it is the expression of God's over-abounding grace—a grace reigning

through righteousness unto eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Whatever man's enmity, then, this grace must find utterance—must be published and have its proclamation in the world. The sweet savor of Christ's work must come abroad. The fruits of it must be gathered and garnered. This pause of blessing is Christianity.

Christ, then, as come to Israel, their Messiah, is (in the language of Daniel's prophecy) "cut off, and has nothing." Israel is not gathered. Three years He comes looking for fruit upon that fig-tree, whose leaves give a deceptive promise of fruit that is not found. But man's condition is apparent, and "without shedding of blood is no remission." "The Son of Man must be lifted up." His followers in Israel must see their Jewish hopes expire in His death, and be "begotten again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," now "to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved *in heaven*."

Judaism must give place to the "precious faith" of Christianity. The risen Lord ascends to heaven, receives from the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost (Acts ii. 33), Pentecost beholds His coming, and the kingdom of God begins upon earth.

Yet Israel is not at once set aside; on the contrary, "to the Jew first" the message of grace is proclaimed. Nor only individually, but nationally also. The three years of Christ's ministry have found no fruit upon the barren fig-tree; still, the words are uttered, "Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it; and if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that, thou shalt cut it down." So, at the cross, the Lord in-

tercedes, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" and Peter proclaims to them the acceptance of that prayer: "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. . . . Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, in order that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you; whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." (Acts iii. 17-21.)

National repentance would even then avail to bring Christ back from heaven, and to bring in the glories of His reign on earth, as the Old-Testament prophets had pictured it. Alas! there was no repentance. Numbers indeed believed, but the nation remained what it remains to this day—rejecters of the Prince of Life. They who had said that if they had lived in their fathers' days, they would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets, proved themselves, as the Lord had predicted, the children of those who killed the prophets, by persecuting, even to death, the new prophets God had raised up. Stephen, arraigned before their tribunal, sums up their guilt, proving from their history how they had always resisted the Holy Ghost, rejecting the divinely raised up deliverers sent to them; and they consummate their sin by stoning him, and sending him, as it were, a messenger after Christ, to say, "We will not have this man to reign over us."

Thus the time of repentance ends. Persecution scatters saints from Jerusalem, and they go every

where preaching the Word. Philip goes down to Samaria, and evangelizes it. Then the Ethiopian eunuch carries away his new-found blessing. Then Saul, the incarnation of Jewish enmity, is converted to be the apostle of the Gentiles, the first of whom is, however, received by the apostle of the circumcision—Peter himself. Antioch soon after becomes the new centre of Gentile evangelization, and from thence Paul and Barnabas go forth to their mission among the heathen round.

Jerusalem yet remains, however, and converts even multiply there greatly; but the nation is unceasingly hostile. Nor only so: the zeal for the law, which disfigures Jewish Christianity, and which warps even Peter himself and Barnabas (Gal. ii.), after it has been decided that it must not be imposed as a yoke on Gentile converts (Acts xv.), persuades even the great apostle of the Gentiles to conduct which brings the fury of a Jewish mob upon him, and shuts him up in a Roman prison. From Italy he writes to warn the Christians to leave the camp of Judaism altogether. Finally, according to the Lord's prophecy, Jerusalem is destroyed, and the temple-worship of necessity wholly ceases.

Alas! that still remains which becomes a subtle infection for the new and spreading faith. This we shall see, if the Lord will, as we proceed; but first, we must look at this new faith itself, and ask ourselves, (alas! in the nineteenth century of its existence, not a needless question,) What is Christianity?

KEY-NOTES TO THE BIBLE BOOKS.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

II.—*Concluded.*

4. (Chap. xiii.—xvii.) *Faith Furnished for the Path through the world, with Christ absent as rejected.*

THE last section of this central portion of the book consists mainly of the Lord's discourses with His disciples before the cross, in view of His speedy departure to the Father. In these, therefore, He speaks of what would furnish them for the time of His absence, the one great feature of it being the coming of that other and abiding Comforter, whose presence with us—alas, how little understood and realized!—is the character of the dispensation in which we are. Thus we are not left to orphanage (xiv. 18, marg.), but see Christ while the world does not see Him; yea, through Him both the Father and the Son come and make their abode with us (v. 23).

There are seven divisions:—(1) Chap. xiii. 1–17, the purification needed to have part with Christ; (2) *vv.* 18–38, the enemy's work in the traitor, only issuing in the glorifying of the Son of Man, and of God in Him; (3) chap. xiv, the Father's house, the revelation of the Father, and our present part with Christ by the Holy Ghost sent down; (4) xv. 1–16, the fruit the test of abiding in Him; (5) xv. 17–xvi. 11, the doom of a world which has rejected Him; (6) xvi. 12–33, access to the Father in His name; (7) chap. xvii, the prayer of the Intercessor for His own.

- (1) Chap. xiii. 1–17. *Purification to have part with*

Christ. The order of the truth in these chapters is important: first, purification; then, communion; then, fruit; then, testimony. Without purification, no communion; without communion, no fruit in the life; without fruit, no real testimony. The first thing of all, then, is purification, the washing of the feet, the application of the Word to free us from all defilement by the way. This is not cleansing by blood, as in 1 John i. 7, which of course must go before it; nor the bathing of the whole person (the washing of regeneration), which the Lord distinguishes from it in His words to Simon Peter (v. 10). Neither of these can be, nor needs to be, repeated; while the washing of the feet must be repeated constantly, not merely to bring back if we have strayed, but to maintain the soul with Him. Moreover, it is not a provision merely for known, but for unknown, evil. *He* must cleanse, *He* must judge; otherwise the most ignorant and least exercised in divine things would have the least need of purification. Absolute surrender to Christ, inviting His inspection, is the prerequisite for all real "part with" Him—communion.

As Revelation i. gives the Lord as occupied with our collective state, so does this chapter show Him caring for our individual state; and in this He gives us also to be imitators of His grace, and to care for one another (vv. 12-17).

(2) Chap. xiii. 18-38. *The enemy's work in the traitor, which only issues in the glorifying of the Son of Man, and of God in Him.* And to this grace, all things perforce serve (v. 3). So if the enemy's work be now seen, and the familiar token of love bring out the enmity of the heart of the traitor (v. 27), the Word of God had already an-

anticipated this (*v.* 18), and the final result is the glory of the meek Sufferer. The Son of Man is glorified in that humiliation in which none other could have stood with Him (*v.* 36), and in which God Himself was glorified as no where else. This leads, for Him, to the glory of God, the glory for which He had descended; while He leaves for His disciples the "new covenant" of love to one another, illustrated and enforced by His proved love to all.

(3) Chap. xiv. *Part with Christ.* And now He unfolds what is "part with" Him, first, in its final and then in its present, form. In its final form, means place in the Father's house eternally, as children, beholding the Father's face, already seen, by faith, in Christ down here. For the Father and He are One. He is "the Way," the One, and the only One, in whom the Father is accessible by men, "the Truth,"—the fruit of the Light, God manifested in the world,—and the Life," needed to receive the revelation.

He goes on to speak of "part with" Him, as now we have it, communion by the Spirit sent down from the Father, (after His own work accomplished and ascension,) to take abidingly with us the place of Guardian* of His people in the time of His absence. As Christ had come into the world, so the Holy Ghost was now to come, not, as incarnate, simply to dwell *with* us as the Lord had done, but to be *in* us as well as *with* us (*v.* 17). In His coming, the Lord would, as it were, Himself return

*The word translated here "Comforter," and, in 1 John II. 1, "Advocate" is perhaps better rendered by this, though still inadequate, term. "Comforter" is too vague, "Advocate" too narrow. The eighteenth verse, in the margin, shows the sense—"I will not leave you *orphans*." As the Lord had charged Himself with them while on earth, and was going now to care for them above, so the Spirit of God would now assume the charge of them below.

for the Spirit of truth would make Christ known as in the Father, His people in Him and He in them. To those showing, in a spirit of obedience, their love to Him, He would (by the Spirit) manifest Himself. Yea, with those keeping His word, the Father and Son would thus come and abide (v. 23).

His words on earth also would all be brought to remembrance, and all things be taught them effectually by the Holy Spirit. And dowered with the peace made for them by His work, and with that peace of communion in which He Himself had walked, their heart need no trouble and no fear. Nay, they might rejoice that He was going to the Father.

(4) Chap. xv. 1-16. *Fruit the test of abiding in Him.* "By their fruits ye shall know them" are the Lord's own words, and to this test of fruit He now submits all professed faith in Him. Israel had been Jehovah's vine of old, had failed utterly, spite of His care of it, brought forth but wild grapes, and been set aside. Now, Christ is the true Vine, and by abiding in Him alone is all fruit found. He had already spoken of being and abiding in Him. He now uses the figure of the vine and its branches to illustrate this. The vine is nothing if it has not fruit: for the branch to be fruitful, it must abide in the vine; thus alone the sap, the life, the source of fruitfulness, abides in the branch: "Abide in Me, and [so] I in you."

That the Lord speaks of "abiding" shows that it is of *grafted* branches He is speaking, and this alone explains the language used. Here, if the graft remains and develops, you know that it has *struck*—that vital connection has been formed. No

man is naturally a branch in Christ, but of the wild stock; and while it is (as the apostle says of the olive,) "*contrary to nature*" to graft a wild branch on a good stock, *spiritually* this is what must always be. Here, then, abiding is what is necessary for fruit. The branch learns to draw from the new tree, and how beautifully this illustrates that life in Christ which is essentially a life of dependence—of faith. The branch that abides not lives upon itself, is exhausted, and withers away.

The fruitful branch, then, is the object of the Father's care; He purges (or prunes) it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Concentration of the sap into fruit is what He seeks—a most important lesson for us all. "Already are ye clean"—purged—says the Lord to His disciples, "through the word which I have spoken unto you." It is the *Word* that sanctifies, or separates, to God, judges what is not of Christ, keeps us in to Him from whom alone our fruit is found. "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for apart from Me ye can do nothing. If any one,"—He will not, by saying "ye," make a doubt of already fruitful branches,—"*if any one abide not in Me, he is cast forth as the branch [is], and withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.*"

On the other hand, "If *ye*,"—He returns to the "ye" here,—"*if ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will,*"—for your will will be (so far as this is true,) in conformity with God's will,—"*and it shall be done unto you.*" Thus will the Father be glorified also; thus shall we be Christ's disciples, and, keeping His commandments, abide in His love, as He kept His Father's com-

mandments, and abode in His love. Thus, too, will the joy He knew in His blessed path be in us, and be full.

Again He returns to tell us that His commandment is love to one another, "as I have loved you;" and then commends to us that love of His, than which none could be greater, proved in laying down His life for His friends; *friends*, as those to whom now He has made known all that He has heard of the Father. Sovereign love, which has chosen us out of the world, has ordained in us this fruitfulness, "that whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He may give you."

(5) Chap. xv. 17-xvi. 11. *The doom of a world which has rejected Him.* But this love on His part to us draws out to us the hatred of the world, which, as it has rejected Him, rejects His people for His sake. As in Him God has been fully revealed, the true state of men is revealed as hatred—awful, unimaginable hatred—to the Father and the Son. In this world the Spirit of truth was now going to take up a testimony to Christ, in connection with which human lips would be permitted also to testify. In opposition to this, the fury of man would burst forth, blind enough to suppose that in killing His saints it did God service.

But the judgment of the world was fixed. He was going out of it to the Father; and the coming of the Spirit—so blessed for His saints that it was expedient for Him to go away that He might come to them,—would be in itself a positive demonstration to the world, of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. It is not a question of a work in men's consciences, but of what in itself this coming proved. For it proved Jesus gone out of the

world—and how? *Sent out*—rejected: “of sin, because they believe not on Me;” God therefore, who has taken Him out of the grave men gave Him, and taken Him away to heaven, *against* the world which has rejected Him: “of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more;” finally, Satan judged, but judged as prince of this world, which he has succeeded in gathering together against Him.

(6) Chap. xvi. 12-33. *Access to the Father in His name.* Again the Lord speaks of the coming of the Spirit, and that He would guide them into all truth, declaring to them things to come, and taking of the things of Christ to show them. How wondrous the sphere of this when He can add, “All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall show them unto you.” For this He must depart to the Father, and they be plunged into sorrow by His death, a sorrow soon ended in the joy of His resurrection. And then by His work accomplished they would have access to the Father in the value of His name,—direct access, though through Him. The day of dark sayings would be over. He would teach them plainly of the Father. Tribulation in the world would indeed be their portion, but in Him peace, and the fruit of His victory over it.

(7) Chap. xvii. *The prayer of the Intercessor.* The Lord now presents His own to the Father as those to whom, according to the authority bestowed on Him, He has given eternal life. His work just finished, He claims to be glorified as Man with the glory which was His with the Father before the world was. He is glorified too in these disciples, the Father’s gift, whom He is leaving now in the world.

For them He sanctifies Himself—sets Himself apart in a new position, that as a heavenly Object He might sanctify them whom now He was sending into the world (no more of it than He was) as He had been sent into it by the Father. Moreover, all those believing through their word He prays for in like manner, that they may be one in the practical development of the divine life possessed by them, that the world through them might believe in Him. The glory given Him He gives also to them, that the world may *know* when it sees them in it with Him, that the Father has both sent Christ and loved them as He loves Him.

He closes by stating His request for them, that they may be in heaven with Him to behold His glory. The righteous Father He looks to distinguish between the world that has not known Him, and Himself; uniting also with Himself those who on His testimony had believed in Him.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO A BROTHER IN AFFLICTION.

“SATAN would take advantage of a condition of nervous weakness, to practice upon us, and we must resist him, ‘steadfast in the faith.’ It is a very real thing that he is ‘the accuser of the brethren,’ but he is the accuser of God Himself to the brethren, and we must take heed lest we fall into the snare. If he can make us judge of what God is to us by external circumstances, and to see Him through the medium of our own thoughts and feelings, instead of in the mirror of His precious Word, then he effectually prevails against us. ‘Is the Lord among us, or not?’ brings up Amalek, and the

place is called Meribah, because, alas! we are 'striving with the Lord.' Let him not prevail against you, dear —. Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus—grace *whatever* you are. Not only then do you find spiritual help, when you can do this, but (as you know,) *bodily* improvement also. This is a clear proof that a great deal you suffer from is spiritual depression. Cast it off, dear brother, and for the Lord's sake, do not do Him the dishonor of taking your thoughts of Him from any thing else than *His own revelation of Himself*. 'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.' Have you not in some sort experienced this too? There is nothing so certain as *His Word*. When instead of that we allow ourselves to trust our own thoughts rather, we are fighting the devil's battles against ourselves. And in no way else can he succeed against us. Will you allow him?

"Above all, be of good courage, for HE hath said, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' And He is true and faithful: He cannot deny Himself.

"The Lord keep and bless you.

"Ever affectionately in Him,"

* * *

"OUR care should ever be, not to suffer ourselves to proceed for a single moment beyond the energy of the Spirit, as the time for the Spirit will always keep us directly occupied with Christ. If the Holy Ghost produces 'five words' of worship or thanksgiving, let us utter the five and have done. If we proceed further, we are eating the flesh of our sacrifice beyond the time; and so far from its being 'accepted,' it is really 'an abomination.'"

THE LESSONS OF THE AGES.

CHRISTIANITY.

WHAT, then, is Christianity? How many answers would be given in the present day to such a question! But the variety of discordant answers assures us of this, which of itself is a lesson needing, however painful, to be laid to heart, that as a dispensation—not it has failed, but—men have failed under it, as they always have. The history of the Church which its historians give us is something widely different from a development of what is Christianity, if we take Scripture for it. The grain of mustard-seed has grown into a tree,—true; but in this it has lost its primitive character. The malign “birds of the air” dwell in its branches, and the power that shelters them is the type of power which we see in Babylon (Dan. iv.). It is indeed Babylon the Great, alas! (Rev. xvii.) The irony of truth to-day affirms that there is a Christian *world*, and that the true Church is *invisible*.

But let us go back to Scripture for the answer to our question, What is Christianity? And this is but asking, What is the New-Testament faith? Let us first define it in its contrast with that Judaism which passed away from before it, and then add to this some other things which will be needed to give an outline of it at all complete.

In the first place, then, Judaism was part of a systematic trial of man: as Moses says, at the time of the giving of the law, “God is come to prove you.” Christianity affirms this trial over, the sentence of the law given—“none righteous, no, not one;” the cross the judgment of the world more

fully still, "the carnal mind" as "enmity against God." It thus begins in the soul as a true repentance, an acceptance of God's righteous judgment against man, the end of all hope of betterment for him, save in a new life and nature from God:—he must be born again.

Man is thus judged as to the old creation, his history is ended: God in His grace remains; and this is expressed in the Second Man, head of a new creation, in whom alone all resources are. He too must go down to death to lay hold upon us there, for "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." Dying, He justifies God in His sentence upon man, and becomes the way of righteous blessing for him. Rising from the dead, He is the sheaf of first-fruits in whom the after-harvest finds acceptance.

The characteristic of Judaism was an unrent vail: man at a distance from God, who dwelt in the thick darkness unapproachable, unknown. Christianity declares the vail rent in love and righteousness,—rent by the cross of Christ, and a way of access thus to God, revealed in Him.

Judaism, with its many constantly repeated offerings, could not make the conscience perfect. The law was efficacious to condemn, but not to justify; and its forgiveness, needing again and again to be renewed, spoke only of the "*forbearance* of God," gave no place of assured rest and acceptance with Him. In Christ, by one offering are perfected forever those who are sanctified; the worshiper once purged has no more conscience of sins; and the righteousness of God justifies the ungodly who believes in Jesus.

Judaism left, therefore, the children of God con-

founded with the world—necessarily, as giving no full assurance to any. “I am a Father to *Israel*, and Ephraim is My first-born,” God was saying. No cry of “Abba, Father,” therefore, was known—no spirit of adoption. Christianity separates its justified ones from the world, to which they no more belong, and separates them to God, to whom they belong.

Judaism, for worldly men, had a “worldly sanctuary” and “carnal ordinances”—things suited to act upon men in nature. The worship of Christianity is heavenly, spiritual, in the intelligence of faith, and needing it, the worship of those brought nigh. It is thus associated, necessarily,—as Abraham’s altar with his tent,—with a stranger and a pilgrim’s place on earth, having here no continuing city, but seeking one to come.

Finally, Judaism had its separate order of priests, who alone had to do with sacred things. Priest and people were distinct; and while none could draw really nigh, the former had an outward, official nearness which the latter had not. In Christianity, people and priests are one; there is real, not merely relative nearness; and as a consequence, an overflowing of joyful testimony to those outside, for whom also, without restriction, the way is opened by grace into the presence of God.

In all this, Christianity is in contrast with Judaism, and, as a divine revelation, its necessary complement. The questions raised by the former dispensation are answered in the new one. The shadows of the one find their substance in the other. But there is an overabundance beyond this even in the grace that has visited us. The Church is, as indwelt by the Spirit, the house of God—His

habitation on earth; it is the body of Christ, His bride, the Eve of the last Adam.

In Judaism there was God's house, but of necessity the house and the people were quite distinct; in Christianity they are identified; and this is the first way in which the Church is announced, viz., as a building: "Upon this rock I will build My Church." Peter develops it as a building of living stones—a spiritual house (1 Pet. ii. 5), and Paul as the temple of God in which the Spirit of God dwells (1 Cor. iii. 16).

That the Church is the body of Christ is Paul's doctrine only, and of this there was not even a type or figure in the Old Testament. Both these things depend upon the coming and indwelling of the Holy Ghost, the fruit of Christ's work accomplished and ascension to the Father: as the Spirit of God dwells in the temple of God, so by the baptism of the Holy Ghost the body of Christ is formed. (1 Cor. xii. 13.)

In the thought of God these two things are co-extensive; and as the body of the individual believer is the temple of the Spirit (1 Cor. vi. 19), so the bodies of believers are the members of Christ (v. 15). Every part of house and body is thus instinct with the glorious presence which claims and seals the whole for God. Holiness is the character of God's house as such; subjection to the Head, and mutual care among the members, the responsibility of the body; the unity of the Spirit the practical unity of the whole.

To be the bride of Christ is the *destiny* of the Church. Now espoused to Him (2 Cor. xi. 2), she is by and by to be presented by Him to Himself (Eph. v. 27); and of this the Old Testament has

many types. Eve is the first and the fullest; but Rebekah, Asenath, and others fill in the blessed picture. As body and bride of Christ, the mind and heart are both provided for. For her union with her Lord the true Church waits and longs.

This, then, in the briefest way, is Christianity, the expression of the "manifold wisdom" (Eph. iii. 10) as of the "exceeding riches of the grace of God" (ii. 7). How it has fared in a world which rejected Christ is a question which must now be answered, though to answer it should wake up in our hearts all their capacity for sorrow. Rejection and persecution by the world are indeed her natural heritage, and this fellowship with her Lord could hardly be unfriendly to her. Fiery trial has manifested again and again the true Church, brightening her features with her own unearthly beauty. But these have been but occasional glimpses of a record of which men's hands have written but a few pages, and which waits the day of manifestation to make known. In general, the history of the Church has been but the history of what has usurped her name and travestied her character. Scripture itself gives us but the history of this professing Church; noting for us its departure from the truth, as He whose eyes are as a flame of fire reads it, and comforting us with its foreseen end. This, then, must be our course as well, following Scripture as our only guide and safeguard against ourselves; for the witcheries of Babylon are many, and by her sorceries have all nations been deceived.

The statements of the Word are explicit as to the failure and corruption of the Church, from which it gives no hope of recovery either, but only

the promise of the Lord's return. If we go back to apostolic days, we may find in Corinth the leaven of immorality and the denial of the resurrection; in Galatia, law superseding grace; in Rome, all seeking their own, not the things of Jesus Christ (Phil. ii. 21); Ephesus by and by having lost its first love; and in the days of John's first epistle, already many antichrists (1 Jno. ii. 18). In these, too, the apostle recognizes the sign of the "last time," as Paul characterizes the "last days" by the denial of the power of godliness (2 Tim. iii. 5), and Peter by "scoffers, walking after their own lusts" (2 Pet. iii. 3). Jude tells us that already there had crept in among Christians the men of whom Enoch prophesied that the Lord was coming to execute judgment on them. While Paul again assures us that the mystery of iniquity was already working which would work on to open apostasy and the man of sin, only to be consumed by the breath of the Lord's mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of His coming (2 Thess. ii., comp. Isa. xi.)

This is explicit assurance as to the close of the dispensation. Evil men and seducers waxing worse and worse (2 Tim. iii. 13), the course of christendom startlingly repeats the history of Israel in its religious features. But we have more connected and detailed account of this decline in its successive stages, and this from the lips of the Lord Himself. The parables of Matthew xiii. give us four of these; the addresses to the seven churches a large supplement to them. I do not propose to enter upon or justify the interpretation of these at this time—it has been often enough done,—but rather out of these to construct an outline which will be, if truly

given, the *divine* history of the professing church.

The Word sown in men's hearts is that which establishes the kingdom upon earth: it is received by faith, not yet set up in power. From the first, therefore, there is varied success: the seed tests the quality of the soil; and here the hard-trodden ground refuses entrance, here the rock below forbids any proper root, here the thorns spring up with it and choke it. We see at once there is no universal reception of Christ, but three parts of the seed out of four become unfruitful. A more ominous thing still is here—that where there is real fruit, few bring forth in any due measure: if “some a hundredfold,” more often “some sixtyfold, some thirty.”

It is this failure in true disciples which is the secret of all that follows. Men sleep, and “*while* men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat.” Here is the introduction of what is not the Word of God at all, but the word of Satan, and the fruit of this is not hypocrites and backsliders merely, but heretics and false teachers. Here the devil has already a secure place in the professing church; and this evil cannot be remedied until the harvest, as the Lord declares.

In the addresses to the churches we see the root of failure in a general departure from first love, with men claiming to be apostles falsely, and Nicolaitanism (or clerisy) in fact, if not in doctrine. But both these are yet resisted. In the next step, we find, amid persecution from the world, the rise of a Jewish party, which the Lord stamps as Satan's synagogue. We see at once how every distinctive principle of the Church is in peril here. Law supplants grace, salvation is clouded, the children of

God lose their known place as such, separation from the world grows shadowy and indistinct. Worship becomes necessarily formal, ritualistic, official. The heavenly people become citizens of the earth: the church the synagogue.

All this is at first the badge of a party, but it is a party which attracts to itself every element of declension, and grows rapidly and necessarily as the decline goes on. The state of the third church addressed, as of that pictured in the third parable, shows now its complete victory. The persecution, which alone for awhile has hindered this, is over; the church is firmly settled in the world. It *dwells* where Satan's throne is; the little seed has become a tree, and the birds of the air—the type of the powers of evil—dwell in the branches of it. Nicolaitanism (the “subjection of the laity”) is now complete—an open doctrine, and not merely a practice; and there are followers of him who loved the wages of unrighteousness, and sought to mix the separated people with the nations round in unlawful intercourse and idol-worship.

Another step, and we find, in Thyatira and the fourth parable, the “woman.” It is the professing church itself, now taking the place of rule and authoritative teaching only to repeat the lessons of the Balaam-teachers, and to mix the leaven of evil with the pure meal of the bread of life. This is now Jezebel, the bloody persecutor of the prophets of the Lord, and for whom the Lord reserves a corresponding retribution. And now the remnant of true saints become more distinctly marked out and separated from her, and encouraged by the Lord's reprobation of her and the promise of His own return.

Another stage: we find the Lord has uttered His own voice in answer to the assumption of the false church, and there is a people who have received and heard. But, alas! they are already called to *remember* what they have received and heard, and to hold fast and repent. Yet it is not corruption of doctrine which characterizes them, but simply a lifeless profession. They have a name to live, but are dead,—the world but a Christian world,—with here too a remnant, not merely of living, but of *pure* living saints whom the Lord owns and commends. But the rest are but the world, and will be treated as the world: He will come as a thief upon them, and they will not know the hour. This answers, without reasonable doubt, to the state churches of the Reformation.

And now follows a solemn time, a time of peculiar blessing, a time of peculiar solemnity. There is evident revival, as we say, the word of Christ being hearkened to, the name of Christ wakening fresh response in the hearts of His own, His people thus being necessarily drawn together—"Philadelphia" is "brotherly love." The word of His patience being kept shows, too, the hope of the Lord's coming in some freshness held. All this is full of encouragement. There is, indeed, no blame at all expressed on the Lord's part, although they have but a little strength. No blame, indeed, but a *warning*, and the Lord's warnings are never without meaning—"Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

Here, then, is the danger; here is the peculiar responsibility: here is the room for overcoming in Philadelphia also, for overcomers there are here. And now the application is plain. What have all

the movements been that have been taking place since almost the Reformation itself, in which wave after wave of blessing and revival have swept over Protestant lands, wakening renewed attention to the Word, renewed love to Christ, renewed desire for His coming, and gathering, whether professedly or not, by necessity of these, the people of God together, in separation more or less distinct from the world, which knows nothing of them? And what has been the result, again and again, of all these movements? Alas! in how brief a time has the freshness, the zeal, the simplicity, died out, and only another sect perhaps been added to the number of those before, in its main features little different from others.

All these impulses of revival, in their passing away, emphasize the impossibility of restoration and the near coming of the Lord Himself: "I come *quickly*" is now His word. Doubtless Philadelphia, in some measure at least, will go on till He comes, as Sardis, as Thyatira, as even Pergamos, go on. Plain proof of it is the assurance: "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee out of the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." But the direct result of the collapse of Philadelphian movements is but Laodicea; in which the heat of Philadelphia has become mere lukewarmness, self-satisfaction, and complacency, with Christ outside: and His word is, "*I will spue thee out of My mouth.*" Upon this I do not linger: it is the rejection by the Faithful Witness of what is now but a false witness for Him on earth. It is the long-threatened removal of the Church's candlestick. The predicted apostasy is now at hand,

and the man of sin ready to be revealed. Let the Lord's voice be now heard summoning His true saints to Himself, and darkness thicker than ever before settles down upon the scene. "Behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the nations," is now fulfilled.

THE "END OF THE AGE."

It has been already stated, at the commencement of these papers, that the expression in Matthew xiii. 39, 40, 49, and xxiv. 3, is not properly "the end of the world," as in our common version, but rather "the end [or consummation] of the age;" and this may be now found in the margin of the new revision. It is a change of immense importance, as it is one of absolute necessity.* As it was itself, no doubt, the product of the belief that Christ's coming is at the end of the world, so this mistranslation has done perhaps more than any thing else to sustain this.

What is this end of the age? It is the harvest-time when the wheat-field of christendom will be reaped, the wheat gathered into the barn, and the tares gathered and burned in the fire. It was entirely natural, therefore, for those who supposed that after Christianity there could be nothing more, to suppose that the end of the age and the end of the world were one. It is strange, but true, that the expression itself shows exactly the opposite; for the truth is, that the end of the age does not refer to any Christian age at all. For us, the cross was the "consummation of the ages" (Heb. ix. 26, *Gk.*);

* It is well known that the true word for "world" in the physical sense is *κοσμός*, found in xiii. 38—"The field is the *world*;" while the word here is *αἰών*, expressing time, not physical structure.

and upon us, therefore, the "ends of the ages are come" (1 Cor. x. 11, *Gk.*). Nay, the apostle uses an expression which shows at once the impossibility of a Christian age when he calls *Satan* the "god of this age" (2 Cor. iv. 4, *Gk.*). The time of the display of God's heavenly purpose is not reckoned among the ages of the world. In the Old-Testament prophecy, its history has no place; it is an uncounted interval—a mere gap of time. Of this we shall have proof as we proceed.

But what, then, is this "end of the age?" If we turn to Matthew xxiv, we find the Lord's answer to the disciples' question as to it: "What is the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the age?" Of Christianity, it should be evident, they could know nothing; the end of the age would be for them Jewish,—the age of law, which was to give place to the age of Messiah's reign. Doubtless the end of the age connected itself for them with the destruction of the then-existing temple of which the Lord had spoken to them. But even so, He says nothing to them of Christianity, but pictures a scene in Judea in which disciples would be found to listen to His word, still connected with a temple in Jerusalem, the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place their warning to escape from the following tribulation.

"Yes," people say, "but this is passed!" Then, has Christ come in the clouds of heaven with all His holy angels with Him, according to this prophecy? Yet this ends the short, sharp, yea, unequaled tribulation of which He speaks. It is plain that this "end of the age" is future to us still, as indeed it must be if it is also (as the 13th chapter shows,) the time of the *harvest of christendom.*

Now put these things side by side, and how complete and unexpected the harmony! *Jewish* disciples once more owned, and Jerusalem again occupying the Lord's mind, in a day when the wheat of christendom has been gathered into the barn, and only tares, which He does *not* own, remain for the burning! Yes, "darkness shall cover the earth, and *gross* darkness"—not the light of Christianity—"the peoples; but the Lord shall arise upon *thee*, and His glory shall be seen upon thee" (Isa. lx. 2).

Then "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place," becomes very plain and full in its significance. We shall find the first mention of it in Daniel ix. 27, in connection with the last week of those seventy *at the end of which Israel's blessing was to come*. This last week is cut off from the previous sixty-nine in a way which the knowledge of Christianity as coming in to fill up an uncounted gap of time in prophecy alone can make intelligible. Sixty-nine weeks (of years—483 years—) pass before Messiah the Prince is there. After it, He is cut off and has nothing (v. 26, margin), and (more than forty years after the sixty-ninth week is ended,) "the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and to the end of the war desolations are determined."

* Thus, if taken without a break, the seventieth week is already gone far past; yet the prophecy closes most unexpectedly with just this seventieth week: "And he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease,

and on account of the wing of abominations shall be a desolator"—I translate literally,—“even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

Many questions might be asked here, but the abomination, on account of which there comes a desolator, is plainly “the abomination of desolation” of which the Lord speaks, while its being “in the holy place” shows clearly how the sacrifice and oblation are caused to cease.* Then the short time of tribulation reads in the prophecy as half a week (3½ years), to the end of which the judgment continues, which suddenly comes to an end with the appearing of the Lord.

The “end of the age” is plainly nothing else than this last week of Daniel's seventy, covering the time from the removal of the heavenly saints to heaven till the time the Lord appears with them in glory.” That “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we appear with Him in glory,” Colossians (iii. 4) teaches. How we come to appear with Him then we are taught in 1 Thess. iv, which includes the dead in Christ as well as those alive and remaining till He comes. That Christians go forth to meet the Bridegroom on His way to earth is told us in the parable of the virgins in Matt. xxv. But we need the putting together of such scriptures as we have had before us to see that any such interval occurs between our being caught up to meet Him and our appearing with Him as that which now is plain. When seen, it harmonizes all the scriptures, and throws a flood of light upon the whole.

*The connection is made quite plain by chap. xl. 31—“They shall pollute the sanctuary, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and place the abomination that maketh desolate.”

Thus, if we go on in Revelation past those warning words to Laodicea in which we have already seen the judgment of the professing church, we reach at once, in chap. iv. and v, a heavenly scene. The apostle by a trumpet-voice is called up there; and there he sees, upon thrones around the throne of God, a company of elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and crowned with golden crowns. From these, prostrate before the Lamb, we hear the song of redemption soon, the angels worshipping in an outer circle.

The throne itself is a throne of judgment: thunders and lightnings proceed from it; but around it is the bow of promise, the token of God's covenant with the earth, for the earth is coming into remembrance before Him. The Lamb who takes the book and looses its seven seals is also now heralded as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah"—King of the Jews. With the blessing of the earth Israel's blessing is necessarily connected.

After this, we look down upon earth, to find, before the seventh seal is broken, a hundred and forty-four thousand sealed of all the tribes of Israel, and then a multitude of Gentiles who have come out of the *great tribulation*. The years of this great tribulation we find numbered variously afterward: "time, times, and a half," "forty and two months," "a thousand, two hundred and three-score days"—all give its measure as that of the *last half week of Daniel*.

These harmonies in the book of God are a sure witness for the truth of this interpretation; and by it we see that the end of the age is the harvest of the world in every phase. Israel, the Gentiles, the professing church, alike come up for judgment in

it. And it is this which gives it much of the importance which attaches to it in Scripture. People are slow to believe that two chapters of Revelation can suffice for eighteen centuries or more of Christianity, and fourteen more be required for seven years of a short closing period. But it is in this short closing period that we find the ripe result of all that preceded. And here are for us lessons which it is true we have little fathomed or even cared to fathom, but which none the less bear witness to the goodness and wisdom of God in furnishing us with the true end of all which is about us. Would that fellowship with Him were more prized by us! Not only would our feet be kept out of a thousand snares, but what would it be to realize as to every thing the mind of the Holy One! May we seek and find it more from day to day!

But beside the end of man's ways, we find also the ways of God, at a time when He is not merely showing long-suffering patience, but actively moving to accomplish His blessed purposes. Here the converging lines of prophecy unite after a manner which tells of God's interest, at least, in what for man may have little. We must in this way study prophecy to find its proper end. Prediction has a moral purpose for us. It is not given merely that we may be able to say, with a wisdom beyond the wise man's, what shall be after us upon the earth, but that in this we may find, as in all other scriptures, sanctification by the truth.

We can here but look in the briefest way at some of the features of this time of the end as prophecy develops them. We have seen the crisis of trouble for the Jews, and their deliverance. The agents in

the former we may now look at. And, first, who is it who confirms a covenant with many [of the Jews] at the beginning of the seventieth week? Most commentators, viewing the seventy weeks as an unbroken period, have considered it to be Messiah Himself; and this is favored by the common translation, which gives "*the* covenant," as if it were the divine one so often spoken of in the after chapters. Of course, no one but a divine Person could do this, and so it passes among most without question. But the real translation is "*a* covenant;" and if he who makes it makes it void, as we have seen in what directly follows this, it is clear that Messiah cannot be the maker of it.

The natural person to think of is the one mentioned in the verse previous,—“the prince that shall come;” but he, again, has been confounded with Titus. “The *people* of the prince that shall come” does not, however, necessitate the thought that he comes with the people, nor is there any reason apparent in the prophecy for marking Titus with this special emphasis. The *people* who destroyed Jerusalem were, we know, the Romans; but if we did not know, it would be surely the question, interpreting scripture by scripture, Is there any prince to come sufficiently marked by Daniel elsewhere to be spoken of in this way, and who could fulfill the further statements of the following verse?

We may put it more distinctly thus: Does Daniel speak any where of a great Roman prince who shall arise at the time of the end, and be in connection with and hostility to the Jews at that time? This question is very readily answered: *Daniel has already spoken of this very person.*

The fourth beast of the seventh chapter is allowed by almost all commentators to be the Roman empire, and the angel who interprets the vision to Daniel speaks thus of its last king: "And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak *great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High*, and think to change times and *the law*,* and they shall be given into his hand until *a time and times and the dividing of a time*. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end."

Here, surely, is the "prince that shall come," in opposition to God and to His people, his changing of Israel's law, the very time of his power, (the last half week of the seventy,) and destroyed by the coming of the Lord. Who can doubt the identity?

But another objection arises: This fourth beast, or Roman empire, how can it be destroyed at the coming of the Lord, when in fact it has already ceased to be long since? Here Revelation comes in to supplement, as in so many other cases, the older prophecy. Revelation, as we know, speaks also of this fourth empire and of its last head, and similarly of his destruction when the Lord appears. But it completely clears up the difficulty that exists by showing us this empire as coming up again out of non-existence—"The beast that was, *and is not*, and *shall be present*:" this is given by all now as the proper reading of Revelation xvii. 8.

Thus, again we see the gap of time which has to be allowed for in Old-Testament prophecy; and

thus the last end of the Gentile empires is revealed. But this by no means fills the whole field of prophetic vision for the last days. The abomination of desolation is still only in part disclosed, and it requires only once more to compare prophecy with prophecy, to find another power side by side with this last blasphemous head of Gentile empire, his main ally and instrument in the east, and indeed *the* Antichrist of whom the apostle says, "Ye know that he shall come."

His marks are these:—

(1) "Who is *the* liar, but he who denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is *the* antichrist who denieth the Father and the Son" (1 Jno. ii. 22). Antichrist thus denies absolutely the Christian revelation; he does not deny the Jewish hope, but claims to fulfill it; does not say there is *no* Christ, but that *Jesus* is not the Christ. He thus heads up Jewish unbelief in both respects.

(2) 2 Thess. ii. so naturally connects with this, that most will readily allow the connection. Here we find an apostate from Christianity, "the man of sin," "the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he as God *sitteth in the temple of God*, showing himself that he is God." Here we might think of the Church as the temple of God, but for two things: (1) that he is an apostate—does not profess Christianity at all, as we have seen the antichrist does not; (2) the connection with an abomination of desolation standing in the holy place is so simple, so evidently satisfying the conditions, that it is hard to suppose any other than the Jewish temple meant.

Then notice his end: "Whom the Lord shall con-

sume with the breath* of His mouth, and destroy with the brightness of His coming." Here, "that wicked one" is literally "that lawless one," and is a point of connection with another prophecy.

(3) In Daniel xi. 36 a king is found in the land of Israel whose character is portrayed in words precisely similar: "And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished, for that that is determined shall be done." Yet "a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor." Compare this with—

(4) Rev. xiii. 11-17, where we find a second beast rising up after the first or Roman beast, with two horns *like a lamb*, but speaking as a dragon; full of such power as the passage in Thessalonians speaks of—doing great wonders, and causing men to worship the first beast, as Christ to worship the Father. These two we find meeting a common doom, when the Lord is revealed from heaven in the nineteenth chapter.

These scriptures clearly show us how the abomination of desolation is planted in the holy place.

The desolation is caused, as we have seen, by a desolator from without, and his course we find in Dan. xi. 40-45, where the king of the north sweeps down upon the king in the land of Israel, and overflows and passes over, reaching down to Egypt and Ethiopia. This king of the north is all the way through the chapter a Grecian king; and the account of him who has this place in these latter days

*Not "spirit." The reference is to Isaiah xi, where "the wicked" is also "the wicked one."

is given in chap. viii. He too comes to his end in the land of Israel, the rod being broken when it has served its purpose, and at the same time, plainly, with the beast and false prophet. (See chap. xii. 1.)

Lastly, Ezekiel xxxviii, xxxix, give us still another power, whose rise and growth and attitude in the present day are (along with the revival of Greece and Italy,) among the most striking signs of the times. It is Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal,—as the words should read. Russia is here really named; and she too; doubtless all through at the back of Greece, comes up as an enemy of Israel and of God, in days which cannot be far distant.

Thus the whole prophetic earth is in convulsion in the time of the end, and amid this, Israel find their discipline, in which a preserved remnant are taught to look for and to find Messiah in the Christ they had rejected. The two tribes only—or those we now call Jews—returning partly (as they are beginning to do) and in unbelief into their land, return to find themselves under the tyranny of Antichrist, whom the mass receive, and between the opposing ranks of Gentile powers. But amid them God raises up and maintains a prophetic testimony, and from them the gospel of the kingdom goes out also to the nations round. Babylon the great, the harlot church, falls under the wrath of the western powers; but the new testimony has its effect in the salvation of many, who are the sheep placed on the right hand of the Judge when the Son of Man takes His throne on earth. Even of those gathered against Jerusalem,—and in the very crisis of her trouble the Lord appears (Zech. xiv.)—many are spared, and sent as messengers of

mercy to the nations round. Then, from all parts of the earth Israel are brought back, and, judgment having wrought for purification, the earth's blessing is at last brought in.

But who can give an idea of the lessons of holy wisdom to be gathered in this solemn field of prophetic history? The conviction of how little distant in the future these things are should give to them an intensity of interest, painful indeed, but salutary. For in all of us lie hidden the seeds of what we here find springing up and in maturity. And true, emphatically, is the rule of divine government: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

THE KINGDOM OF THE SON OF MAN.

THE "world to come," the apostle tells the Hebrew Christians, is to be subjected, not to angels, but to *man*. "For unto angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, 'What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honor; Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.'"

We have only to read attentively the tenth chapter of Daniel to know what is meant by being subjected to angels, and to find that this is what is true of the *present* world. We there read of angelic "princes" of Persia and Grecia, and the former, at least, in conflict with the angel who speaks to the prophet, while he is helped by another angel, "Michael, your prince,"—that is, prince of the Jews. Angelic "principalities and powers" are

thus made known to us as in relation to the earth, and Satan is seen in all his power, as "prince of this world;" while in the same sphere the holy angels are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation."

But the world to come is not subjected to angels, but to man; and here, not to the first man, who has lost it, but to the Second Man, and He is the subject of the eighth psalm—"made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death," as the apostle explains, and "crowned with glory and honor." But as yet we "see not all things put under Him," he adds: this is not fulfilled in His exaltation to the right hand of God now, but will be when that glorious time shall come of which prophecy has been ever full—the "times of refreshing from the *presence* of the Lord." These He must come again to introduce.

Accordingly we find, at the time when the Gentile empires come to an end, in Daniel's vision of the seventh chapter, "Behold, One like the Son of Man, *came in the clouds of heaven*, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people and nations and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Between this kingdom of the Son of Man and the kingdom which He now has, the Lord Himself distinguishes in His address to the church in Laodicea: "To him that overcometh will I give to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne."

It is "One like unto the Son of Man" who thus speaks, and as this alone can His people be, through His marvelous grace, associated with Him. No saint could sit with Him upon the *Father's* throne, and now it is the "kingdom of *God's* dear Son" (Col. i. 13). In this, we are only subjects; but "if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him;" and then it will no longer be long-suffering patience, but the exercise of power which will beat down all opposition. So in the address to Thyatira the Lord says, "And he that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of My Father."

In this character we see Him come forth, in the nineteenth chapter of the same book, upon a white horse, the symbol of conquest and victory, the armies of heaven following Him also upon white horses, to the judgment of the earth: "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."

Now, therefore, no adverse power can be tolerated. Not only do the beast and false prophet meet their end at His appearing, but Satan is bound and cast into the bottomless pit, to be shut up there until the thousand years of the last dispensation shall be fulfilled. Then he is cast finally into the lake of fire. The close of the twenty-fourth chapter of Isaiah had long before announced this, though in more general terms: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones upon high, and the kings of

the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and be shut up in the prison, and *after many days* they shall be visited." This clearly shows the judgment to be premillennial. "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients [or "elders"] gloriously."

With this breaking of Satan's chain comes the removal of the curse upon the earth. "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Creation, fallen with her head, waits till the open declaration of God's grace toward man shall be seen in the redemption of the body. Then it also "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and translated into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." (Rom. viii. 19-21.) Well may the earth rejoice, the floods clap their hands, and the hills be joyful together before the Lord. The Redeemer is the Creator, and the "rule" of the rod of iron is a *shepherd*-rule, as the word means. The judgment itself is the effect of love as well as righteousness, to "destroy those who destroy the earth." (Rev. xi. 18.)

This is not the eternal state, however; it is not that in which divine love can rest. The Lord's own words to His disciples speak of it (Matt. xix. 28) as "the regeneration," not the state of glory or of full blessing, though a great and important step toward it.* The word evidently implies the rule

* There is a plain correspondence here between the steps of blessing for the individual saint and for the earth. In both, there is at first "the bondage of corruption;" then a state in which the dominion of sin is broken; then the material change, whether of the body or the earth itself; and then rest and glory.

of righteousness, not by any means yet the complete absence of sin; and this all the pictures given us of that time confirm. Indeed, the very meaning of that apparently so strange letting loose of Satan at the end of the thousand years is to detect the hidden evil. The display of power when Christ comes easily compels a certain obedience. "As soon as they hear of Me, they shall obey Me," says the prophet, personating Messiah; "the strangers shall lie unto Me" (Ps. xviii. 44, *marg.*). And then—"The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their close places." Again, in the sixty-sixth psalm it is said, "Through the greatness of Thy power shall Thine enemies submit themselves unto Thee." Here the same word, "lie," is used; they are "enemies" still. Now when a thousand years of blessing have not sufficed to change this stubborn enmity, Satan is allowed to claim his own, and the multitudes who follow him show speedily the true condition of things: "the number of whom is as the sand of the sea."

Indeed the character of the millennium has been wrongly estimated by many through confounding Christianity with that which replaces it upon the earth. But in fact, we must go for our pictures of it, not to the New Testament, but to the Old. The New Testament simply supplements the prophecies of the Old with the few verses in Rev. xx.-xxii, and these add little but the reign of the heavenly saints and the account of the apostasy at the close. The Old-Testament prophets give us pictures which, because they accord little with our thoughts of what should be, have been "spiritualized," as the phrase is, until they have lost all distinct meaning; while others have used them to lower the final por-

tion of Christians to Jewish—or rather Israelitish—promises, as the apostle of the Gentiles declares them to be (Rom. ix. 4).

No doubt the Gentiles too are blessed, but by no means, as now, on the same footing with converted Israel. Every where in the Old-Testament prophets the old distinction is maintained. Nay, it is plainly said, that while on account of their rejection of Christ “therefore He will give them up, until she which travaileth hath brought forth”—until the nation be born as in a day; “*then* the remnant of His (Messiah’s) brethren shall return unto the children of Israel:”—they shall be Israelites once more (Mic. v. 3).

And in the millennial earth Israel will have chief place. Purified in the fiery trial to which they have been exposed, and gathered out of their long dispersion, Judah and Ephraim in their twelve tribes united again together, they will be the first example of a nation *all* saved and holy: “*all* Israel shall be saved” (Rom. xi. 26). According to the terms of the new covenant, to be made with Israel and Judah in the time of which we are speaking (Heb. viii. 8; Jer. xxxi. 31, etc.), “they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them; for I will be merciful unto their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.”

Thus sanctified, the glory of God, driven away from them by their sins, will return to Israel: “the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And

many peoples shall go and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways; and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isa. ii. 2, 3.)

This is already very different from Christianity: When there are added to it the coming up of all nations yearly to Jerusalem to keep the feast of tabernacles, as spoken of by Zechariah (xiv.), and the restoration of the temple and its services, even to the reinstitution of the animal sacrifices as given by Ezekiel (xl.-xlvi.), the incredulity of many is aroused by such a reversion to the types and shadows of the old economy. Yet the declaration of Zechariah is as plain as can be, while the long detail of Ezekiel, and the blessing of the land, with the final settlement of the people in it which follow in Ezekiel, will neither admit of spiritualization nor of setting aside. Christianity it is not, surely; but Christianity we have seen to be a break in the earth's ages of probation. Of these the millennial age is really the last—a dispensation of sight rather than of faith, and for that very reason less spiritual than that addressed to faith. Men reason as to the heathen now, and even amid the blaze of full light require more evidence, and would throw on God the blame of not giving it. In the millennium, the earth is filled with the knowledge of His glory. The new Jerusalem descends from heaven; the Lord and His saints reign openly; the power of evil is repressed; the doom of disobedience is before the eyes of men (Isa. lxvi. 24) in that which the New Testament takes up as the type of hell itself:—yet with all this, men's hearts can resist all. Satan

goes out once more to deceive the nations, and gathers them together to battle, *the number of whom is as the sand of the sea*. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them."

And now the end is at last reached. Satan is cast into the lake of fire; there is a great white throne, and One who sits on it, from before whose face the earth and the heavens flee away; the judgment of the wicked dead takes place, raised up in the resurrection of judgment. They are judged every one according to their works, and death and hades cast into the lake of fire. The truth comes out that for man in every age there is no salvation save in the sovereign grace of God. "Whosoever was not found *written in the book of life* was cast into the lake of fire."

ETERNITY.

As soon as ever we are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, eternity is for us entered upon. God's rest has not come, nor therefore the eternal condition of things around us; but we are forever with the Lord, enjoying the fruit of His blessed work for us. The fruit of our work follows, and is connected in Scripture, not with our being caught up, but with the Lord's appearing—the day of *manifestation*.

As taken up, whether raised or changed, we are already in the likeness of Christ's glorious body. Redemption is complete in body, soul, and spirit; no spot of sin, no wrinkle of infirmity, remains for any. We have taken an everlasting farewell of both. Who can imagine the blessedness! escaped forever

from all subjection to vanity, from the whole body of sin and all connected with it; nothing left but the memory of it to awaken the endless praise, fuller than angels'.

Then the Lord's presence, seeing Him as He is! All inability removed, with all the unlikeness to Him. Knowledge and enjoyment perfected in open vision. Divine love in all-revealing light.

With this, the Father's house, for so the Lord Himself connects these: "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." To know Christ here is to know the Father; to come to Him, to come to the Father: to be with Him face to face cannot be separated from the Father's presence, nor this from the joy of the Father's house. With Him in the children's place, owned as His in heaven now, children brought home.

The book of Revelation, which gives the throne of God rather than the Father's house, adds to these things two others as found in the twenty-four elders round about the throne: they are "kings and priests"—a royal priesthood,—sharers with Him who is to come forth as King and Priest.

These things belong to all the heavenly company of redeemed ones. But Scripture distinguishes two classes of these—"the assembly of the first-born ones, whose names are written in heaven" and "the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. xii. 23). That the latter class are Old-Testament saints is plain, from their being spoken of as all departed ones, while the Church waits on earth till called up

by her Lord's voice. On the other hand, "the first-born ones" are not such in time, but in privilege. And such is the Church, Christ's body. It may be, as others have thought, that the number of the crowned elders (24) indicates the union of these two companies (2×12) in the royal priesthood of Revelation iv.

Just when Babylon the false church is judged, and when the Lord is nearly ready to come forth, we hear that the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready; and then, too, it is granted her to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the *righteousnesses* of the saints. It is not now the "*best robe*" as in the parable, which is the value of Christ Himself before God; this is expressed by another word; but, according to the character of Revelation, it is the practical obedience of the saints which is now granted to them to be arrayed in. And this tells, surely, of the judgment-seat of Christ passed, and the reward of works measured out. Only grace, after all, can do this, and *such* garments need to be washed in the blood of Christ to be made white.* This shows the immense difference between them and Christ as our righteousness, which it would be blasphemy to speak of needing washing.

The marriage of the Lamb is now come, therefore, and soon after, the Lord appears with His saints, who, changing their attitude with His, come out as His "armies" to the judgment of the earth. The same "fine linen, clean and white," covers them still. Judgment is executed, as we have seen. The

*It is well known that chap. xxii. 14 should read, "Blessed are they who have washed their robes, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." See also chap. vii. 14, and comp. chap. vi. 11 and xii. 11.

saints reign with Christ, the martyrs under the beast being added to them, and so the first resurrection is complete.*

In the final judgment, the Lord alone is on the throne; while after it, the new Jerusalem, the bride of the Lamb, descends from heaven, to be the "tabernacle of God with men." The picture of the bride which closes the prophecy of the book is doubtless millennial, though the city itself be eternal.

The earth comes out of her baptism of fire (2 Pet. iii. 7-13) a "new earth;" for surely it is not regenerated as in the millennium to be afterward set aside. The notice that "there was no more sea" agrees with this. The very type of instability and barrenness is removed. God is with men; although among these Israel retains a distinct place (Isa. lxvi. 22). The kingdom of the Son of Man is over; its object is achieved. Having brought all things back to God, and all enemies subsided forever, Christ delivers up the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all. This is God's rest, the seal of eternity put upon all—a rest never to be disturbed again.

* Note that xx. 4, 5, first sentence, gives the vision; the rest is interpretation; and this latter is not symbolic, or it would not be interpretation. It shows indeed how clear the vision itself is, that it *does* represent a real resurrection, and that the "thousand years" is literally this.

KEY-NOTES TO THE BIBLE BOOKS.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.—*Concluded.*

III.

THE DEATH OUT OF WHICH IS LIFE. (Chap. xviii.—xxi.)

WE come now, as in the other gospels, to the Lord's offering of Himself, and its results, in which we find, I believe, four sections: (1) chap. xviii.—xix. 16, man's part in the death of Christ; (2) chap. xix. 17–42, the death itself; (3) chap. xx, relationships in the new life; (4) chap. xxi, a supplementary chapter, in which we have the *power* of the new life shown.

(1) Chap. xviii.—xix. 16. *Man's part in the death of Christ.* Here we find, first of all, the voluntariness of His offering. Those sent to take Him fall prostrate before the One they seek; yet He gives Himself up into their hands, expressly providing as He does so for the safety of His disciples: "If therefore ye seek Me, let these go their way."

The scene in the high-priest's palace follows, with Peter's fall. There is little detail, for the Jewish question is not that of the gospel. The Lord simply refers them for His doctrine to those that had heard Him.

Before Pilate, the question of His being King of the Jews is answered by His showing His kingdom not to be of this world, but established by the truth, which as such has authority where the heart is true. Pilate knows nothing of this, but would fain rid himself of responsibility by releasing Him, as it was customary to do one at the passover, but the people chose Barabbas. When he hears that Jesus claims to be the Son of God, Pilate is still more

afraid; but the fear of Cæsar prevails over the fear of God, and he delivers Him up to the people's will.

(2) Chap. xix. 17-42. *The death of the Lord.* The sufferings of the Lord are not detailed, nor is there any darkness over the cross, nor cry of desertion, nor rending of the vail. Only here is there distinct mention of His seamless robe. He provides tenderly for His mother; finds one scripture unfulfilled and fulfills it, then declares all finished, and gives up His spirit to the Father. The record of His body preserved from dishonor follows, while the soldier's spear brings forth the testimony of expiation and purification, both now provided through His death: the Spirit in John bears witness ("God hath given us eternal life"); and He is buried in the rich man's grave.

(3) Chap. xx. *Relationships in the new life.* In resurrection, Mary Magdalene—rather than the eleven or any of them—is made the messenger of the new gospel of the Father's name declared to "brethren." Christ is ascending to the Father. On the same day He comes into the midst of those gathered within closed doors for fear of the world, and they see the wounds which have made their peace; and from Him as last Adam of a new creation they receive their place as in the new life, and title to receive the Holy Ghost. Then, afresh dowered with peace—before, of conscience; now, of heart?—they are sent out by the risen Lord to administer the blessings of His kingdom upon earth.

Thomas, not among them when He first appears, becomes in his unbelief the type of those to be gathered in a later day. He sees and believes; but

the higher blessing is of those who, having not seen, have yet believed.

(4) Chap. xxi. *The power of the new life* is in God, realized therefore by faith—dependence upon Him. Peter has in this chapter the self-confidence searched out, the cause of his fall; but in grace which perfectly restores, and enables him in natural weakness to accomplish the desire to glorify his Master which after all he had. Conscious of nothingness, he can strengthen his brethren in the ministry of Christ, better known than before, to the sheep and lambs of His flock. Through death, or without seeing it, the business of each disciple for himself to follow Him.

EXTRACT FROM "IMMANUEL."

BY OCTAVIUS WINSLOW.

"For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, 'My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.)

OH, let Jesus be exalted, and His name magnified, though it be upon the wreck and ruin of our own might, importance, and fame! and truly, if He is ever exalted and glorified in us, it will be in our nothingness, weakness, and poverty. He will empty us from vessel to vessel if He ever intends to fill us with His power and grace, and use us as instruments in vindicating His honor, in advancing His kingdom, and in

defending valiantly and successfully His truth upon the earth. Accept, then, all your self-acquaintance however humbling, all the discipline of trial and sorrow however painful, all your frustrated purposes and deranged plans and disappointed hopes however they may seem to make against you, as the teaching of God designed but to arm you with a power infinitely above and beyond your own; thus rendering you, a worm of the dust, equal to the accomplishment of any work, and invincible to the assaults of any foe.

"As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

