

HELP AND FOOD

FOR THE

Household of Faith.

Vol. VIII.

NEW YORK:
LOIZEAUX BROTHERS, 63 FOURTH AVENUE.
1890.

ERRATUM.

Page 262, 12th line, " knows," read "known."

CONTENTS.

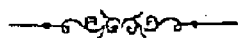
	<i>Page.</i>
Abigail, the Wife of Nabal, the Carmelite.....	240, 253
A Glance at Prophecy.....	174
An Outline of Second Timothy.....	125
Answers to Correspondents.....	139, 167, 195, 280, 332
A Record of Grace.....	208
Christian Devotedness.....	261
Christian Science.....	154
Christ's Work as Priest on Earth.....	201
Christ the King, being Lessons from the Gospel of Matthew.—	
1. With genealogy and Without	234
Colossians ii.	22
Conflict with Satan, and the Panoply of God.—	
1. The Conflict.....	29
2. The Panoply	68
CURRENT EVENTS:—	
Dr. Waldenström, and Non-Vicarious Atonement.—	
I.....	76, 105
II.....	130, 157, 188
Declension, and its Course.....	17
Evidences, and their Scripture Use.....	180
Extract from "An Essay on Faith," by James Erskine.....	219
Extract from William Reid.....	278
Fragments.....	56, 156, 224
God's Love, Gratuitous and Motive.....	320
Glories.....	331
His Sent Ones.....	73
"In this we Groan.".....	64
Is Propitiation Godward?.....	129
Meditations on the Psalms.—Psalin cl.....	221

On the Humanity of Christ.....	120
Our Centre, our Mission, and our Discipline.....	267
Partial Recovery.....	197
POETRY:—	
A Pilgrim Song.....	306
He Leadeth Me	187
Jesu's Love for Me.....	75
The Christian's Temptation.....	294
The Resurrection	178
The Well on the Way.....	330
Power in the Midst of Evil.....	304
"Righteousness, Faith.".....	9
Seth in Place of Abel: the Lesson of the Ages as to Holiness.....	1, 35
"Seventh-Day Adventists"—What are They?.....	247
The Day of John's Third Epistle.....	225, 276
"The Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of Man."..	27
The Heart Longing after the Person of Christ.....	67
The Law of Vows.....	296
The Man of God. Lecture I.....	98
Lecture II.....	113
Lecture III.....	141
The Resurrection.....	178
The Two Natures, and What they Imply.....	40
The Valley of Baca.....	211
"Things that Shall be:" an Exposition of Rev. iv.—xxii.—	
<i>Part II.—The Trumpets.</i> —The First Four Trumpets.	57, 85
The First Woe.....	169
The Sixth Trumpet.....	272
The Little Open Book.....	281
The Witnesses.....	309
The Kingdom.....	318
"Thy Good Things".....	288
What has the Blood of Christ done for us?.....	308

Help and Good

FOR THE

HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.



SETH IN PLACE OF ABEL:

THE LESSON OF THE AGES AS TO HOLINESS.

Genesis iv.

FROM the beginning of the world this history comes to us, a sample and a parable of its whole history since. It is a chapter, with all the gloom of it, of priceless value. No where does Scripture in its mere chronicle-character show itself more prophetic. No where do we see more plainly, as taught of Him who only can show it to us, the end from the beginning. No where is it more apparent that with Him what seems defeat is victory,—that He is “King of the ages,” and all things perforce serve Him. Thus it reverses the prophet’s experience for us: that which is bitter in the mouth, as we first taste it, is sweet in the belly, as it is well digested. Blessed be God that He is God!

The history is a type,—not merely a single, but a double one. It is fulfilled in the world at large. It is fulfilled in the lesser world of our own bosoms. The one fulfillment underlies the other. The lesson is one: the testimony is double. Each confirms the other; and for this reason we shall do well to look at both.

The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head. Faith says this, and it says true: God has pledged His

word for it. But because it is still *faith* that says it, this is even yet among the things unseen. What is seen is the other side of the prophecy,—the heel of the woman's seed bruised by the serpent. The cross is more than the central fact of history; it is, as to its human side, but the epitome of it,—its meaning concentrated and emphasized in one tremendous deed. The conflict between good and evil has been long protracted, and its issue, so far as the eye can take note of it, has been by no means victory for the good. Nor, so long as "man's day" lasts, does Scripture give any expectation of it. The coming of the Prince of Peace alone can bring peace. Until then, His own words remain applicable, "I came not to send peace, but a sword." Thus, when He asks, and the nations are given Him for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession, His power must act in putting down the opposition: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Ps. ii. 8, 9). And this power His people too shall share with Him. (Rev. ii. 26, 27.)

Till then, their portion is with Him the cross: "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. viii. 17.)

God's *present* triumph over evil is thus in using it as the necessary discipline of His people, and in making it work out, spite of itself, His work: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee; the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain" (Ps. lxxvi. 10). Thus we may look evil in the face and fear not,—nay, rejoice to see in it all, as in the cross itself, God's mastery over it. What will not turn to praise, He suffers not to be. What is, is to glorify Him.

Abel is in this history a type of Him whose blood "speaks better things." In its efficacy Godward, it is seen in that sacrifice by which God declares him righteous,

"testifying of his gifts" (Heb. xi. 4). In its human side, it is seen in his own death at his brother's hand, as Christ received His at the hands of Israel, His kindred after the flesh. Cain is indeed the perfect type and pattern of those Pharisees who were ever His bitter antagonists: religious after his fashion, and by his very religion proving himself far from God,—a worshiper, and his brother's murderer. And this "way of Cain" the Jews have walked in to this day, like him, outcast from God, fugitives and vagabonds upon the earth, with the mark upon them which still manifests them as preserved of God, spite of their sin and its penalty. How strikingly in these national judgments is the handwriting of God "writ large" for man to read! and how inexcusable if he does not read it!

The world has got rid of Christ, and to-day it rejects Him still. Not Israel only; but in Christendom His rejection is as plain, and more terrible. They may keep His birthday, and build a pile over His sepulchre, and so did Israel, on the Lord's day, build the sepulchres of the prophets whom their fathers slew, and were witnesses to themselves, as He assures them, that they were the children of those who slew the prophets.

Meanwhile the progress is undoubted: the "many inventions" abound by which man's nakedness is successfully covered, and the cities of the land of Nod show by their adornment that the wanderers there mean to stay. Lamech, the "strong man," a title in frequent use to-day, is the common father of all these men of genius, and he, with the inspiration of a poet, prophesies, taking for his text Cain's security, to argue for himself greater security than Cain's. How unmistakable a picture of our civilized world to-day!

But then God comes in again, and Seth is appointed in the place of Abel whom Cain slew. And in the genealogy that follows, Cain and his descendants have no place.

Enosh is born—"frail man"—the antipodes of the strong one, Lamech; but then men begin to call on the name of the Lord. The weakness of man, demonstrated and confessed, exalts God who is now so necessary to him; and man also finds his place of blessing in dependence, where it ever is.

This goes beyond present history, but prophecy is clear as to its fulfillment. It speaks of a day of manifestation, a day of the Lord, which shall be upon all the pride of man, bringing down all that is high, in order to exalt the lowly. "And then," saith God, "will I turn to the peoples a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent . . . I will also leave in the midst of them (Israel) an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." But when is this? and when shall a Seth mighty to accomplish this replace in the history of the earth the murdered Abel? Only Christ glorified can replace Christ crucified; and then it is that the humble Enosh shall displace the haughty Lamech. So the prophet goes to declare,—“Sing, O daughter of Zion! shout, O Israel! be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! The Lord hath taken away thy judgment; He hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not see evil any more.” (Zeph. iii.)

Here, assuredly, is the true Seth, and the day to which the history in its typical character points us on. This is what alone fulfills for the earth the promise of woman's Seed in its reality. The serpent's head is now bruised.

All this, in its underlying principles, witnesses plainly to that lesson which we now go on to learn from it in its individual application. It is indeed the lesson of the ages; a lesson beginning before the ages, and the wisdom gained by which shall last eternally.

In the individual application, the same struggle between

good and evil is revealed as taking place in the world within us as we have seen to take place in the world without us. "That which is first is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual." Cain, therefore, is the first-born, and not Abel. The names too are significant. "Cain" is "acquisition," "possession," and he lays hold of the earth to retain it. "Abel" is "vapor," "vanity," significant to us at least in connection with the brevity of his life. Personally righteous, and though dead yet speaking, he seems to accomplish nothing, and leaves the evil in triumphant power. It is just the experience of the seventh of Romans—a hopeless incapacity for good in one who wills what is good: "the good that I would I do not; the evil that I would not, that I do."

Nor only so: he uses the strong word "death," as descriptive of his condition. Identifying himself with the good within, with that which desires and seeks this, he describes his state thus: "Sin revived, and I *died*. And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto *death*. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Here is the interpretation of what is most perplexing in the type before us. We naturally ask, "How can that die in us which is of God and good? and how can the defeat of the desire for good be a lesson of holiness?" Yet to how many traveling in this path would it be a ray from heaven indeed, could they believe it! Let us, then, seek earnestly to apprehend this strange experience, and see if in it God is not leading the blind by a way they know not to the very haven where they would be.

Before man was created, sin had been in heaven. The conflict between good and evil did not begin on earth. Strange enough, and terrible to realize, that beings created upright, in a scene where all bore witness to the goodness and love of God, could without temptation fall

from purity, and become all that is expressed for us in the word "*devils*"! "How could it be?" we ask. Scripture may not afford us all the light we would desire upon such a question, but some light it assuredly does give, and that which is most needful for us. It assures us that the "condemnation of the devil" was for *pride* (1 Tim. iii. 6): "not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil." The "lifting up" of the creature is its fall. Forgetting its absolute dependence is the sure and speedy way to ruin. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

The process is given us in the twenty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel, in which we have, as it would seem, under the vail of the "king of Tyre," Satan himself before us. "Prince of this world," the Lord calls him; and in Revelation he is pictured as the "dragon," with the seven heads and ten horns of the empire, the power of which he wields. Thus the king of Tyre might well represent him in Ezekiel. And much of what is said seems in no way else really explicable.

"Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, 'Thus saith the Lord God, Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering . . . thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day thou wast created until iniquity was found in thee. Thy heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.'"

We are indeed, in a world like this, familiar enough with such a process. The startling thing is, to find it as the account of sin in its beginning in a creature of whom God could speak in such a way. It is an intelligible account, however, of how when there was yet no evil, the contemplation and consciousness of what was good could

become evil, the germ of all that has developed since. Here is the germ. Let us mark and lay it to heart, for we shall find here what will explain the mystery of God's ways with man ever since. A wonder of wonders it is that inasmuch as the consciousness of good has been to the creature the cause of evil, God will now in His sovereign wisdom make the *consciousness of evil* the cause of good! Simple this is too; but how great in its simplicity. The thought of it at once brings conviction into the soul, that so it is, and so it must be. And how important that we should realize it. Already upon this experience of the seventh of Romans a bright ray of light has fallen.

The next thing after the fall of the angels, so far as our knowledge reaches, comes the creation of man. And how clearly now we see that if Satan had fallen through pride, God would hide pride from this new creature of His. A spiritual being he must be, and in the image of God thus, His offspring. Only so could he respond aright unto God that made him. Only thus in any proper way could He be his God. Yet He does not now make another angel. He does not merely repeat Himself. Angels have fallen, and through pride. God takes up the dust of the ground, and wraps in it—one may almost say, *hides*—the spirit of man. All that materialism builds itself upon is just the evidence of this. Though the breath of the Almighty is breathed into him, he is yet a "living soul;" and the beast too is a living soul. He acquires his wisdom by the organs of sense; his mind grows with his body: there is ordained to him a long helpless infancy, beyond even the beasts. He needs food, and is constantly reminded of his necessity. He needs help, and it is not good for him to be alone. No independence can be permitted him; and yet every want is met in so tender a way,—every avenue of sense is so made to him an occasion of delight, that every where he

is assured of One who cares for him,—to whom he is constant debtor. As independence to him would be plain ruin, so dependence is endeared to him in every possible way.

Evil is yet barred out from him: he knows as yet nothing of it. Though it exists, God does not suffer it to show itself as evil till he invites it in. The question by which the woman falls is as innocent as she is, and from a beast,—what is below her, not above. The prohibition of the tree, which the devil uses, is good also as a warning of their dependence, and the penalty as guarding the prohibition. Who would lose all this blessing to gain none could say what? could there be indeed a gain?

Yet man falls, as we well know, and with the lust of the flesh and of the eyes, the pride of life gains possession of him. On the other hand, with sin, death enters into the world,—the great leveler of the pride of man. His eyes open upon his nakedness. Conscience becomes his accuser. In the sweat of his brow he must eat his bread, gathering it from the midst of the thorns and thistles, which are the sign of the curse. And when a man comes into the world, it must be amid travail and sorrow.

Thus his history begins, and for four thousand years afterward, until the coming of the Deliverer, there is but one long sorrow—one tale of sin and misery.

The “due time” for Christ to die is when, after all this, man is still without strength and ungodly. (Rom. v. 6.) It is his trial-time, the period of his education under the school-master, and the one lesson to be learned is of spiritual nothingness. His sin is kept ever before him. “None righteous,—no, not one;” “none that doeth good,—no, not one;” and this applied to all,—Jew and Gentile, saint and sinner alike. In the book of Job, the best man upon earth,—a saint, surely,—is taken up to bear witness of this. His efforts to wash himself white are

impressively told, and how God plunges him in the ditch so that his own clothes abhor him. It is a saint who learns the lesson : so it is a lesson for saints. And all the way through the centuries the burden is repeated, “There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not” (Eccles. vii. 20). “Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?” (Prov. xx. 9.)

All the way through those ages, it is with the evidences of man’s sin that God fights sin. To abase him, this is to exalt him. To wean him from himself, this is to make God his joy, his strength, his riches. “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” God educates him in the knowledge of sin. His history begins as it ends, and ends as it begins—with failure. It seems the celebration of the triumph of Cain ; the strong men are of his line : that which is of God takes no root in the earth ; a Nebuchadnezzar is king of kings ; a little remnant return from the captivity in Babylon, only to exhibit their poverty, and to fail as thoroughly as before. There is no hope but in Another : when we are yet without strength, Christ dies for the ungodly.

(To be continued.)

“RIGHTEOUSNESS, FAITH.”

(2 Tim. ii. 22.)

THE order of Scripture is every where most important, and no where more so than in its practical exhortations. We can only read the Word of God aright as we have faith in its absolute perfection, and therefore study it in its connection as well as in its separate sentences. It is not a mosaic of beautiful but unconnected utterances,—even the book of Proverbs is not that, and Scripture in general is not a book of Proverbs either. Nor is it like a creed, or a text-book of theology, or a code of laws, or a digest of practical rules. It differs

from all these as a field of living plants from the botanist's herbarium. The latter may have its uses, but it is dry and artificial evidently. The truth as given in Scripture is instinct with life, and clothed with the inimitable freshness and beauty which belong to it. To tear it from its connection is to deprive it of its vitality.

The connection is always *practical*: it is the highway by which you must travel if you would reach the point to which it leads you; you can *view* it, no doubt, from other points, but you cannot *reach* it,—and that is what is to be your constant aim.

So, then, with the passage before us. To "follow faith," we must "follow righteousness," and it is the relation of these to one another that I would dwell on a little now.

It is, of course, in the adoption of it for ourselves, and not in the exaction of it from others, that we are called to "follow righteousness." This should be plain; and yet it may not be needless to remind ourselves of it. There are those who imagine what the apostle exhorts the Corinthians to—"Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?"—to be really inconsistent with the following of righteousness. They think that we are called to maintain righteousness upon the earth, and that we are therefore morally bound to make war upon unrighteousness; whereas it is grace of which we are the witnesses, as having received grace. Yet this also may be [not carried too far,—that is impossible, but] misunderstood and abused therefore.

Suppose I hid a thief from the officers that were in pursuit of him, or refused to give him up into their hands, this would not be grace, but a perversion of it. It would be unrighteousness indeed on my own part, for I should be interfering with that which God has established for the restraint of evil. Nor have I liberty to show grace, nor would this be grace, where another's rights are con-

cerned and not my own. In my own case alone can I show it or talk of it aright.

But in my own case I *am* to be the witness of it, as the Lord's words as to the non-resistance of evil so emphatically enjoin: words indeed so little akin to the spirit of the world in which we are, that if we drink into this at all, we shall not be able to understand them. The maintenance of rights has all the logic of common sense in its support, and except we are ready to maintain them, we shall be counted cravens, and recreants to the truth. The Lord, indeed, has said, "If My kingdom were of this world, then should My servants fight" (Jno. xviii. 36), and the mass have decided that His kingdom *is* of this world.

But of this it is not my purpose now to speak. I only notice it, that none may infer a contradiction between following righteousness and showing grace. Guarding this point, then, it is of the utmost importance to see that in our personal conduct, in what we do, and in what we go with, righteousness is the very first necessity. No question can be rightly allowed to precede it or to interfere with it. What is not righteousness is not of God, and to sanction it as of Him in any conceivable case is nothing else than blasphemy against His name and nature. It involves, in fact, that "Let us do evil that good may come," of which the apostle says, as to those who say it, "their condemnation is just" (Rom. iii. 8).

"Righteousness" defines, then, for the Christian a circle beyond which he cannot go—a boundary-line he dare not transgress. He must therefore know precisely the limit, and in no case move until he is sure that he is within the limit. Here is need for continual exercise, for the line is not always perceptible at first sight, and to be unexercised is the sure way to transgress it. Nay, more: he who is careless is already in spirit a transgressor.

God has denounced an emphatic "woe unto them that

call evil good and good evil, that put darkness for light and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!" (Isa. v. 20.) There must be no blurring of the moral boundary-lines. And here, therefore, is the first question always for us. We may not put "faith" before "righteousness." We may not argue, "This is of God, and therefore it is good." We must argue the other way,—“This is good, and therefore it is of God.” “God is light,” and “light is that which doth make manifest” (Eph. v. 13). Thus, only as walking in the light, and with our eye single to take it in, can we walk without stumbling.

But, alas! how common a thing it is to allow ourselves in that of which the character is all uncertain to us! How many think it enough to stop where they are convicted of evil, rather than require to see first before they move that what they do is good! Such souls are not in the presence of God, and cannot therefore attain to any clear vision. It is already “evil” to walk in the darkness, and the rule is first “Cease to do evil,” and then “Learn to do well.”

We have further to consider, before we can pass on from this, that righteousness always has respect also to our position and relationships: it is to act in consistency with these. Thus, to show grace is for a Christian only righteousness. “Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?” The manifestation of grace is not something over and above what is required of us,—something which (because it is *grace*,) we can refuse without unrighteousness. Righteousness embraces the whole sphere of conduct, for “to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (Jas. iv. 17). How solemn, how penetrating, are such words as these! There is no “work of supererogation,” as the papists say. Pur-

chased with the precious blood of Christ, we are His in all things, His absolutely. The "consecration" of ourselves to God, of which so many are speaking now, is nothing else than that sanctification by the blood of Christ supposes, of which the epistle to the Hebrews speaks. *His we are* by that blood shed for us, and to take our own way in any thing is simply to deny in that respect His title. Yet how many indeed think it the liberty of grace to be free to please themselves in some particulars!—as if it were "liberty" to mire ourselves in the ditch instead of walking on the well-made road, or to serve a weak and foolish tyrant rather than the wisest, noblest, *meekest*, of masters.

"Consecrated" we are, every one of us: "called saints,"—that is, saints by calling; sanctified in Christ Jesus. Only let us *walk* as saints.

"Righteousness," then, is the first thing to follow; but it is not all,—it is only the first thing. This secured, we are next to follow "faith."

And this contracts materially the road we travel. It is in this that we first perceive that it is indeed a "narrow way." So narrow, indeed, that, in whatever situation we may be, there is but one spot upon which we can rightly put our foot next,—one, and one only. There is *no choice*, in that sense, permitted us.

"Faith" supposes more than a mere rule of conduct, however perfect. *Faith* is in a *person*; not a rule (though there may be a rule), but a *ruler*. "I commend you to the word of His grace," says the apostle to the Ephesians (Acts xx. 32). Is that all? No, but "to *God* and the word of His grace." There is a living God whose eye is upon us, whose heart goes with us, whose hand holds us. Ah, if there were not such, we should indeed be orphans! As with Israel in the wilderness, where there was "no way," the way was marked out for

them by the pillar of cloud and fire, which showed the presence of Jehovah with them,—this was but the veiled presence of One who for faith is found without a veil by the Christian now. These things happened unto them for types (1 Cor. x. 11), and are written for our admonition. The glorious presence that goes with us is the Antitype, and faith is more to us than was the sight of the eyes to them.

Faith, then, for us puts under a living Leader, from whose love we cannot for a moment withdraw ourselves. His eye ever upon us, His heart ever occupied with us, there cannot be a step that we can take in which He is uninterested or has not a mind for us. Perfect wisdom has employed itself about the path we tread, and it is for us to consult that unerring wisdom, and to govern ourselves according to the will of Him who is both Master and Lord. The path is indeed narrow, but who could wish it wider—some room for our own wills to act, some room in which our ignorance may display itself, and in which our folly and frailty may work disaster for us? How blessed to be saved from this! How great the grace that will thus patiently instruct us! "He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learner." (Isa. l. 4—*Heb.*) This is the language prophetically ascribed to our blessed Lord Himself. Himself the perfect example of faith, He has gone before us in this path in which we follow Him,—a path thus doubly endeared to us, by its own intrinsic blessedness and by our fellowship with Him in it.

It is in following "faith" that we find our true individuality before God, for faith is of necessity individual. How earnestly the apostle insists upon this! To induce another to do so innocent a thing as to eat meats, to the Christian perfectly clean, but where he could not eat it, faith, was in his mind to "*destroy*" him: "Destroy no

him with thy meat for whom Christ died” (Rom. xiv. 15). “For meat destroy not the work of God. . . . He that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (*viv.* 20, 23).

Thus the doing of what in itself was no evil—of what in another might be an act of Christian liberty—yet without faith would be only sin, and an act of real self-destruction. That the mercy of God might avert this in any particular case alters nothing as to the essential character or inherent tendency of the thing in itself, and this is what the Spirit of God by the apostle would press upon us. How often in a presumptuous way we bring in God's care for His own, and His eternal purposes of love toward them, to blind ourselves as to the character of our own! But if I put poison upon a man's plate, I am responsible to the full extent of all that would naturally be the result of it. I should be a murderer, though he were never murdered. Oh that the Word of God may have thus its edge for us! “Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died”!

What a view of our responsibilities does this open up to us! and what a sense should it give us of the necessity of faith in every step that we take in our path down here! “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” If, then, as is most certain, God our Father has so deep concern for us as to make our every step a matter of importance and interest to Him,—if He has His own mind for us in all things, His way for us to walk in,—then what a necessity there is for us to seek and learn that mind! and what disaster must result from inattention as to it! Is not here the secret of many otherwise inexplicable failures where the end sought seems right enough, and the way to the end also to be irreproachable? Is it not the secret that it was but poor halting reason that we followed,—that we mistook the road because the torch-light that we walked

by did not throw its light far enough for guidance, and we waited not for heaven's illumination? "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world; but if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him." (Jno. xi. 9, 10.)

Will any call it legality, or tedious strictness, to have to walk in the full light of the day alone,—to have need ever of a Father's counsel,—to be made to seek ever a wisdom higher than one's own, and to be subject to a will that rules all things, and that carries with it unfailing power and victory? How strange that we should count as liberty the license to go astray—to bring down upon ourselves sorrow and suffering, and regret that cannot recall the past, or undo what is once done, or avail to turn away the inevitable consequences!

We do, indeed, perhaps recognize in matters of greater importance the need of knowing and following the divine will. But life is made up mainly of smaller matters. From how much, then, of our lives we must banish God! and as we look not for His will to declare itself, so, naturally enough, we have no eyes to see it when it does most plainly do so. The joy and sweetness, the ineffable delight of a walk with God, are concentrated upon a few days of our life's course, in which we rather *met* than "walked with" Him. And then what mistakes we make as to what *is* of importance! how little we realize, often, what are the controlling points of our own history! we enter all unconsciously upon what we should look back upon with the keenest emotion. Only, then, in cleaving closely to our Guide and Guardian can we be a moment safe. In this sense, truly "happy is the man that feareth always."

Here, too, we have need to remember that "there is a way that seemeth right to a man, and the end thereof are

the ways of death" (Prov. xiv. 12). Alas! how often are we seduced by the right *seeming* of a way, which has only against it that which is its sufficient condemnation—that it is our "own way"! How many a man is busy with things in themselves most excellent, and yet wholly out of his place and astray! Man may do nothing but praise him, and his own conscience also approve him, and yet he may be thus astray. The light is not in us: in the light of God alone we see light.

I leave this now with the one remark that nothing, therefore, must be allowed to interfere with this maintenance of our individuality before God. All that would conflict with it condemns itself as evil by the very fact. The Lord has bought us for Himself. He is "both Master (or Teacher) and Lord." We may help each other in ascertaining His will, but no more. "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." (Matt. xxiii. 8.)

DECLENSION, AND ITS COURSE.

1 CORINTHIANS X.

IN a day of widespread declension such as this, it may be useful to trace the steps by which a low point is reached, as the discovery of our real state and its exposure by the Word is one of the means God uses in order to extricate from it.

No one sets out on a downward path with the idea of its being that, though God may allow many warnings to come, and even the discipline of His hand to be felt, to awaken from its lethargy the soul that is indifferent. Neither can any one who is pursuing that way tell how far he will go, though of course his own purpose is, to keep within certain bounds. But the power of the enemy is such that we have no ability to stand against him, unless

we are going on with God, in the strength He gives to those who are dependent on Him.

In 1 Cor. x. 1-13, we have the steps in the course of declension very fully pictured, and they present a striking contrast to the apostle's own way, as given at the end of the previous chapter. Some have difficulty in understanding Paul's words, because they have in some degree disconnected the life—eternal life—from the path in which those who have it should (and more or less *do*) walk. For some, alas! the deliverance from judgment, because of failure in responsibility as children of Adam, by the cross of Christ, it is to be feared, deliverance also from responsibility itself. But this is surely not God's way. Nay, He puts us by redemption upon higher ground than we had left, and with, as a consequence, higher responsibilities. If we are saved by grace,—“not of works, lest any man should boast,”—yet we are “created in Christ Jesus *unto good works*, which God hath afore prepared that we should walk in them,” and he who does not more or less walk in that path disproves his title to eternal life. It is still true that “without holiness, no man shall see the Lord,” and one part of Scripture is not in conflict with another, but all is in harmony. (Comp. also 2 Tim. ii. 19.)

The *outward* participation in the things of Christianity was no guarantee of attaining to the rest of God, and it is this that is insisted on in the first verses of chapter x. They all stood on new ground, and partook of what was God's provision for their need,—the bread from heaven and the water out of the rock,—yet with many of them God was not well pleased, and they fell in the wilderness—they did not reach Canaan. These things are expressly said to have “happened to them for examples (types), and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

The first step in the downward course is lust. If God

had been retained in their thoughts, they could not have doubted that He would give all that was needful. To desire something different from what God sees good to give shows that the heart has turned from Him, and lost its confidence in His love. To desire what is according to His will is not lust, and He has not limited us as to what is really for our good. "No *good* thing will He withhold from them which walk uprightly." The restless craving of desire is itself a witness that we have turned away from the only One who can satisfy. "He that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst."

What follows next is idolatry—a god that suits the low state: with Israel, of course, the golden calf is referred to. It may be only a limitation of the God of revelation—an ideal which suits the fancy or tastes, but which is therefore only a reflex picture of the one who forms it—of myself. Hence men deified human passion, which was a large part of heathenism. But it is only a human sentiment or idea, for God can only be known through revelation, and is far from being what man's imagination would paint Him: "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself." Unrestrainedness of ways is the result: "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." "Aaron had made them *naked*," should probably be, "let them loose." (See 2 Chron. xxviii. 19.) If God is turned from, how soon the heart is turned to folly! How like the prodigal going off into the far country to indulge himself in every evil! If piety toward God is neglected, then no amount of truth can keep us, or be a check upon the flesh.

Next, worldly alliances are formed. If we are down upon the world's level, it will soon be glad of our company, and, little by little, will take away all from us that savors of the fear of God. It is easy to acquire a liking

for what conscience at first refused as evil. If it is not judged, but tolerated, however spurious the plea, it will soon be accepted, and delighted in. And it is striking that from *Peor* Balaam was forced to speak the highest blessing of the people, when he took up his parable the third time; and it was there the people fell into alliances with the Midianites. God's best thoughts, and grace toward them, are seen in contrast with their own low state and acts. How seductive is the world! How few of us have grace to refuse it, especially in the shape in which it *pleases* us! For each of us it has a different aspect, exactly adapted to our tastes, and what would be an attractive bait to one would not be to another. But "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life are not of the Father, but of the world," and "whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

We then have Christ despised—the manna esteemed as light food. If I share the world's tastes, I shall not see much in the lowliness of Christ to attract me, and the connection between despising the manna and the fiery serpents is important. If He is rejected, the work of death goes on unhindered. It is sin become exceedingly sinful, manifestly by the rejection of Him who came to relieve from it, and death working unhindered in those that despised Him who came in lowly grace to seek and save the lost.

Finally, the dissatisfaction of heart is openly expressed in their murmuring, which brought the judgment of God; no doubt, a reference to Num. xiii., xiv.,—their refusal of the pleasant land, and in heart turning back to Egypt. It was this that brought the full sentence upon them of exclusion from the land which they had openly refused. How solemn the warning! How it should stimulate us to diligence and carefulness to watch against the coming in of what would, if its results were fully known, end in

entire separation from God ! And "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Self-confidence is a very different thing from confidence in God, though it may carry one on a good way without the discovery being made of what it really is. "We are kept by the power of God, *through faith*, unto salvation." But this is the confidence of one who, knowing his own weakness, has learned to trust Him, and every thing else must fail and break down. How beautiful the encouragement given to one beset with the very wilderness-trials which the enemy would use to discourage and drive from God into the meshes of his own net !

Do not think your trials are greater than others, true as it is that "the heart knoweth its own bitterness." "No temptation hath taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful." What a word—"But God is faithful"! Yea, think of Him who is still interested in your welfare, and who, though He may try your faith for your good, will never forsake. Only wait on Him, as One who is entitled to the confidence of your heart, and who will make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it, and will give you that for which to praise Him when His delivering hand is seen. To have these exercises is true gain, as to be without them would indeed be loss ; and those who seek to fortify themselves against the trials by their own inventions will find how much they have lost in the weakening of their faith and the consequent obscurity of all that is most precious. To leave the path of faith because of its exercises, to seek one that seems smoother, is to insure one's own downfall, and the missing of even that we aimed at.

R. T. G.

COLOSSIANS II.

THIS chapter furnishes us with some important warnings against man's interference with so wonderful a revelation as God has given. It is well for the heart to have firm hold of the grand truth that all is from God, and therefore not to be reasoned about, but received in faith; and the more unquestioning that faith, the more apprehension there will be of the mind of God. For this, we need, as in the prayer of the apostle in Eph. i., that God would give the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of the heart being enlightened, etc.

Here, too, Paul expresses the desire of his heart that there might be in the saints every where this knowledge of the mystery of God, which would so satisfy the soul that its search after other things would be stopped. The common participation in these things by saints would knit their hearts together in love. It was not alone for those at Colosse the apostle desired these things, but for as many as had not seen his face in the flesh. His ministry was in the whole Church, and what he desired for one he desired for all, longing after them in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

To him a special dispensation, or stewardship, of the mystery of God was committed; and this was not alone taken up as responsibility—"Woe is me if I preach not the gospel," but his heart's affections had been won to Christ as the One who had died and risen for him, and whose love, thus shown toward him when in sin, now constrained Paul to live to Christ.

In the mystery of God are hid *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. If this be apprehended, man's enticing words will not beguile one. He may offer what to the unwary and uninstructed may appear fascinating, but it is only at best a poor substitute, and is introduced by the enemy in order to divert from Christ.

A little word of commendation is graciously added,—words of encouragement in the path of right for those already in danger of being warped from it. This, in the wisdom of the Spirit, was the true way to gain access to their hearts; not by blaming them for their failings, but commending their order, and the steadfastness of their faith in Christ.

But there was not lacking the exhortation to *walk* in Christ and not to be satisfied with present attainment, but to be gaining firmer hold of the One that they had already known. “Rooted and built up” speaks of growth in every way,—a firmer hold of the One already known through grace; such as the picture given in Phil. iii.—Christ at the right hand of God as the source of all grace and blessing, and as an object for the heart in heaven, and Christ in His lowly path down here as the One whose mind we shall thus have.

Only as we get the object right will the path be right,—all else is but fleshly effort; and however sincere the soul in its desires, it must surely succumb to the pressure from outside and within; and what is produced becomes the piety of nature, sanctified flesh, and not the manifestation of the life of Jesus in our mortal bodies. How fruitless the attempt to be any way walking as approved unto God save as we take in, in faith, this blessed object—living by faith,—“the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me”! Self-judgment may clear the eye from the mists which have obscured it, and in this we need constantly to be exercised; but only as we see Him in the unclouded light of the glory of God can there be energy communicated to maintain our ground against the enemy, or go on to perfection.

But human philosophy—the mere working of mind and imagination about moral principles, which to the pride of the heart might seem an easier or, at least, a needful way

of settling many points, the faithful needed to be warned against. Tradition, law-keeping, and such-like things would approve themselves to the mind or conscience, but they were after the rudiments of the world; and when God had given up dealing with man upon that ground, they were but "beggarly elements."

By the law, God had taken up man in the flesh, and educated him in certain moral principles. If he heartily adopted these principles, and accepted them as a proper definition of human righteousness, they led to the discovery of his own incapacity to keep them, and guilty and without strength was in consequence man's proved condition by them. They became the ministry of death and condemnation. But this was not now God's way with man, still less were mere human traditions, however sanctified by the appearance of antiquity. Christ, a heavenly Christ, was now revealed—the revelation of God's perfect love to man in all his proved need, and the remedy for all the sin in which he was found, through His atoning death and sufferings, as well as now risen and glorified, was the measure of man's place and acceptance in the heavenlies. In view of Christ, how all man's traditions, and even the law, holy as it was, and God's purpose in giving it, sink into nothing in comparison!

How wonderful the statement that follows!—"For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power." How suitable to the condition of those who were in danger of looking another way, to remind them of this! Divine fullness—the fullness of Godhead dwelling in a man! As to the cross itself, how striking the way in which it is presented! "For in Him all the fullness was pleased to dwell; and, having made peace by the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto itself." How well and completely

must that work be done which had thus been taken up !

From ver. 10-15 is a statement of some aspects of that completeness, and it seems as if the Spirit of God anticipates all the ways in which need could be felt, and shows how fully they are met. Thus are the avenues guarded by which these human devices would gain access. The divine remedy being known, the human is not needed.

A Jew would come with his circumcision, and press it as a divine institution, and how early this was done, and how successful the snare, Galatians and other portions of the Word prove. But in Christ I have the true circumcision,—the body of the flesh put off, all that to which the law applied gone, through the death of Christ. But I have more: I have been buried with Him in baptism; yet not left in the grave either, though I, as a poor corrupt and corrupting creature, needed to be put out of sight. But faith in the working of God, who raised Christ from the dead, has linked me, identified with Him, in this new place with God.

My history closed, as to the ruin I was connected with, and a new beginning made for me—a risen man in Christ. Next, as to my condition in nature as dead in sins, I am made alive together with Him, and as to all the sins which were the expression of that state, they are all forgiven. How thorough the deliverance His love has wrought, that the conscience, free from all guilt, the heart might delight itself in God, and now no longer dead to Him, “alienated from the life of God,” but alive with Christ, my privilege is, to live to Him who has thus rescued and redeemed me !

But there remain two other things, which, though they are not my personal condition, which has thus been so blessedly met, were yet opposed to me, and operated to shut me out from blessing. The first is the law, not now looked at in its rule over me and the consequent results,

but as that which, given to the Jew as his distinctive privilege, if it shut him into the place of privilege, shut me, the Gentile, out. This, then, is taken out of the way, nailing it to His cross, as now fully entered into in Eph. ii., the barrier has been removed, and no longer withstands the entrance of the Gentile into the full favor of God, and place of nearness such as was never known to a Jew or could be for a man in the flesh.

Lastly, principalities and powers, under whose dominion I was, have been triumphed over through the cross. We are delivered from the authority of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of the Son of His love. Thus every aspect of need is met. But not alone that: every blessing conferred which the blessing of God, working according to the perfection of His wisdom, could plan to give us. How wonderful His ways! Well may we say, "What hath God wrought!"

Such being our established place of blessing, the exhortations that follow are simple. I am to refuse man's ordinances, and the things whereby he would infringe my liberty, and to accept them is to deny Christianity. What have meats and drinks and holy days to do with risen heavenly life? Yet such is ours. Eternal life begun is not so limited or marked, and the body is of Christ, and belongs to a different scene from this, in which that life is now for a season displayed. Yet holy days *are* shadows of things to come, but for the earth, and will be kept and enjoyed by those whose calling connects them with the earth in a scene of millennial blessedness.

Neither is the intrusion of some other being, under the plea of a humility which is false, to be allowed. Those who would put angels or saints or priests between me and Him have interposed a fatal hindrance to my growth, and even secured my downfall. True humility is an accompaniment of the faith which puts God in His true place

as the Giver and myself as the receiver of His benefits. And if God, acting from Himself, is pleased to bestow the highest blessings freely on the least deserving, what becomes us is to take with thankful and rejoicing hearts what He gives. When, too, we know that all comes to us as the fruit of God having been glorified by Christ, we find ourselves in happy liberty before Him, as identified, through grace, with all the sweet savor of that precious offering. But the thickness of a gold-leaf between the Head and the members is as fatal, though not as manifest, as a great chasm.

May we be kept sensible that all the fullness is in Him, and open to us continually to draw upon with the faith which honors and gives Him His true glory. Dead and risen with Him, we are cut off, on the one hand, from all the evil in which man in the flesh, religious or otherwise, is found, and, on the other, brought into that new scene where "old things have passed away, and all are become new, and all of God." Our privilege is, to live to God, and seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; living in the scene which rejected Him, as strangers and pilgrims and unknown, but waiting for Him who is our life to be manifested, when we shall share His joy and glory and its unending bliss forever.

R. T. G.

"THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN."

WORLDLY and worldly-minded men are fond of the above-written phrase, and frequently quote and use it as an axiomatic truth, when, except in a very broad and general sense, it is not truth at all. In the sense of Creator and creatures, it may be admitted; but even then it must be remembered that man, by sin, ruined the first creation, and alienated himself from God,

and took sides with Satan against God his Creator. In this he separated himself from his Creator, and broke off relationship with Him; so that God gave him up to his own will, and permitted him to go his own way for a long time, that thus he might satisfy himself that he could not get on without God. All this time, however, the Creator offered reconciliation to man if he would do righteousness. On this ground also man totally failed, and the just judgment of his Creator upon him was, "None righteous,—no, not one:" "there is none that seeketh after God."

But "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Here God comes in mercy and offers reconciliation to man; and it is upon this ground, *and upon this alone*, that the relationship implied in the phrase written at the head of this article can be restored. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate," says God, "and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters." Here is the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and nowhere else does it exist but in the Lord Jesus Christ. Out of Christ, man is not and never can be in relationship with God. He is of his father the devil, and he will do the works of his father, as the Lord said to the Pharisees. "Ye must be born again."—"They that are in the flesh cannot please God."—"The end of all flesh is come before" God. In Christ Jesus alone is life—the new life that you must be born into to come again into the relationship of children with God. The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man is now restored in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is formed in the assembly, or Church of God, which is composed of all that are born of God, and united to Christ, the Head in heaven, by the Holy Spirit of God. "Call no man your father upon the earth; for One is your Father, which is in heaven," "and all ye are brethren." (Matt. xxiii. 8, 9.)

J. S. P.

CONFLICT WITH SATAN, AND THE PANOPLY OF GOD.

(Eph. vi. 10-20.)

I. THE CONFLICT.

IT is a most significant thing indeed that that which is ordinarily conceived as Christian conflict is in Scripture scarcely noticed—never insisted on as a necessity at all, while that which *is* insisted on in it is, in its turn, almost unknown in its true character by the mass of Christians. With these, conflict is with the sin within them, and the Scripture-example of it is considered to be in the seventh of Romans, where we have, in fact, something very different—the struggle (an impotent struggle) of one in bonds. Here, the only effect is, to reveal the bondage, and manifest the law of sin under which he is. And when, in answer to the cry for deliverance, liberty is found, the practical rule becomes “Reckon yourselves dead indeed unto sin;” which if we do, conflict with it becomes impossible.

It is true that if we have not been reckoning ourselves thus dead,—if our eyes have wandered away from Christ, and we have become entangled with other objects, there will be doubtless a struggle to break away, if on the other hand God's chastening do not rather burst through the snare. But the path of progress is never in this direction; and if the “flesh” does ever—and it is true it does—“lust against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh,” the remedy is, to “*walk in the Spirit*, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (Gal. v. 16, 17).

The strife which we must not expect to escape is this, that “we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places.” “We wrestle”—it is a matter of

course—we do wrestle, all of us ; and then he spreads before us the array against which we are contending. He does not make little of these foes ; he would not have us make little of them. They are principalities ; they are powers ; they are masters of this world by means of the spiritual darkness in which it is wrapped ; they are heavenly beings, though fallen. If it is always a dangerous mistake to underrate an enemy, how dangerous must it be to do so in this case ! Here are foes who are able to bring in all the world to their aid, and who work in the dark, by “wiles” and stratagem. It is against these wiles we have to stand, in a warfare which, though it has its times of special pressure, is never relinquished. It is not enough to stand in the evil day : having done all, we must still “stand.”

But to what end are these wiles directed?—what is meant by this warfare ? To learn this, we must consider with what in this epistle these things stand connected. We are seen here to be in the heavenly places in Christ, blest with all spiritual blessings there in Him ; and the apostle invites us, in the practical acceptance of this truth, to go in by faith and take possession of our promised land. Thus our Joshua is to be our Leader, and Israël's entrance into Canaan is to be our type. It is to this that he refers when he reminds us that *we* wrestle not (as they did) with flesh and blood. The antitype is greater than the type, and, so far, in contrast with it. Israel found the land full of enemies, ready to resist their claim to possession ; the struggle was, to keep them out of what the divine word had given over to them. God has made heaven our own, and He calls us now, as has been said, to take possession of it ; and this is what brings all the power of Satan to resist and defeat us if he can.

Well he knows, if we do not, what is involved. By faith to lay hold of our place in heaven is in effect to become

heavenly—strangers and pilgrims upon earth. And this means power for walk, for separation from the world to God,—for holiness. It means the being Christians practically—the maintenance of testimony to Christ, and to His sufficiency for the soul. There is no other holiness for the Christian but a heart in heaven: there is no proper testimony to Christ but a heart where Christ is. Well the enemy may desire, then, to keep us out of this. The battle will surely be severe, unremitting, by which this is to be accomplished.

The weapons which he employs are indicated in this fact, that he is the ruler of the darkness of this world. Our inheritance is with the “saints in light.” It is in the light that we are called to walk; and thus if the eye be single, the whole body will be full of light. The darkness of this world is thus the very means wherewith to antagonize the light of heaven. Holiness is the “holiness of *truth*” (Eph. iv. 24, *marg.*); the world is where “man walketh in a vain show, and disquieteth himself in vain” (Ps. xxxix. 6). Bring in its principles, its aims, its objects, and the truth is obscured—a dark fog rests upon the spiritual vision, the steps falter or go astray, “the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint” (Isa. i. 5).

The book of Joshua shows clearly enough, as a type, this method of the adversary. Israel are brought into the land by the power of God, Jordan dried up before them, their Gilgal-pillar is raised on the bank, and the angel of the Lord takes His place as Captain of the Lord’s host, to lead them into possession. Then, to show them how to be “strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might,” Jericho falls while they but walk around it. Jericho is the world, whose judgment is indeed of God, though faith anticipates, and consents with it. It is this consent of faith which is the very secret of success in the conflict following: it is with the apostle to say, “God

forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. vi. 14.)

It must not be thought strange that it is here, after we have left the world, and have entered, in type, into the heavenly places, that we find the judgment of the world. There is no possible right judgment of the world except as we are in faith outside it. We find there that which meets and neutralizes the power of Satan. The darkness of this world cannot envelope one who is with God on the resurrection side of it. Thus Jericho is wholly burnt with fire, as accursed, and its silver and gold come into the Lord's treasury, but not into man's;—no man must take of it. Obedience here is a first principle for blessing.

And here begins the failure among the people of God, which makes them turn their back toward an enemy that they have presumptuously despised, and withers up a strength which is no longer in the Lord. Achan covets a goodly Babylonish garment and a wedge of gold, and hides them in the earth under his tent. And the anger of the Lord is upon Israel, who go on haughtily; not seeking counsel of God, but building themselves up upon a victory *they* have won, to find defeat as sure as had been the victory. How soon may the very power of God become to a people no longer walking with Him a tradition and a snare!

It is but Ai they have now to deal with,—Ai, "a heap of ruins," as the word means: they had just seen Jericho reduced to such a heap; they were meeting, as it were, but the old defeated foe. They had to learn that, for a people declined from God, a vanquished foe may have a resurrection. The world which yesterday was under our feet may prevail against us to-day, and will, if we are no longer with God,—if seduced by something that is of the world, we have spared that which was devoted to judg-

ment, or perverted to our own use what was devoted to the Lord.

With a faithful and omniscient God, judgment is as sure upon departure from Him as victory in going with Him. Alas that even a Joshua can fall upon His face when Israel is smitten!—as if God had failed instead of Israel! There is nothing arbitrary in His dealings with us,—no wrong in any thing His holy hand can do to us. All is good,—the buffets of His love; nought else. Creep nearer to His heart, and you are safe.

Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might,—strong against the wiles of the rulers of the darkness of this world: this is what this history keeps repeating to us.

Ai too is vanquished in its turn, and burnt, though with an effort which shows how the people had been weakened. And then we have, in the league with the Gibeonites, a very plain sample indeed of the wiles of the enemy; and again we find how Israel walked by their own wisdom, and “asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord.” So it ever is: they are deceived, no doubt, but why are they deceived? The results of this false step are permanent: they entangle themselves in the treacherous alliance by an oath by Jehovah, and dare not commit a breach of it. How terrible an alliance with that which is not of God, from which yet the word of God itself forbids withdrawal! and yet how many of His people can form such associations without even a question apparently being raised in their minds!

All this enforces the original lesson. We see that the enemy's attempt is the same however various the means which he may use. Yet in all of these, it is still by the power of the world that he would keep us out of the enjoyment of our heavenly portion; and it is for the acquisition of this that God equips and arms and sends us forth.

The question, then, becomes urgent with us, What do we know of this conflict? and that will resolve itself into another, Are we earnest enough to lay hold of what is ours within the veil? This is a wholly different one from that which asks, Are we seeking to live, as men would deem, correctly, benevolently, or even piously? All this at least can be answered with little check of conscience by those who if you speak of any possible *present* entering upon our heavenly inheritance, would think it impracticable mysticism. The book of Joshua has for most still no typical meaning. It is but a history of the past. Heaven lies for us, as the paradise of old did for those before the flood, with its gate barred against us. Only the world is practical for the realist; and men, they will tell you, are realists to-day.

Even He in whom heaven did once come down to us has been changed, they say, since He went up to heaven again. Human they suppose He is, but in such sort only as when John saw Him in Patmos, and fell at His feet as dead. Paul too was in paradise, and could bring us back no word from there. What can we know, then? and what does it matter, when we shall know so soon?

Yet it is the same Paul who exhorts us, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God;" and to "set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. iii. 1, 2, *marg.*). No doubt, at the best, "we see through a glass darkly," but so bright is the scene beyond, that it is only as when we must have such a darkened glass to gaze upon the sun. Bright enough Christ's glory shines there in its proper home, to produce in us the change of which the apostle speaks—"from glory to glory" (2 Cor. iii. 18), where the least degree is *glory*. And it is this glow in the face which Satan would seek to darken with the fog of this world, and wrap the

children of day in the disguise and sadness of the night. Let us struggle on,—and we are told we shall have to struggle,—to get what we may of that which in its very dimmest outshines all the promise and glory of the world.

(*To be continued.*)

SETH IN PLACE OF ABEL:

THE LESSON OF THE AGES AS TO HOLINESS.

Genesis iv.—(*Continued.*)

AT the cross, as we have already partly seen, the controversy between God and man comes out in the most open manner. The “way of Cain” is seen reproduced in that Pharisaism which was ever the most earnest opponent of the Lord, and which He on His part denounced most earnestly. “Have any of the Pharisees believed on Him?” they could ask with assurance; and on the other side He could let them know, “The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you” (Jno. vii. 48; Matt. xxi. 31). Pharisaism was indeed the most successful device of Satan to hinder the acceptance of that sentence of condemnation which the prophet had long since declared to have passed upon the people,—“Then said God, ‘Call his name Lo-ammi; for ye are not My people, and I will not be your God’” (Hos. i. 9). Man, in Israel, had thus been fully tried and found wanting; and the Babylonian ax had thereupon cut down the doomed tree. And although a remnant had returned again to rebuild their temple, the glory had not returned. Their true hope was only in accepting the sentence upon them, and awaiting, in Messiah, their Deliverer.

Then arose Pharisaism, with its fierce blind zeal for a law which but condemned them, and its eager claim for a righteousness which refused, in Christ the Lord, their righteousness. Their fanatical enmity slew the King of

Glory, and brought His blood upon themselves and on their children.

But the cross, if on the one hand the completed testimony as to man's guilt and ruin, is on the other the removal for faith of all that hinders blessing. Christ in man's place under death and judgment owns in his behalf the righteousness of God in the penalty which He bears and bears away from him; while He, the Second Man, as the Head of a new creation, brings those connected with Him into the enjoyment of a portion of which He is worthy, and which is theirs in Him. "In Him" affirms the setting aside of the old head, and all connected with him; "if any man be in Christ, it is *new* creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new."

But how far does this go? Is it as sinners only we are set aside by the cross? and is the question here only of righteousness and acceptance with God? It is our "*old man*" that is crucified with Christ, and that is just ourselves as the men we were—sinners assuredly, and only that,—and this "that the body of sin might be destroyed [annulled], that henceforth we should not serve sin." Thus there is, at least, a practical purpose in it. We are to begin here a new life as saints, not sinners. The dominion of sin is broken for us. Holiness is that to which God has called us, and we are assuredly meant to realize our calling. Holiness is not a thing *imputed*, as righteousness is; and it is a *condition*, not merely a *position*.

But here, more than one road opens before us, and it is once more to be realized that God's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor His ways our ways. Thus, if there are two ways, we are prone to take our own. God's way, indeed, naturally does not present itself to us as an alternative. We do not look for the way-marks: we suppose, perhaps, that there are difficulties *in* the way, but not *as to* the way.

Thus the "broad way" is still the by-path, and God's way narrow and overlooked.

Man's way is self-occupation, self-satisfaction,—the method which changed an angel into a devil,—the very way by which sin came at first. God's way necessarily is the opposite, to turn man from himself, to occupy him with Another, give him an object which will draw him out of himself, satisfying him with Him who is alone competent to meet all the needs of the soul. "I am crucified with Christ" is the language of one who realizes this: "nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20). Here is what has displaced self in its religious form as well as every other. It is Seth in the place of Abel, and the fruit of it is, no Lamech—no "strong man,"—but an Enos,—a frail one: but then the worship of the heart is God's,—“we worship God in the spirit, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. iii. 3).

Directly athwart man's way lies the fact that still in the child of God is found an evil nature, a "sin that dwelleth in" us, a "body of death" we loathe yet cannot escape from, so that "if we say we have no sin, we lie, and do not the truth" (1 Jno. i. 8). Yea, he who is admitted by God to see in paradise what could not be told by human tongue, must then have "a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet" him, lest he should be exalted above measure. (2 Cor. xii.) Pride, self-exaltation, is the danger which we have most to dread, and which is ready to turn all good into corruption. Unlike all other sin, pride grows upon what is good, and thus God in His wisdom can use the very consciousness of evil which we have learned to hate, to subdue this monster evil.

Notice how, when Peter, in true love to his Master, but confident in himself, declares, "I will lay down my life for Thy sake," the Lord answers him with the forewarning of

his denial of Him so soon to follow. There was no remedy but by the fall to allow him to realize his weakness that he might thus find strength, and so be able even to "strengthen his brethren." The open sin, with all its grossness, was less evil than that fatal self-confidence from which nothing but a fall such as his could awaken him.

So with a self-occupied soul under the law, as in the experience of the seventh of Romans, only the repeated check, "The good that I would I do not; the evil that I would not, that I do,"—so inexplicable as it is until we realize the divine principle,—can meet the need by blocking the road which, broad as it seems, leads to a precipice. It is God with whom we are at issue, while yet we think in our hearts we are but seeking His will. We "delight in the law of God after the inward man," and yet "find another law in our members, warring against the law of our minds, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members."

Here, indeed, strangely, some would settle down. "This is the path," they would argue; "but, you see, it is blocked,—progress is impossible: here we must stay until death opens the way for us." But what, then, means the anguished cry, "Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" Has God indeed left His redeemed in the meantime hopelessly captive to a law of sin? How, then, is it said, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, because ye are not under the law, but under grace"? But are we not, then, "under the law"? If for *righteousness* we are indeed not under it, are we not for *holiness*? There is, indeed, the whole question. Let us seek the answer to it.

Two things face us at the outset: first, that "the strength of sin is the law" (1 Cor. xv. 56); and this certainly corresponds with the experience we have just been realizing. It is not that it is that which *condemns* us,—

true though that is,—but that it is the strength of *sin*.

The second thing is, that “the law is not of faith” (Gal. iii. 12); and faith is that which is the very principle of fruitfulness: it is “*faith* that worketh by love” (Gal. v. 6).

These things go together, and are of the deepest import as to holiness. The law, in short, occupies me with myself; faith’s object is Christ. And Christ is made of God unto us “sanctification” as much as “righteousness” (1 Cor. i. 30). It is here that we have the answer to that despairing cry, “Who shall deliver me?” and learn to “thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Here is the method of sanctification: “We all, with open face beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit” (2 Cor. iii. 18). This is the method of faith; it is Seth appointed in the place of Abel, whom Cain slew; it is the apostle’s “Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2 Cor. xii. 9); it is the frail Enos instead of the strong Lamech; it is the spiritual circumcision in which we “worship God in the Spirit, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”

How slow are we to perceive that all *self*-confidence is “confidence in the flesh”! When the disciples asked that question of the Lord, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” “Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, ‘Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever shall *humble* himself, therefore, as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.’” (Matt. xviii. 1-4.)

How this harmonizes with the whole tenor of that which we have been considering! and how easy it would seem to make the attainment of that which is true greatness in

the sight of God! We have but to consent to be the little and feeble things we are;—we have but to find our strength outside ourselves, in One who is almighty;—we have but to recognize our nothingness, that Christ may be all things to us. “CHRIST IS ALL:” that is our practical theology; and who shall tell the extent or fullness of those three words?

Self-occupation, self-consciousness, self-complacency: these are the weeds that spring out of our cultivation of holiness, as still men commonly practice it, and which God’s winter is required to kill. Defeat is as to these our one necessity; and if our efforts at self-culture meet but this, there is only one cause as there is one remedy. To be “changed from glory into glory” needs not effort—cannot be attained by it, but is attained by keeping in the Sun, whose rays thus glorify all they shine upon. With his soul penetrated with that glory, the apostle says, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

THE TWO NATURES, AND WHAT THEY IMPLY.

Jno. iii. 8; Gal. v. 17.

WHEN we speak of there being two natures in the believer, as these passages, with others, plainly teach, it is needful, in the first place, to explain the words that we are using. The more so, as the word “nature” is not of frequent use in Scripture, and such expressions as “the old nature” and “the new nature”—in frequent use among ourselves—do not occur. I am not on this account condemning the expressions. They may be useful enough, and accurate enough, without being taken literally from Scripture; and he who would

exclaim against them on this account would show only narrowness and unintelligence really.

But what such persons have a right to insist upon, and what we should all be as jealous for as they, is that these expressions should really represent to us *things* that are in Scripture,—not fancies of our own, but truths of the Word of God. Our business, therefore, must be to explain the terms we use, and justify them by the appeal to Scripture, by showing that the things themselves are there for which we use these expressions as convenient terms.

There is no word for “nature” in the Old Testament at all. In the New, the word translated so is, in every case but one, the word *phusis*, “growth.” In the exceptional case, it is *genesis*, a word familiar to us as the title of the first book of Scripture, so called from its describing the origin or “birth” of the world. The two words in this application come nearly to the same meaning; they express the result of what we have by our origin—the qualities that are developed in us by growth.

Now, for us as Christians, there are *two* births, and two growths, and thus we can rightly speak of two natures,—two sets of moral qualities that belong to us: the one as born of Adam, the other as born of God. Each is dependent upon the life received, and from which it springs. We are one thing as children of men merely; we are another as children of God. Let us look at these separately now; and first, at that which is first in order of time.

Men we are, of course, all through. Here, again, we must learn to distinguish between what we are as men by God's creation and what we are as men fallen from the uprightness in which God created us at the beginning. We must distinguish between our nature as men and our nature as fallen men. Men we are, and are ever to be; whatever change we pass through in new birth as to spirit and soul, whatever change awaits the body at the time

when the Lord shall call us to be with Himself, we shall never lose our essential identity with what God created us to be at the first. We are the same *persons* all through,—the same *individuals*. No question of life or nature, such as we are about to consider, affects the reality of our possession of what we commonly call *human* nature all the way through. The youth differs much from the infant; the man from the youth; yet the same human being, the same person, passes through these different stages. The caterpillar is the same being that is at first in the egg and that finally is the butterfly; so changed as to conditions that if we had not traced its continuity through these different forms, we should regard it as three or four different creatures; and yet we have the most absolute persuasion of its identity throughout. We might distinguish between the “nature” of the egg, the caterpillar, the chrysalis, and the butterfly, and yet again affirm its *insect*-nature to be unchanged throughout, and its individuality to be maintained too all through. It would be even its “nature” as an insect to go through these several changes. So we must distinguish between such terms as “our human nature,” “our fallen nature,” “our new nature.” The fall did not unmake us as men; our new birth does not unmake us on the other side. What is essential to manhood we never lose, and our individuality too is never changed.

These distinctions are not useless, but on the contrary, most important. Did we keep them in mind, there could be no misunderstanding (such as there often is) as to the Lord assuming our nature, for instance. The words of the hymn, “He wears *our nature* on the throne,” are objected to by some, because they do not make such simple distinctions; and on the other hand, some would press that taking of our nature into consequences as to our blessed Lord, such as every true soul would indig-

nantly repudiate. He *did* take our human nature: He was in all respects true *man*; the consequences and conditions of the fall are as little essential to manhood as the fracture of an image is essential to the image.

Let us consider, then, briefly and simply, what is essential to man as man, in order to separate from it as far as possible what is due to the fall: *human* nature from *fallen* nature, or what Scripture calls "the flesh." We shall find mysteries, no doubt. Mysteries surround us, into which all our researches will enable us to penetrate but a very little way. Our knowledge is very partial; our ignorance is great. And no where among created things do we find more mystery than when we attempt to penetrate the secrets of our own being. But in keeping closely to the Word, we shall find a sure and unfailing guide here as elsewhere, and a means of testing whatever may be gathered from other sources.

Man is constituted of spirit, soul, and body. He has lost none of these by the fall; he has only these when born again and a child of God. Mind, judgment, and therefore conscience are properties of his spirit. The affections and emotions are faculties of his soul, which is also that wherein is found the link between the spirit and the body, and by which the former, while highest of all in its nature, and (rightly) controlling all, apprehends the things of sense.

Man is thus by constitution a conscious, intelligent, and moral being, but dependent, in his present state, upon his senses for the furniture even of his mind—a "living soul," as Scripture terms him, and not a pure "spirit," as the angels are. Yet, with other spirits, he is in relation to God as his God, and his Father too; only that in this last respect he has sold, like Esau, his birth-right for a mess of pottage.

The fall has affected man in all his constituent parts.

It has subjected the spirit to the soul, and the soul to the body. The scene in Eden, which Scripture represents to us at once so simply and so graphically, is recalled to our minds as we ponder the inspired descriptions of what man now is. The link of affection, reverence, and dependence which held him to God being broken, he is like a building in which the roof has fallen in upon the base. Named from his lowest part, into which spirit and soul have sunk, he is "*flesh*." Thus "flesh" is the scriptural designation of his old or fallen nature.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food,"—there the body, and in its lowest cravings, is first;—"and that it was pleasant to the *eyes*,"—meeting the emotional desires of the *soul*;—"and a tree to be desired to make one wise,"—there the spirit is,—last, but aspiring to independence of God. "Ye shall be as gods" had been the temptation. Yielding to it, his mental and moral structure had collapsed. A thing of sense rather than God he had chosen for his dependence: the things of sense became his necessity and his masters; his wisdom, henceforth not from above, was "earthly, sensual," and so, "devilish."

And this word "sensual," which, while it may well have that meaning here, is in fact the adjective of the word "soul," is the same word as that translated "natural" where we read, "The *natural* man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14).

The spirit here has given up the reins to the soul; the soul is swayed by the allurements of sense; the body itself, unbalanced and perverted in its natural instincts and appetites, becomes in turn the tempter of the soul. The man is "sensual:" his nature is "flesh."

We must not expect to find this use of the word "flesh,"

however, in the Old Testament, for a reason which will easily suggest itself to one who knows the peculiar character of the Old Testament. The law being the trial of man in nature, as long as the trial was going on, the character of man could not be fully brought out. Nor is it even in those first three gospels in which Christ's presentation to man is God's last experiment with him. "Having yet, therefore, one son, his well-beloved," as the Lord Himself puts it in the parable, "he sent him last unto them, saying, 'They will reverence my son'" (Matt. xxii. 6). But in John's gospel, it is seen that this trial too has failed: "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not; He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." That is the very opening chapter; and thereupon he immediately goes on to speak of "the flesh," and of new birth: "But to as many as received Him, to them gave He [not "power," but] authority to become the sons of God, even to those who believed in His name." And who were these? "Which were *born*, not of blood, nor of the *will of the FLESH*, nor of the will of man, but *of God*."

One passage there is in the Old Testament, in which man is characterized as "flesh," in a manner which seems to approach the style of the New. And this passage is found in almost the beginning of Genesis. Before the flood, the Lord says, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh, but his days shall be a hundred and twenty years." Yet even here the declaration seems more to point to the frailty of a creature with whom it would be unseemly for God to be always striving. And the limitation of his days seems to coincide with this interpretation. It is like the appeal to Job,—“What is man, that Thou shouldst magnify him? and that thou shouldst set Thine heart upon him? and that Thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every

moment?" Or, like that in that hundred and forty-fourth psalm, so striking a contrast with the eighth,—“Lord, what is man, that Thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man, that Thou makest account of him? Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away! Bow Thy heavens, O Lord, and come down Cast forth lightning, and scatter them!”

All through the Old Testament, “flesh” is thus the symbol of weakness and nothingness: a use of it which is carried on also in the New. Witness a passage which is often cited in another way, and very falsely applied: it is the tender apology of the Lord for His disciples' sleeping in the garden: “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Here, the “weak” flesh is clearly not at all the old nature. It is bodily infirmity which prevents it yielding to the will of the spirit.

In the gospel of John, we find, for the first time, the “flesh” used in the other signification of an evil nature,—our sad inheritance by the fall. We hear of a “will of the flesh” from which new birth does *not* proceed. And in the third chapter of the gospel, the Lord enforces upon Nicodemus the absolute necessity of a new birth, from the irreclaimable character of this,—“That which is born of the flesh,”—of man characterized as this,—“is *flesh*; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit: marvel not that I said unto you, ‘Ye *must* be born again.’”

Thus, out of man's fallen nature proceeds nothing that can be acceptable to God. Like a field unsown, the heart of man will never produce aught, so to speak, but thorns and thistles—fruit of the curse. Life of the right sort must be dropped into it in the living germ of the Word of God, as our Lord teaches in the parable, and from that alone is there fruit for Him.*

*It is one of those lessons from the book of creation, of which there are so many, that wheat is only found in connection with the presence of man—never wild.

New life is thus introduced into the field, and while this does take up and assimilate material from the soil, and thus there now goes on an active transformation of this kind, yet how false an account would it be to give of this to make this transformation the whole thing, and ignore the new life which was effecting it! Yet in the spiritual change of new birth, people are doing exactly this. They look at the moral transformation going on, and ignore what Scripture speaks of in the most decisive way—the introduction of a positive new life from God, from which the moral change proceeds.

It is no wonder if, in trying to define this, we soon lose ourselves, and are made aware of mysteries which crowd upon us at every step. Even natural life is a mystery, which the mind of man, vainly seeking to penetrate, is trying in an exactly similar manner to deny. We are told that we may as well talk of a principle of "aquosity" in water as of a vital principle in a living thing. Yet as a cause of certain effects otherwise unaccountable, it is as vain to deny as it may be impossible to define. So spiritually we may learn lessons from experience which at least rebuke the folly of not listening to the Word. And Scripture points these out also, giving us, as needed explanation of what every child of God finds in experience, a doctrine which alone makes all intelligible, and enables us to learn and use the experience itself aright.

As for natural birth there must be, not merely certain processes, but the communication of a life-principle which produces, controls, and harmonizes these processes, so is there precisely for new birth. The voice that soon will quicken out of death natural—which all that are in the graves shall hear and shall come forth—now quickens similarly the spiritually dead,—“Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that

hear shall live: for as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself" (Jno. v. 25, 26). Here there is a life communicated by One who has it in Himself to communicate,—a new life for those "dead;" in whom, if there be not this first, no moral change is possible at all.

This new birth the Spirit and the Word combine to effect. A man is born of water and of the Spirit, the water here, as the symbol of purification, taking the place that the seed of the Word does in the parable elsewhere. As the apostle Peter tells us, we are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God . . . and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. i. 23, 25). And so the apostle of the Gentiles explains Christ's purification of His Church to be "with the washing of water *by the Word*" (Eph. v. 26).

To take up again the former figure of the seed, used by both the Lord and the apostle, the seed is the incorruptible Word which gives form and character to the life-manifestation; but the life itself must be in the germ, or it cannot be manifested. So the word of the Lord embodies and manifests the new life we receive, but the energy of the life communicated by the Spirit works by the Word, and there is "growth"—the development of a new nature, which is characterized by its blessed and holy attributes.

Thus Scripture speaks of "the *ingrafted* Word" (Jas. i. 21); and the apostle John, similarly connecting the new nature with the Word, says, "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). This is Peter's "incorruptible seed" of "the Word of God," but the life communicated by the Spirit, as already said, causes it to germinate; and, being "*everlasting* life," His seed remains.

The "nature" of the seed determines the form of life. The new nature, God's gift, is not a mixed or partially good thing. It is in itself perfect (though capable of and needing development), without mixture of evil from the very first. In the man in whom it is implanted, evil indeed exists, as thorns and thistles in the field in which wheat is sown: these things being not the imperfection of the wheat in any wise, though hindrances to the crop they are. The character of the seed we have just seen, where the apostle says that the child of God "doth not commit (or rather "practice") sin; *for* His seed remaineth in him." The new life, if obscured by the evil, is untouched by it, and in essential,—nay, victorious opposition to sin. It will vindicate its character in one born of God, and manifest him as born of God; and where we do not see this result, we cannot recognize as a Christian the person, in whom it fails, although granting the possibility of seed being in the ground that has not yet come to the surface. But "faith"—the first principle of the new nature—"worketh by love;" and "faith," if it have not works, is dead, being alone:" "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Gal. v. 6; Jas. ii. 19; Rom. viii. 14.)

It is needful to insist on this at all times—never more needful than at the present time. It is no exaltation of faith to maintain it as justifying and saving, and yet possibly without power to produce fruit in the world, or to glorify God in a holy life. The apostle's faith was the power of a life devoted as his was,—“The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Gal. ii. 20).

Such, then, in its character, and such in its energy, is the new nature. It will be understood that the gospel has to be received, and deliverance realized, before this can be properly known; nor do I dwell upon these now.

But such is the new nature; and being such, it is the means of effecting that wonderful change in a man which we speak of as "conversion." As the seed converts the lifeless elements of the soul into the beauty of the living plant, so the powers and faculties of soul and spirit are brought back from death to life. The spirit, redeemed from self-idolatry, and having learned the lesson of dependence upon God which faith implies, is reinstated in its old supremacy; the affections of the soul are taught to trail no longer upon earth, and set upon God as their only worthy object. The body, yet unredeemed, and "dead, because of sin,"—awaiting its redemption at the time of the resurrection (Rom. viii. 10, 11, 23),—can only as yet be "kept under, and brought into subjection" to the man new-created in Christ Jesus. (Rom. viii. 13; 1 Cor. ix. 27.)

But now we must again draw some very important distinctions. We speak of the old nature, or "flesh," and of the new. We speak also of the "old *man*" and of the "new." Is there any difference between these? and if so, what is the use of the distinction?

A *nature* and a *person* are in many ways widely different. Unconverted and converted, the person is of course the same. It is the one who was dead in sin who is quickened and raised up; it is the same person who was condemned and a child of wrath who is justified, sanctified, and redeemed to God. It is the person too—the "man"—to whom accountability attaches, and not to the nature. *Acts* belong to the individual, and not to his nature; and in the case of man, the only rational and responsible creature of whom we have something that can be called knowledge, we know that he is responsible to walk contrary to [not indeed his nature as God first constituted him, but yet] his nature as he actually now possesses it, fallen from its primitive state.

Only, in fact, by a license of speech do we speak of nature acting. To say of a person, "nature acts in him," whether said approvingly or disapprovingly, still implies that the man himself has lost command of himself, or does not exercise it. Many a Christian thus talks of the flesh in himself or others, as if its being flesh that was exhibited explained matters sufficiently. Yet, if he thinks about it, he will realize that he uses this language to *escape* responsibility, so little idea has he of responsibility attaching to a nature. Yet if this excused him, it would excuse every sinner that ever lived; and how could God judge the world? In point of fact, men do use every where the truth of their sinful nature in order to escape condemnation; whereas if they would listen to conscience, they would assuredly find that not a single sin have they ever committed which they could truthfully say their nature forced them to. It *inclined*, no doubt; but they should, and might, have controlled the inclination. The essence of their guilt is, that they do not.

In the day of judgment, therefore, the award will be given, not according to the nature, (in which they are alike), but to their works, in which they are not alike. God "will render to every man according to his *deeds*" (Rom. ii. 6). And this, and this alone, will be the exact measure of guilt and responsibility.

It may be objected to all this, "How, then, can the man in the seventh of Romans, who is converted, and has a will for good, find, on the other hand, the flesh in such opposition, that what he desires, he is quite unable to perform? How can there still be no ability, when the will is right?"

But the answer is plain, that the good he desires would not be good really if done in other than the sense of dependence upon God, which is the only right condition of the creature. The power of sin from which he has to

be delivered lies in the self-complacent self-seeking which assumes the shape of holiness to a converted man. For a holiness that makes *him* something, he has to accept a Christ who shall draw him *out of* himself. The "good" (in one sense that,) which he is seeking, is really a phantom shape which God has to destroy, to give him instead the true and only God. Thus only crippled Jacob can become Israel.

"Power belongeth only unto God." True—ever true; but were we right with Him, could it be lacking to us? Assuredly it could not. Still, then, it remains true that no one is shut up powerlessly in bondage to evil. The key of his prison-house is in his own hand.

It is the *man*, then, who sins, and is the sinner; it is the *man* who has to be forgiven and justified; it is the *man* who is responsible to walk, not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. It is the same person—the same individual all through.

Yet, in another way, we may surely say as to the Christian, that the man that *was* and the man that *is* are total opposites. I *was* a sinner in my sins, freely following the evil that I loved: I *am* a child of God, with a new nature, new affections, and a new object. Between these two persons there is a wide interval indeed. The first is what Scripture calls "the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph. iv. 22); the second is styled "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (v. 24), and "renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him who created him, where . . . Christ is all and in all" (Col. iii. 10, 11). The first it speaks of as being "crucified with Christ," as it does of our "having put off the old man with his deeds" (Rom. vi. 6; Col. iii. 9.*) The second, similarly, it speaks

* Eph. iv. 22 is not different from this, although the common version might make a difficulty. But the "putting off" here, and the "putting on," ver. 24, are really in the past.

of our "having put on." What we were we are not, and never can be again. But while this is happily true of us, it is also true that the "flesh"—the old nature—we have in us still, and shall have, till the body of humiliation is either dropped, or changed into the glorified likeness of the Lord's own body.

The old man is gone forever, but the flesh abides: in those who are possessors of the Spirit, still "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh;" and the exhortation is, not to destroy the flesh, as if that were possible, but "walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. v. 16, 17). A poor conclusion this, to many in our day! but to those who know themselves, how great a relief to find thus an explanation of what experience testifies to! It may be, and is, a mystery how we can have at the same time in us two natures, total opposites of each other,—how Christ can dwell in us, and yet sin dwell too; but Scripture affirms it, and experience also. If it is God's mind to allow us to know thus for awhile what evil is, not by yielding to it surely, but as realizing its opposition, can He not make this experience even both to serve us and glorify Him?

The flesh remains, and remains unchanged: "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing" must always be said by one who identifies himself with the flesh. "The mind of the flesh is death; . . . because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. vii. 18; viii. 6, 7). Thus the Word speaks of the incurable evil of the old nature, which, attaching itself, as we have seen it does, to the things of time and sense amid which we are, God's remedy for it is Christ as an object for our hearts in heaven, and His cross as that by which we are crucified to a world which the flesh lusts after, and

which in its moral elements consists of "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." We are not in the flesh; we are in Christ before God; our life is hid with Christ in God. The knowledge of our portion in Him, as given us by the Spirit, divorces our hearts, and turns our eyes away from that which ministers to the evil in us. "*As* strangers and pilgrims," journeying on to a point which faith, not sight, beholds, we learn to "abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Pet. ii. 2), and, as a consequence, to "mortify the deeds of the body" (Rom. viii. 13). Our true power is in absent-mindedness,—a heart set upon that which stirs no lust, for it is our own forever, and we are invited to enjoy it.

This *satisfies*, and this alone. By "the exceeding great and precious promises" we "become partakers of (or rather, "in communion with,") the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet. i. 4). The new life within us is strengthened and developed, and this alone can divine things work upon. Christ seen and enjoyed by faith, we grow up unto Him in all things, from the babe to the young man and to the father, when we have but to sit down, as it were, and endlessly enjoy our infinite blessing.

Before closing this brief sketch of an important subject, let us look closer at this question of growth, as the apostle puts it before us here. Growth (mental, not physical,)—the growth of a babe into a man, is a matter of education; not merely what professes to be such, but the influence upon it of surrounding circumstances which call forth the hidden energies of the mind and heart, and of examples which stimulate and encourage to imitation. God has thus, on the one hand, for us His discipline of trial; on the other, His perfect example of what He would have us grow up to. In general, men reach about the level of

what is thus before them. God puts before us Christ, that we may grow up into Christ. Our occupation will tell upon us. What we give ourselves to will make its necessary mark upon us. The exhortation to us is, "Set your mind on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."

The admonition, therefore, of the apostle to the babes and young men—to the fathers he has none—is to let nothing take away their eyes from Christ. The babes he warns as to Antichrist, not that he may perfect them in prophetic knowledge, but because in their little acquaintance as yet with the truth of what Christ is, they might be led away into some deceit of the enemy. Satan's first snare for souls is some distorting error, which shall in fact deform to us the face in which alone all the glory of God shines, or substitute for His face some witchery for the natural eye, in which the heart may be unawares entangled, supposing it to be the true and divine object before it. This is Antichrist,—not yet the full denial of the Father and the Son, of course,—and antichrists there are many.

Oh, that Christians did more realize the immense value of truth!—the terrible and disastrous effect of error! What presents to me, when seen aright, the blessed face of God Himself, may through Satan's artifice darken, obscure, distort this, or present to me a treacherous and destructive lure instead.

The apostle therefore warns the babes as to false Christs doctrinally. The young men are not in the same danger as to this. They are strong, and the word of God abides in them, and they have overcome the wicked one. Their danger now lies from the allurements of a world into which their very energy is carrying them. The word to these is, "Love not the *world*, neither the things that are in the world." For the eye affects the heart; and it

is one thing to have seen by the Word that the world is under judgment, and another thing to have gone through it in detail, looking it in the face, and counting it all loss for Christ.

This the fathers have, however, done: therefore he says to them (and it is all he needs to say), "Ye have known Him that is from the beginning." It is all we gain by looking through the world; yet it is a great gain to be able to say of it all through, "How unlike Christ it is!" And what when we have reached this? Has the "father" nothing more to learn? Oh, yes, he is but at the beginning. He has but now his lesson-book before him, for undistracted learning. But he needs not caution in the same way not to mix any thing with Christ, and not to take any thing else for Christ. How much toil to reach, how slow we are in reaching, so simple a conclusion! But then the joy of eternity begins. Oh, to have Him ever before us, unfolding His glories, as He does to one whose eyes and whose heart are all for Him! The knowledge of the new man is "Christ is all!" To the martyr, in the fire which consumed him, this knowledge broke out in the words which told of a joy beyond the torment—"NONE BUT CHRIST!"

"In the midst of the wreck and ruin of the creature, can you say, notwithstanding it all, 'I have found a spring in Thee, O God, and can count on Thee to give me all blessing in Christ; not to fill me once and then all gone, but to fill me again and again'? I would have you judge yourselves about the sort of faith you have. Is it a *living faith*? It is the *living* God upon whom His people hang, drawing daily supplies from the fullness of the living springs in Him. Ah, if you have found that God, no depths can be too deep for the heart of that living God, who meets us according to the circumstances in which we are."

“THINGS THAT SHALL BE:”

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART II.—THE TRUMPETS.

(Chap. viii. 2—xi. 18.)

The First Four Trumpets. (Chap. viii. 2—13.)

THE last seal is loosed, and the book of Revelation lies open before us; yet just here it is undoubtedly true that we have reached the most difficult part of the whole. As we go on, we shall find ourselves in the midst of scenes with which the Old-Testament prophets have made us in measure familiar—a part which can be compared in this very prophecy to “a little *open* book.” In the seals, we have found also what was more simple by its very breadth and generality. We have here evidently predictions more definite, and yet the application of which may never be made known to us, as they do *not* seem to come into that “open book,”—do not seem to find their place where the Old Testament can shed its light in the same way upon them. Yet we are not left to that mere “private interpretation” which is forbidden us; and it is well to inquire at the beginning, what helps we have to interpretation from other parts of Scripture.

The series of trumpets is septenary, as we know—just as those of the seals and vials are. Not only so, but, as already said, the 7 here becomes, by the interposed vision between the sixth and seventh, in structure, an 8. And in this, the seals are plainly similar; the vials really, though more obscurely.

This naturally invites further comparison; and then at once we perceive that the vials are certainly in other respects also a parallel to the trumpets. In the first of

each, the *earth* is affected; in the second, the sea; in the third, the rivers and fountains of waters; in the fourth, the sun; in the fifth, there is darkness; in the sixth, the river Euphrates is the scene: the general resemblance cannot be doubted.

No such resemblance can be traced if we compare the seals, however; though the similarity of structure should yield us something. The structure itself, so definite and plainly numerical, may speak to those who have ears to hear it, and we shall seek to gain from it what we can. But there is a third witness, whose help we shall do well to avail ourselves of, and that is, the historical interpretation, which just here—strangely as it may seem—is at its plainest. There is a very striking and satisfactory agreement among those of the historical school with regard to the fifth and sixth trumpets at least; and the harmony pleads for some substantial truth in what they agree about. We must at all events inquire as to this.

Strictly, according to the structure, the first five verses of this chapter belong to the seventh seal; but for our purpose it is more convenient to connect them with the trumpet-series, which they introduce. The judgments following they show us to be the answer of God to the cry of His people, though in His heart for them before they cry. This is what the order plainly teaches: "And I saw the seven angels which stand before God, and seven trumpets were given unto them." Thus all is prepared of God beforehand; yet He must be inquired of, to do it for them, and therefore we have next the prayers of all the saints ascending up to God. There is now a union of all hearts together: the common distress leads to united prayer; and He who has given special assurance that He will answer the prayer of two or three that unitedly ask of Him, how can He withdraw Himself from such supplication?

But we see another thing,—the action of the angel at the altar of incense: "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints ascended up before God out of the angel's hand." Thus the fragrance of Christ's acceptability gives efficacy to His people's prayers; a thing perfectly familiar to us as Christians, and which scarcely needs interpretation, but which, as pictured for us here, has this element of strangeness in it—the figure of an *angel*-priest. Why, if it be Christ who of necessity must take this place, why is He shown us as an angel? "For He taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham He taketh 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." (Heb. ii. 16, 17.) If, then, to be the priest men need, He must be made like to men, why does He appear here as an angel, and not as a man?

There is no need for doubt that what has been answered by many is the true explanation, and that the angel-figure here speaks of personal distance still from those for whom yet He intercedes. We have many like examples in Scripture, and one which is of special interest in this connection. Those who appear in the eighteenth of Genesis as "men" to Abraham, go on to Sodom as "angels" in the nineteenth. They go there to deliver Lot, but are not able to show him the intimacy which they show to Abraham. "Just man" as he is, and "vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked," he is yet one "saved so as through the fire." Found, not in his tent-door at Mamre, but in the "gate of Sodom," he is one of those righteous men but in an evil place, for

whom Abraham intercedes with God, and when delivered, it is said of him that "God *remembered Abraham*, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in the midst of which Lot dwelt." (Gen. xix. 29.)

Lot may thus fitly represent this very remnant of Israel at the last, whose prayers are here coming up before God; who have had opportunity to have known the Church's pilgrim path, but have refused it, and to whom Christ is even yet a stranger, though interceding for them. If we remember the priestly character of the heavenly elders in the fifth chapter here, and "their vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints" (v. 8) we may see further resemblance between these pictures so far apart. And how touching is it to see how in the troubles which encompass Lot in Sodom, these angels begin to appear as "men" again! (Gen. xix. 10, 12, 16.) Sweet grace of God, shining out in the very midst of the trial from which it could not, because of our need of it, exempt us!

Thus the angel-priest, in its very incongruity of thought, exactly suits the place in which we find it. It is "the time of Jacob's trouble,"—needed, because he is yet *Jacob*, but out of which he shall be delivered when its work is once accomplished. (Jer. xxx. 7.) Thus their prayers offered are heard; and, as inheriting on the earth, the answer to them involves the purging of the earth. "And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it unto the earth; and there were voices and thunderings and lightnings, and an earthquake. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound."

This fire, because from the altar, some have difficulty in believing to be judgment. They remember how a live coal from the altar purged Isaiah's lips, and cannot see

how that which has fed upon the sacrifice can be any longer wrath against men. But this is easily answered; for while, where the heart turns to God, this is certainly true, it is in no wise true for those who do not turn. For them, there is no sacrifice that avails; rather it pleads *against* its rejecters: the wrath of God against sin has not been set aside, but demonstrated an awful reality by the cross; and where the precious blood has not cleansed from sin, the wrath of God rests only the more heavily on those who slight it. The signs of judgment following are therefore in perfect keeping with the fact that it is the fire of the altar that evokes them, as they are with their being the answer to the prayers of a people who cry (with the saints under the fifth seal, or with the widow to whom the Lord compares them,), "Avenge me of mine adversary." (Luke xviii. 3.)

Every thing finds its place when once we are in the track of the divine thoughts; and in all this there is no difficulty when we have learnt the period to which it applies. It is a suited introduction to the trumpets which follow, and in which, according to the old institution (Num. x. 9), God Himself now declares Himself in behalf of His people, and against their enemies.

There is much more difficulty when we come to consider separately the trumpets themselves.

"And the first sounded, and there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of the earth was burnt up, and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up."

Hail with fire we find in other parts of Scripture, as in nature also. It is one of the most solemn figures of the divine judgment which nature furnishes. It was one of the plagues of Egypt. In the eighteenth psalm it is found connected with similar judgment. "The Lord also

thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave His voice,—hailstones and coals of fire." Electricity and hail are products of the same cause, a mass of heated air saturated with vapor, rising to a higher level, and meeting the check of a cold current. It is a product of cold, the withdrawal of heat, as darkness is the absence of light; and light and heat, cold and darkness, are akin to one another. Cold stands (with darkness) for the withdrawal of God, as fire (which is both heat and light) for the glow of His presence, which, as against sin, is wrath. And both these things can consist together, however they may seem contradictory—"hailstones and coals of fire" be poured out together. God's forsaking is in anger necessarily, and thus what would be a ministry of refreshment is turned into a storm of judgment. There is a concord of contraries against those that cast off God; as for those who love Him, all things work together for good.

The blood mingled is of course a sign of death—a violent death,—and shows the deadly character of this visitation, by which a third part of the prophetic earth is desolated, a third part of the trees burnt up, and prosperity (if the green grass implies that,) every-where destroyed.

This judgment seems to affect, therefore, especially the lower ranks of the people, though, as necessarily would be the case, many of the higher also; but it does not affect especially those in authority. They have not escaped, as we have seen, in the general convulsion under the sixth seal;—nay, the heavens fleeing away might seem to intimate that the very possibility of true government was departed. Yet this might be while in fact governments go on, and we find in what follows here that they do go on, although never really recovering themselves. Under this trumpet now begins, as it would seem, what

shall really cause them to collapse. A people impoverished by that which spares the governing classes, who does not realize the danger to these of such a state of things? And the second trumpet seems to show us in reality what we might anticipate to grow out of this.

"And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain, burning with fire, was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea and had life died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed."

The comparison of Babylon to such a mountain (Jer. li. 25) may put us in the track of the meaning here. It is a power mighty, firmly seated and exalted, yet full of volcanic forces in conflict, by which not only her own bowels shall be torn out, but ruin spread around. This cast into the sea of the nations,—already in commotion, as the "sea" implies—produces death and disaster beyond that of the preceding trumpet. Human life is more directly attacked by it. Such a state of eruption was in France at the end of the last century, and may well illustrate (as others have suggested) what seems intended. The fierce outburst of revolt against all forms of monarchy, the fruit of centuries of insolent tyranny under which men had been crushed, set Europe in convulsion. History is full of such portents of that which shall be, and we do well to take heed to them. Especially as the end approaches may we expect to find it so: there is growth on to and preparation for that which at last takes those who have not received the warning by surprise.

The third part of the ships being destroyed would seem naturally to imply the destruction of commerce to this extent, the intercourse between the nations necessarily affected by the reign of terror around.

"IN THIS WE GROAN."

WHO among us who believe does not prove the truth of these words? It is a bit of experience that none can escape. In our friends—those we love dearest perhaps, in our circumstances, and in our own persons, there is something to keep us constantly reminded that sin is here, and has done its deadly work, and what is crooked cannot be made straight, and what is wanting cannot be numbered. Paul carries it further still in Rom. viii., and tells us that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." Not some of it, but the whole; there is nothing that has sense and feeling but what has felt the damaging effect of the fall of creation's head, though the difference is immense between the physical suffering of the mere brute and that of man, with a mind and conscience beside,—a spirit susceptible of the most intense anguish, capable of self-reproach and condemnation, and of reflection upon and anticipation of the deserts of sin. A buoyant heart may carry over for a time the terrible reality,—the multiplicity of occupations, be it with work or pleasure, may cause forgetfulness, but the time must come when every vail must be torn off, and the stern reality be known in a way there is no escape from.

Yes, "in this we groan," and creation groans, and for the unbeliever it is but the presage of an eternal night of woe. How solemn the thought! Men may live without God, but to pass into eternity without Him, this would be terrible indeed, and many in thinking of it have taken refuge in some of the forms of current unbelief with reference to the future,—setting up human judgment against what is revealed in the Word of God, in place of accepting God's simple way, so perfect and wonderful as it is.

But, "in this *we* groan" contemplates the Christian, of course, though the world groans too; and therefore the apostle adds to it, "Earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." Yes, he brings in a hope,—the one only thing that really meets the difficulty, ministering a remedy divine and perfect. Hope is the anchor of the soul; it keeps it steady in the midst of storms and tempests. It puts God before the soul—the living God, the One who has brought into the scene of suffering and death a perfect and complete remedy. He alone could do it where death was at work, and if He has undertaken it, it will be done in a way to bring Him glory, and full blessing to us. It will be no patch put upon a rent, no plaster for a sore, but the whole made new, and a body of glory given in place of the body of humiliation we now wear, and in which we groan. We have borne the image of the earthy, we shall bear the image of the heavenly; and whatever *may* intervene, faith bridges the whole, and looks on to that blessed moment which Scripture links with the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus Paul comforted the saints at Thessalonica, who "were turned to God from idols, to serve the living and the true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven," about those who had fallen asleep in Jesus. He did not say, "You shall die too and join them." No, he pointed them to that moment when the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God; when the dead in Christ shall rise first, the living be changed, and all together be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. He pointed them to that day that God has promised shall come,—a day known only to Him, for which saints here are taught to wait, for which those who are departed wait, and for which the Lord Jesus also waits,—the day when He shall see the fruit of the travail

of His soul and be satisfied; and if He is satisfied, how surely shall we be so too!

I do not ask, then, if you groan, dear fellow-believer; I am sure you do, for Scripture says so, though no doubt the more we are in fellowship with God, in His thoughts and ways, so much the more shall we truly groan,—if not about ourselves, at least in witnessing what sin has done in man and brought upon a creature made in the image of God; but now, alas! fallen so low. But may I not ask if you can add, as that which the faith of your soul has laid hold of, "earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, that mortality may be swallowed up of life." Yes, mortality,—the liability to death—will be swallowed up of life, for those who are called up to be with Christ without seeing death. While for all, living or dead, death will be swallowed up of victory at that same moment. Are you stumbled at this? Do you not know the Scriptures, and the power of God? Have you let man rob you of "the blessed hope"? Then in this, at least, you share in what has shut out from your soul the true and solid comfort God would give. But it needs the power of God assuredly—the God who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, and whose Spirit shall "make alive our mortal bodies," working by that power by which "He shall subdue all things to Himself."

Have you, then, laid hold of that truth? and is it to you "a blessed hope"—sustaining, comforting, when all may be most dark and trying—the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ? Are you watching, through the darkness of this world's night, for the One who alone can bring relief and remedy,—for the rejected One who is coming again—coming to reign over the scene of His rejection—to make His enemies His footstool, and to share His throne and glory with His redeemed ones?

You may say, "I do not understand prophecy." May I ask, Why not? Are we not told to "take heed to it, as to a light that shines in a dark place"? Is the world not a dark place,—aye, growing darker every day? If you do not know this, you will surely despise the light that shines there; it will be unheeded by you, as perhaps it has been. Still it shines in a dark place, and it points to that one object who is the burden of the testimony of the Spirit of God in Scripture from Genesis to Revelation—Christ; and it marks out two periods and events of paramount importance: the coming of that blessed One to suffer and to die, the just One for the unjust ones, to bring us to God; and next, to His coming to reign,—to be glorified in the scene of His rejection. How near this may be, who can tell? Do not say, "My Lord delayeth His coming;" still less take part with scoffers who say He will not come; but hearken to His own word, "Surely, I come quickly." May you be able to add to this your "Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus."

R. T. G.

THE HEART LONGING AFTER THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

(An Extract.)

I AM inclined to think that this feeling in reference to ministry is intimately connected with a deep, personal longing after more profound, rich, abiding communion with the person of Christ, by the power of the Holy Ghost. . . . Nothing is of any value that does not spring from personal love to and communion with Christ Himself. We may have Scripture at our finger ends, we may be able to preach with remarkable fluency—a fluency which unpracticed spirits may easily enough mistake for power, but oh! if our hearts are not drinking deeply at the fountain-head—if they are not

enlivened and invigorated by the realization of the love of Christ, it will all end in flash and smoke. I have learnt to be increasingly dissatisfied with every thing, whether in myself or in others, short of abiding, real, deep, divinely inwrought communion with and conformity to the blessed Master.

"*Crotchets* I despise; mere *opinions* I dread; *controversy* I shrink from; all *isms* I esteem as utterly worthless. But I long to know more of His own precious person, His work, and His glory. And then, oh, to live for Him, to labor, testify, preach, and pray, and all for Christ, and by the working of His grace in our hearts.

CONFLICT WITH SATAN, AND THE PANOPLY OF GOD.

2. THE PANOPLY.

FOR this conflict we must have the panoply—the *whole* armor—of God. This is emphasized by repetition.

(*vv. 11, 13.*) It must be the *whole* armor, or we are as powerless against the adversary as if we had none. The whole *man* can be reached through any one part exposed. A city can be taken through a single gate unguarded. And our foe is subtle, and easily discerns what is lacking in us. Moreover, the armor itself is so made, to fit together,—one part is so necessary to another, that it cannot rightly be put on except it be *all* put on. How can we be girt about with truth and have no "breast-plate of righteousness"? And so it will be found all through. No wonder! for this is just "integrity" in its true meaning,—that is, entireness. Who that is upright with God can pick and choose as to His will, what to do and what he may leave undone? Let us remember at the outset, therefore, it is the *whole* armor we are to put on.

The order too is important, and that will appear as we go on. The order in Scripture is far too little thought of. To take it into account would be by many considered too minute; but in fact there is nothing too minute for our attention in the Word of God; and this cannot be too seriously pressed.

The first part of the armor, then, is the *girdle*,—what might be scarcely thought a part of it, but according to this, the very first thing to be considered. What indeed could a soldier do with flowing garments about his feet? And here the Word of God gets its right place: *truth* it is that girds the loins.

“Sanctify them through the truth,” is the Lord’s own prayer: “Thy Word is truth.” (Jno. xvii. 17.) In the world, men walk in a vain show, and disquiet themselves in vain: holiness is “holiness of truth.” (Eph. iv. 24, *marg.*) The Word of God brings into the soul the realities which separate from what is seen to be false and merely seductive. The things unseen, but eternal, stir and energize the heart. Torpor is gone; earnestness and diligence possess the soul. It is kept with God, and at rest,—a rest which is full activity, and makes it untiring.

It is plain that this state of soul is a first necessity for conflict, and that the wiles of the enemy can only be met by one delivered from the illusions of that world which is his great instrument. It connects also with the second part of the armor, the breast-plate of righteousness, which is, of course, *practical* righteousness, a conscience void of offense, as of one walking in the truth he knows. Otherwise the truth itself becomes a reproach, and we are in danger of shipwreck as to it even: “holding faith and a good conscience,” says the apostle, “which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck.” (1 Tim. i. 19)

He who does not follow the truth he knows is sure to

find, except God's mercy prevent, something that will accommodate itself, as the truth will not, to the laxity in which he indulges. The enemy here has full opportunity, and it is no wonder if the darkness should soon be proportionate to the truth once known.

The third part of the armor is, the feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. It is peace to which the gospel introduces,—not only through the blood of Jesus having no more conscience of sins, but God known as for us; who can be against us? Thus in all circumstances there is peace. If God rule—our Father be the Lord of heaven and earth, to receive from His hand every thing is to be delivered from unrest, from resentment even of what is meant for harm: "As for you, ye indeed thought evil against me," says Joseph to his brethren, "but God meant it for good." (Gen. i. 20.) To what a height of serenity can such a consciousness lift the soul! How can one desire evil upon another for what in the hand of God had been only good?

Israel's shoes were never worn out with all the flinty rocks of the wilderness; and such peace, maintained in communion with God, is proof against all the roughness of the way. Those who enjoy this peace are indeed armed against Satan; but it is only attainable in the order in which we find it here.

Fourthly, we have, "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one." Some would read here, "in all things," but I believe the text is right as it stands, and that it means, not "more than all," nor "besides all," but, as Bengel reads, "over all." The shield covers even the rest of the armor, and can be moved so as to guard any threatened part. It is thus that faith is to protect all the other parts,—the faith which is not merely in the work accomplished for us, but a practical confidence in

God at all times. This it is that quenches all the fiery darts of the wicked one,—the suspicions of His love and faithfulness, to a believer one would say impossible, but for bitter experience. What fiery darts are these! and how well is he called “the wicked one” who can employ them!

Still, the head needs to be provided for, and here it is, “Receive the helmet of salvation.” It is not a hope, it is a positive accomplishment. Saved we are; and this consciousness enables one to lift up his head amid the tumult of the battle-field. We are conquerors before we enter the strife. Not that there is nothing at stake, nor that there is not real meaning and importance in the conflict. There is surely much; but *salvation* is not at stake: it is not for it we are contending. This we have as the fruit of Another’s victory. And to mark this, it would seem, the word is changed here which has just been used for “*taking* the shield of faith;” it is really, “and *receive* the helmet of salvation.” It is not an attainment, not something in which we are active, as before; it is the gift of Another, a gift of grace alone.

Then we have our offensive weapon—“the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.” There is a slight correction to be made here; it is rather, “The sword of the Spirit, which is the *saying* of God,”—that is, the particular text out of the Word which you want for the occasion. And this is the sword of the Spirit, not simply because the whole Word is inspired of Him, but also because you need to be under His guidance in order to find the text. How wise may a mere babe in Christ be if with God! how dull the greatest student if without Him! But let us not imagine that deep and accurate acquaintance with the Word is therefore of small account. It is far otherwise. Growth is by the truth, and if the truth be slighted, and we are babes when we ought to be

grown men, then are we "carnal, and not spiritual" (1 Cor. iii. 1), and He will need to make us sensible of our folly. To expect the blessed Spirit of God to minister to spiritual sloth and indifference is presumption; and here again the order of Scripture is instructive: it is only when all the coat-armor is fastened on that the sword can be grasped; only thus will it be effective.

But used thus, what victories may we gain with it! there is nothing else, indeed, by which victory can be gained. Satan dreads no mere human reasoning, which lies, after all, under the darkness of this world—cannot escape from it: it is "armor of *light*" we need, and light is heavenly, as even nature witnesses. Here faith alone can enter. Mere human apprehension cannot lay hold of Christ; and to the knowledge of the new man "Christ is all." (Col. iii. 11.)

Let it not be thought that I am decrying reason: it is impossible to get on a step without it. Man without reason would be below the beast—an idiot. Those who declaim against it use it (however irrationally) in their declamation. Scripture is full every where of the most sublime reasoning; nor can we apply a text without it. Only, among things unseen, reason must be the handmaid of faith, and not her mistress; it must work by the light of revelation, or have none.

And now, lastly, we have that which is not so much a part of the armor as it is the spirit in which alone it can be used; connected indeed especially with the Word of God, as that in which we draw near to God, as in the Word He draws near to us:—"praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." No where else, perhaps, is the language as to prayer so strong and emphatic as it is here. Well it may be, here in the presence of the enemy, where, as we were at first

reminded, our strength, if we are to have strength, must be "in the Lord." The exhortation of the apostle thus ends as it begins—with Christ Himself, the one absolute necessity for the soul at every moment. The consciousness of this is safety and power: its expression is in prayer; and this spirit of prayer is what the Spirit of God produces wherever He works. Let us remark, however, that where the soul is right with God, prayer becomes proportionately intercession for the saints. Christ on high is taking that place of intercession, to be in it ourselves is to be in fellowship with Him. Where the heart entertains Him, it will entertain His people also.

HIS SENT ONES.

IN the fifth chapter of John, we find the Lord Jesus as the Worker. In fellowship with the Father, He must work: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

There could be no rest for Him in a scene where sin had defiled and ruined every thing. His rest was above the scene, in the One who had sent Him. What a lesson this for us! How apt we are to be restless here, instead of workers! If indeed we find fully our rest in Him who has sent us, even as He was sent (Jno. xx. 21), will it not lead us in fellowship with Him in His work in this scene of sorrow? Beloved brethren, what a place of privilege is ours! "Sent ones"! Sent by Him, as He was sent: sent to be workers here, in fellowship with Him. Our rest indeed in Himself, as His rest was in the Father.

And we find He lays down the principles, if I may so call them, that governed Him in His work. He says, "I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me." (v. 30.)

"I can of Mine own self do nothing." Every thing was done in communion with and dependence on the Father.

What a word for us! How much work is, so to speak, master, because we have not learnt this lesson! But, again, He says, "As I hear, I judge." His was the listening ear. As on another occasion He tells us, "I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." (Jno. xii. 49.) How much of vain speaking would this save us if it were true of us! Oh for a waiting, listening ear, that seeks ever the Lord's word, and acts and judges in accordance therewith!

"My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me." Here we find the secret of true judgment. Just in proportion as we are seeking a place for ourselves do we fail to have a just conception of things. How much failure can be attributed to this! How self-seeking so often characterizes us in the Lord's service! May we be led, in the power of the indwelling Spirit, to surrender ourselves unreservedly to the will of our blessed Lord, so that down here, as "His sent ones," we may have His mind, and thus be a help to the Lord's people in these days.

The call to-day is for unselfishness and devotedness in the ministry of God's Word. Seeking not the applause of men, but, through good report and evil, seeking to make Christ known to others, and giving a faithful testimony for Him in these days of unfaithfulness.

To this end, beloved brethren, ought we not to make continual prayer and supplication to our God? May this coming year, if our Lord tarry, lead each one of us to seek this blessing for ourselves and for the whole Church of God.

J. J. S.

JESU'S LOVE FOR ME.

JESUS, let Thy presence with me
Set my heart's affections free ;
Lead me, teach me, keep me near Thee,
In Thy love for me.

Once I lay beside the water,
Once I stood beneath the tree,
Once a leper, once a beggar,
But Thou calledst me.

Once I sat in nature's blindness,
Once I wandered o'er the tombs,
Once I fell among the robbers,—
Thou didst heal my wounds.

Jesus, Lord of life and glory,
Set my heart's affections free ;
Teach me well the wondrous story
Of Thy love for me.

Oh, what wonder ! oh, what mercy !
Thou didst touch the bier for me ;
Thou didst bid them loose the grave-clothes,
In Thy love for me.

Once the Sycamore I clambered,
Thinking thus Thyself to see ;
Once in sin the city wandered,
All was dark to me.

Jesus, let Thy presence with me
Set my heart's affections free ;
Teach me, lead me, keep me near Thee,
In Thy love for Me.

Anon.



CURRENT EVENTS.

DR. WALDENSTRÖM AND NON-VICARIOUS ATONEMENT.

I.

THE work of Dr. Waldenström may well take its place among the *Current Events* which deserve special notice at our hands. It is one of the signs of the times—sad signs of the departure from the faith which is going on every where, and will go on to the apostasy predicted as that in which the dispensation ends. (2 Thess. ii.) I do not take it up, however, merely to notice it as that, but to give full examination to the views themselves, which, having been widely accepted already among Scandinavians generally, are now being brought before the English-speaking public for an acceptance which they are but too sure to find with many. Dr. Waldenström's writings have in them a tone of piety which will attract, while they assume to deal exhaustively with Scripture on their several topics. It is something which assuredly they are very far from doing, a partial truth being very commonly mistaken for the whole, so that we have but to fill in the gaps to find the antidote. But the appearance of doing so will be enough with many to carry their convictions, at least for a time. Among his own countrymen, we are told,—

“The promulgation of the author's views on the atonement occasioned a very general and earnest searching of the Word of God by all classes of Christians, and as these so-called ‘new views’ were plainly found just in that Word, they were accepted by the majority of Swedes, in their own and in this country [America]; also by many among Norwegians and Danes, by preachers and people in and outside the state church. Notwithstanding the cry of heresy raised in some quarters at the time against Dr. W——, he passed triumphantly (in 1873), by a discussion before the bishop and consistory of the diocese, his examination for admission into the higher orders of the clergy. In 1874, he was

appointed professor of theology (including Biblical Hebrew and Greek) in the state college at Gefle, one of the largest cities in Sweden. This position he still holds, while at the same time he is serving his second term in the Swedish parliament."

It is with the treatise on the "Blood of Jesus," the key-note to his views as to atonement, that we naturally begin. It leads us at once into the heart of our subject.

He tells us, first of all, that if, according to the law of Moses, "almost all things are purged with blood" (Heb. ix. 22), "the purging itself was accomplished, not by the slaying of the victim, but by the sprinkling with the blood. This has a profound typical significance. In the New Testament also it is said that cleansing from sin is effected by the *blood* of Jesus—notice: not by the *death* of Jesus, but by the *blood* of Jesus."

This is true, and the reason is plain also: by the blood of Jesus our "hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience." (Heb. x. 22.) And this sprinkling is just the *application to the person* of Christ's blessed work. Useless would His death be to us if it were not to be *applied*—that is, appropriated to us; and the blood speaks of death, but of a *violent* death, not of a natural one; of a life *taken*, not merely ended. A natural death the Lord could not have died, and such a death could not have availed us, because it implies sin in the one who dies.

But, says Dr. Waldenström further, by the blood of Christ we cannot mean His bodily or physical blood; but the blood must be a *type* of something: we have to ask ourselves, therefore, what the blood typifies.

This is a very serious mistake. The blood of Christ is not a type of something else. It is used metonymically, as the rhetoricians say,—that is, to express such a death as has been pointed out; but that is a very different thing from its being a type. This would deny the blood of the cross to have any real place in our cleansing from sin at all. It would be simply in such relation to it as was

Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness, and nothing more. Dr. Waldenström seems to have borrowed from Swedenborgianism here.

But he asks what is meant by the saints having "washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb," or our eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood. "Every one understands," he says, "that the blood here is a type of something." I can only answer that, for my own part at least, I have never thought so. *Figurative*, of course, the expressions are; but it does not follow that *every expression* in a sentence is figurative even because some are. The washing and the garments, the eating and the drinking, may be figurative; and are, surely: but it does not make the blood simply a "type." When the Lord says, "He that eateth ME shall live by Me," is Christ Himself only a type? It is strange that a professor of theology should make so rash a statement.

He bids us, again, observe that it is not "*faith* in the blood" which cleanses from sin, but the blood itself. And that it is not the "value of the blood in the sight of God," but only the blood. And again, that the blood of Christ is never represented as a payment to God for our sins; nor in the Old Testament is the blood of the sacrifices ever represented as such a payment.

What all this is to prepare the way for is pretty clear. But is it true? and is it the whole truth?

For it is plain that if our hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience—and sprinkling is to cleanse, as Dr. Waldenström insists,—we read, on the other hand, of God "purifying hearts through *faith*" (Acts xv. 9), and of "peace"—that is, a purged conscience—"in *believing*" (Rom. xv. 13); just as we read of justification by faith, sanctification by the truth,—that is, of course, by faith in it,—and so on. Surely it is true that faith has for its object, not faith, but Christ, and His work, and that its

power for blessing is in this very thing. Thus this is just how faith necessarily must say, "*Not* faith, nor any thing in myself, but the blood of Christ cleanseth." And that is true; and yet without faith there would be no cleansing.

Now, when he says, It is not the value of the blood in the sight of God that cleanses, he makes another mistake of the same kind. Whatever the value of a remedy, of course, it is not its *value* that acts in the cure. It is the remedy itself that acts. It is indeed the blood that cleanses, and by its being sprinkled; but if we ask, *how* is it the sprinkled blood can cleanse? we shall then find that its *cleansing* power depends upon its *atoning* power,—that is, upon its *value in the sight of God*. Dr. Waldenström confounds here cleansing with atonement, while in general we shall find he makes atonement to depend upon cleansing, instead of making, as he should make, cleansing depend upon atonement. These two things are widely different. Cleansing is for man, (it is man who is cleansed), while atonement is for God. Once let us make this easy distinction, Dr. Waldenström's doctrine will appear the mere confusion that it really is.

As to the blood of Christ being *payment* for our sins, the expression, it is true, is indefensible, although those who use it have, after all, a truer thought than Dr. Waldenström. It is true that the sacrifices of old were not represented as payment for sin, and that this would be a gross, low thought, unworthy of God; yet our author seems to have forgotten that there was such a thing as atonement-money (Ex. xxx. 12), and that this was said to be a ransom for their souls. It is to this also that the apostle refers when he says that we "were not redeemed with corruptible things, as with silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.) Here, un-

doubtedly, the blood of Christ is regarded as the true atonement-money.

The thought, then, is, of a price by which we are redeemed; and with this, all are *purchased*. (2 Pet. ii. 1.) Christ's sufferings are thus a price He paid for all, though only a *ransom-price* for His people. *Purchase* must be distinguished from *redemption*, although every one that will may find in the first general truth what enables him to realize the special and distinctive one. Christ tasted "death for every man." (Heb. ii. 9.) Here is the price paid, and for all: it is for faith to lay hold of this, and say, as it has title to say, "Then I am His." To him who *receives* this precious grace, the purchase is found to be redemption.

What, then, is the mistake in saying that Christ has made "payment for our sins"? This, that in Scripture the price is for *us*, not for our sins. He has bought us as that which had value in His eyes. True that the price He had to pay was really that of making atonement for our sins: here is the way open for the confusion, if we are not as careful as, in matters such as these, we should be; and yet we ought to be able easily to distinguish what is very different. Price paid for *us* speaks of where His heart is: price paid for *sin* conveys the thought of God being able to tolerate it if His demands are met. Yet no renewed soul could mean such a thing or think of it. The expression to him is only intended to convey that there was an absolute necessity for satisfaction to God's righteousness in order to our salvation, and Christ has given this. Blessed be God, He has! but price for *sin* is a different thought, and one to be rejected utterly—which every true soul brought face to face with it will assuredly reject.

But Dr. Waldenström sees no need of satisfaction to divine justice, as Mr. Princell on his part explicitly

assures us ("The Reconciliation," p. 5, *n.*). Thus with him there is not merely confusion of thought, but fundamental error, as will be clearly seen in the issue.

For him, the blood of Christ is a type, as we have seen; and he thinks that very commonly "Christians hear and speak and sing about the 'blood of Jesus' without making it clear to themselves what this expression means," and so it is not "of any use to true edification"! If this be so, it is surely sad enough. Think of it, that very commonly to *true* Christians (we must suppose) all their hearing and talking and singing about the blood of Jesus is really a vain and idle thing! They do not even know what the blood of Jesus means! What then? do they not know that it is that which was shed for them upon the cross for their sins? And is the belief of that wondrous fact unedifying to the one who bows prostrate in adoration before God because it is so?

What is, then, for Dr. Waldenström the meaning of the blood of Jesus? He goes on to tell us,—

"In Lev. xvii. 11 (according to the original), we read, 'The life [or soul] of the body is in the blood, and I have given it you to sprinkle [or pour] upon the altar, that thereby atonement may be made for your lives [or souls]; for the blood maketh atonement by reason of the life [or soul] which is therein.' And again in ver. 14, 'The life [or soul] of all flesh is in its blood, and it [the blood] constitutes its life [or soul]'. For that reason the Israelites were forbidden to eat blood. From these words we understand that the *blood* is a term for or expressing *life*; and this immediately sheds a beautiful, heavenly light upon the language of the Bible concerning the blood of Jesus."

The blood means, then, the *life*, for Dr. Waldenström: that is evidently not death, but its opposite. And the *blood* of Jesus of course means, not the death, but the *life* of Jesus!

Let us first of all examine Dr. Waldenström's translation of the passages to which he refers us. Would it be imagined that he has more than once inserted words which are not there, but which are his commentary

merely, and even *emphasized* what he has inserted, as if part of the text? Yet it is so: the words, "to sprinkle [or pour]," and "which is therein," the last of which is emphasized for us in his book, have absolutely nothing corresponding to them in the Hebrew; and the last of these additions is one of special importance for his argument. "For the blood maketh atonement by reason of the life *which is therein.*" Therein, *when?* Remember that it is the blood *sprinkled or poured upon the altar* to make atonement of which this is said. Is the life in it *then?* That would seem perhaps too foolish a question to be asked. Yet the nature of Dr. Waldenström's argument requires one to say, Yes; and he actually makes Scripture say so too! The blood sprinkled makes atonement by the reason of the life which is in it!

Strike out the interpolated words, and we have Scripture, and what is consistent with the fact. The blood does make atonement by reason of the life, but not of a life which is still in it, but of a *life rendered up*. That is, it speaks of death, as every Christian perhaps before Dr. Waldenström has understood it. If "the blood constituted its life"—the life of the body,—it is surely *in the body* that it does so, and not out of it. "The life"—not soul—"is in the blood;" or, as this means, and is said further on, it is the blood that is the life. What, then, does the blood *shed* mean but *life poured out?* and what is life poured out but *death?*

But our author would put it rather thus, that the blood being the life of the body, when shed out it still *represents* its life; nay, he says this is a very common representation in the Bible. The instances he gives are singular enough: Jonathan's words to his father, "Wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to *slay* David without a cause?" David saying (Ps. xciv. 21), "They gather themselves together against the soul [or life] of the righteous, and condemn

the innocent blood ;" Ezek. iii. 18, The blood of the wicked required at the watchman's hand ; Pilate's words, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person ;" the people's answer, "His blood be upon us and on our children ;" Judas's confession, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood ;" and then he curiously remarks,—

"From all these Scripture-expressions we thus see that it is very common for the Scriptures to say *blood* instead of *life* ; and especially is this very common when the question is of a LIFE SACRIFICED IN DEATH, as we have seen already from the examples quoted" !

Truly we have. So that a life *sacrificed* is still "life" for the Swedish professor, and not death at all ; and we may read, "His *life* be upon us and on our children," etc., etc. ! What can one say ? What need one say ? The life which is not death turns out to be a "sacrifice in death ;" and he even ventures to quote, "The Son of Man came to give His life a ransom for many," as explaining "we have redemption through His blood," and to say, as the conclusion of it all, "*The blood of Jesus is nothing else than His life given in His death for us.*" Of course it is ; but what is "life given up in death" as *distinguished from* death ?

All the texts in which "blood" is spoken of here speak of death, yet Dr. Waldenström would teach that it is not death at all that is meant. What is it, then ? "*Life given up in death*" !! And this is proved by the very texts which were to show us the difference.

To what is all this leading us ? We shall soon see:—

"In Matt. xxvi. 28, the Lord says, while He hands the blessed cup to His disciples, 'This is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.' In and with and under the wine He gave them His blood, made them partakers of His life, which He was now about to lay down for them in death. When He handed them the bread, He did not say, 'This signifies or represents My body ;' but, 'This is My body ;' and when He handed them the wine, He did not say, 'This signifies or represents My blood ;' but, 'This is My blood.' Thus, while giving them the bread and wine, He made them real

partakers of Himself, joined them to Himself as members of His body, and made them partakers of His life."

Here, then, is the key of Dr. Waldenström's position. He is, as we see, thus far still a Lutheran, though with a strange gap in his defenses as that, through which the enemy will surely find an easy way. Go back to Marburg and the table-cloth, and conceive, if you can, Luther maintaining his thesis with the admission made that the blood of Christ was a figure, though the drinking it was literal! Dr. Waldenström apparently must believe this, although the Lord actually speaks of the shedding of His blood in the text quoted; but this means, he tells us, His life laid down. Let us meet this straightforwardly, then: is it true that the Lord made His disciples then (or that He makes them now) partakers of that human life which He laid down for us? It is *not* true; or, if it be, it should be shown us plainly. It is "*everlasting* life" of which we, blessed be God! are made partakers: was it everlasting life that the Lord laid down for us? Can everlasting life become extinct in death? Will even Dr. Waldenström say so?

Thus simply is the whole argument overthrown. As for the Lutheran view itself, it is as contrary to Scripture as it is to reason; and Scripture is never *contrary* to reason, though it often transcends it. But Scripture plainly says that the Lord's Supper is a *remembrance*, and a remembrance of His *death*. The bread and the wine thus represent Christ's body and blood *separate*, as they are in death: the blood is *shed*; we show forth Christ's death till He comes. He Himself says, with reference to such a misunderstanding of like words elsewhere, "Doth this offend you? What if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?"—as if that would end all thought of this kind,—“it is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” (Jno. vi. 61–63.)

(To be continued.)

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART II.—THE TRUMPETS.

(Chap. viii. 2—xi. 18.)

The First Four Trumpets. (Chap. viii. 2—13.)

(Continued.)

THE third trumpet sounds, and a star falls from heaven, burning like a torch. "And it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters. And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

The heavens are the sphere of government, whether civil or spiritual; a ruler of either kind might be here indicated therefore, and the historical application is in general to Attila, king of the Huns; yet the fall from heaven, the poisoning of the sources of refreshment, as well as the parallel, if not the deeper, connection with the sixth trumpet, seem to point much more strongly to an apostate teacher, by whose fall the springs of spiritual truth should be embittered, causing men to perish. With all the misery that has hitherto been depicted as coming upon men under these apocalyptic symbols, we have not before had any clear intimation of this, which we know, however, to be a principal ingredient in the full cup of bitterness which will then be meted out to men. Because they have not received the love of the truth, that they might be saved, God will send them strong delusion, that they may believe a lie; and here would seem to be the beginning of this.

In the French revolution at the end of the last century, the revolt against the existing governments linked itself

with an uprise against Christianity; and the socialistic and anarchical movements which have followed, with however little present success, are uniformly allied with infidel and atheistic avowals as extreme as any of that time. Russian "nihilism" fulfills its name in demanding, "No law, no religion—*nihil!*" and as the first thing, "Tear out of your hearts the belief in the existence of God." Here is forestalled the one "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped;" nor is it a contradiction to this that one with such nihilism on his standard should exalt himself into the place of God: the atheist Comte devised for his followers a new worship, with forms borrowed from Rome, and a peremptory spirit, which have gained for it from a noted infidel of the day the title of "Catholicism *minus* Christianity." This was his proposition, as stated by himself: "The re-organization of human society, without God or king, through the systematic worship of humanity."

This was a delirium! True, but such dreams will come again, as the Word of God declares, in that fever of the world to which, with its quick pulse now, it is fast approaching. Apostasy is written already upon what men would fain have the dawn of a new day, and the being who has raised himself from the chattering ape to link the lightning to his chariot of progress, what shall stay him now? These are the words from the lips of Truth itself: "I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."

We have already considered in a measure the doctrine of a personal antichrist yet to come, and we shall be repeatedly recalled to the consideration of it as we go on with Revelation. Here it is only the place to say that his birthplace in the book seems to be under this third seal,

though his descent more strictly than his rise. He is born of apostasy, as the second epistle to the Thessalonians (chap. ii. 3) would lead us to anticipate.

And now, under the fourth trumpet, a scene occurs which may be compared with that under the sixth seal, but which in the comparison reveals important differences. Then, a convulsion affected (as would appear) the whole earth: now, it is only the governing powers that are affected by it; and that, not every where, but a third part of the sun and of the moon and of the stars, so that the day shines not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. These last words in connection with the similar limitation to a third part in the preceding seals, seem plain enough. The day does not shine in a third part of the sphere of its dominion, nor the night (in its moon and stars) either. Certainly this would not be the natural result of the darkening of a third part of sun and moon, and intimates to us that we have not here a literal phenomenon such as is represented, but figures of other things. Royal or imperial authority has collapsed, with its train of satellites, within such limits as a "third part" may designate; and with this, the first series of the trumpets ends. As ordinarily in these septenary series, the last three are cut off from these first four, which have a certain oneness of application, as the use of this "third part" employed in them throughout also would imply; for the next trumpet has no intimation of this kind. The sixth has it again, but the seventh refuses all such limitation.

The meaning of this trumpet, then, is simple; but its proper significance must be gained from its connection with the series of which it forms a part, and indeed with any prophecies elsewhere which by comparison may throw light upon it.

In general, also, the historical application attains here

a consistency which claims attention ; and that there is some substantial truth in it (though not the full truth) there is no need to doubt. The minds of so many of the Lord's people as have explored the book of Revelation by this light have not been left so utterly dark and untaught of the Spirit as to have allowed them to wander utterly astray. Scripture is larger in compass than we think, and this is by no means the only part of prophecy in which a certain fulfillment has anticipated and, as it were, typified the final and exhaustive one. In this very book, those who receive the addresses to the seven churches as prophetic of the history of the professing church at large can surely not deny, or seek to deny, a primary application to churches actually existing in the apostle's day. And here the foundation of the historical interpretation is already laid. The stream of prophecy in the seals and trumpets in this case naturally has its germinant fulfillment from that very time ; and if we refuse it, we refuse not only the comfort we should gain from seeing the Lord's control of the whole course of man's spiritual history for so many centuries, but also lose for the final application a guiding clue with which the grace of God has furnished us. That it is not a full, exhaustive fulfillment will not in this case either affect its being *a* fulfillment. It will be in perfect keeping with its place that it shall not be a complete one ; for were it this, no room for the final one would be left.

Now the general interpretation of the first four trumpets applies them to the breaking up of the Roman empire by the barbarian inroads of Goths, Vandals, and Huns, until its final extinction in the west by the hands of Odoacer. The eastern half survived to a latter day, but it was henceforth Grecian rather than Roman, Rome itself, with all that constituted its greatness,—nay, its being, in the days of its ancient glory, having departed from it.

This application agrees with the unity of these trumpets, while it gives a sufficient reason for the series coming to an end, and the fifth and sixth trumpets turning now to judgments upon the eastern half, by the hands of Saracen and Turk, the seventh being in its character universal. The Roman empire, let us remember, as the last empire of Daniel's visions, and that which existed in the Lord's lifetime upon earth, and by the authority of which He was crucified, stands as the representative of the world-power in its rebellion against God. (Comp. Ps. ii. with Acts iv. 25-28.) No wonder, therefore, if its history should be given under these war-trumpets, the last of which gives the full victory of Christ over all the opposition.

It is consistent with this that Satan in the twelfth chapter of this book should as the dragon be pictured with the seven heads and ten horns of the Roman beast. He is the spiritual prince of this world, and in this way is clothed with the power of the world, which we see here again is *Roman*.

So again, the "earth," which both in Greek and Hebrew may mean "land," and is often by no means the equivalent of the world, seems almost constantly in these prophecies, till the final one, to be the Roman earth, the territory of the Roman empire in its widest, and of which the western part seems to be the "third part" mentioned in the trumpets. As to this third part, Mr. Elliott urges, that during the period of these early trumpets, "the Roman world was, in fact, divided into three parts,* viz., the *Eastern* (Asia Minor, Syria, Arabia, Egypt); the *Central* (Mœsia, Greece, Illyricum, Rhoëtia); the *Western* (Italy, Gaul, Britain, Spain, north-western Africa); and that the third, or western, part was destroyed."

Others would make the "third part" equivalent to the

* I quote from the American edition of Lange on Revelation, p. 201.

territory peculiar to the third beast of Daniel, or the Greek empire; but this seems certainly not the truth: for in this case, according to the historical interpretation, the end of the *eastern* empire must be found under the fourth trumpet, whereas the fifth trumpet goes back before this, to introduce the Saracens!

Of all interpretations, that only seems consistent which applies the "third part" to the western part of the Roman earth, and in this way the term may have a further significance, as that part in which the Roman empire is yet to revive again, as it will revive for judgment in the latter days,—the "third" being very often connected in Scripture, as is well known, with the thought of resurrection.

The Roman empire has indeed long been extinct, both in the west and in the east, and it is of this very extinction that the historical interpretation of the trumpets speaks, yet the voice of prophecy clearly assures us that it must be existing at the time of the end, when, because of the words of the little horn, judgment comes down upon it. (Dan. vii. 11.) The nineteenth chapter of this book unites with the book of Daniel in this testimony: for it is when the Lord appears that the beast is seen, along with the kings of the earth, arrayed in opposition against Him. Thus it is plain that the Roman empire must be existent at the end. It has yet, therefore, to rise again, and in the thirteenth chapter we see it, in fact, rising out of the sea: while in the seventeenth, where the woman Babylon has her seat upon it, it is said, "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition." (v. 8.) So it is called, "The beast that was, and is not, and shall come." (v. 8., *R. V.*)

Nothing can be much plainer than the fact that the Roman empire will revive again.

But not only so; it is also declared by the same sure

Word that it will revive to be smitten again in one of its heads, and apparently to death, yet its wound is healed and it lives. (chap. xii. 3, 12, 14.) It is after this that it becomes idolatrous, as Daniel has intimated to us it will, and all the world wonders after it. (*vv.* 3, 8, 12.)

It is not yet the place to go fully into this, but so much is clear as enables us to see how the historical interpretation of these trumpets points, or may point, to a future fulfillment of them. One other thing which the book of Revelation notes will make more complete our means of interpretation.

The beast, as seen in Revelation, has seven heads, or kings; and these are successive rulers—or forms of rule—over the empire: for "five," says the angel, "are fallen, and one is, and another is yet to come; and when he cometh, he must continue a *short* space." The heads, then, in this primary view, are seven, but five had passed away—commentators quote them from Livy—the sixth, the imperial power, existed at that time: the seventh was wholly future, and, in contrast with the long continuance of the sixth, would continue only a short space.

But there is an eighth head, and the beast himself is this. The last statement has been supposed to mean that the head exercised the whole authority of the empire; but it would seem nothing strange for the head of empire to exercise imperial authority. Does it not rather mean that the beast that is seen all through these chapters is the beast of this eighth head?

But the seventh head, where does it come in? There are some things that would seem to give us help with regard to this. For the empire plainly collapsed under its sixth head, and the seventh could not be until the empire again existed. There are questions here that have to be settled with the historical interpretation; but in the meantime the course of the trumpets as we have already

followed it, confirmed by their historical interpretation also, would suggest that we have in them, and indeed from the commencement of the seals, the history of the seventh head. The rider upon the white horse, to whom a crown is given, may well be the person under whom the empire is at first re-established. And of such an one Napoleon, though not (as some have thought) the seventh head himself, may be well the foreshadow. The sixth seal does not point to his overthrow: it is a wider, temporary convulsion which affects all classes—high and low together; and in the pause that follows, they would seem to recover themselves. The trumpets begin, however, at once to threaten overthrow. The very escape of the governing classes under the first trumpet seems to prepare the way for the outburst under the second, which is an eruption from beneath,—fierce with passionate revolt; to which is added, under the third, apostasy, the giving up of the restraint of divine government, soon to grow into the last, worst form of Christianity according to Satan—Antichrist: the opposition to incarnate Deity of deified humanity.

The result is, under the fourth trumpet, as it would appear, the imperial power smitten, the seventh head wounded to death, and with it the recently established empire overthrown beyond mere human power to revive again. But this brings in the help of one mightier than man—the awful power of Satan, working with an energy proportionate to the shortness of the time which is now his. The beast arises out of the abyss, its deadly wound is healed; the dragon gives him his power and throne and great authority; and all the world wonders and worships. (chap. xiii. 2-4.)

Then indeed it is "Woe! woe! woe! to the inhabitants of the earth."

(To be continued.)

THE MAN OF GOD.

Lecture I.—1 Kings xvi. 29—xvii. 1.

I HAVE just read these closing verses in the sixteenth chapter, beloved friends, in order that we may have before us in some measure the times in which Elijah stood forth. My desire is, if the Lord will, in this, or a lecture or so, to look at what, in the most striking features, the man of God is. We find, in the times of Israel, that word "man of God" coming up repeatedly in connection with Elijah and Elisha. The title, while actually found, as the character itself is prominently brought out, in times of failure, is still really applicable to all the Lord's people, as what they are all, I may say, positionally, and as purchased by the blood of Christ. They are surely God's men; but the "man of God" is the title here of one who is *practically* that,—one whose practical character answers to his position.

We have, in a very striking way, in the second epistle to Timothy, the man of God spoken of as the one for whom, in a sense, all Scripture was written, and whom alone it would profit as it ought; and so it becomes a very serious thing with us whether we have that character. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that *the man of God* may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. ii. 16, 17.)

There you find that Scripture only has its proper effect on the man of God; and though, of course, no child of God is shut out, and it is written for all in this sense, that all may be and should be such, yet of necessity the profit of it is limited to those who have, in a measure at least, the character of the man of God,—God's man; of those who

stand out for Him—those who are manifestly and practically His.

The character naturally becomes only the more distinct as the times are trying. Even in the apostle's time it could be said, "All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." (Phil. ii. 21.) Just in proportion as that is so, of course it makes more striking the reality of one who is a man of God; it makes him shine out in the darkness; as it is said of John the Baptist, who in his day took up Elijah's mission: "He was a burning and a shining light,"—not merely a shining light, mark, as the dead and decaying wood may shine, but a burning light as well. And it is a great point to understand, that while, of course, the darkness is not of God,—surely it is not!—yet, at the same time, it is *used* of God to make His light more apparent. We should accustom ourselves to think of it in that way; not excusing the evil, or thinking lightly of it, but as certainly not sinking down under it, or being controlled by it. For God's lights, as such, are made for the darkness, which does not hide or put them out, but manifests them. Such a light, in the very darkest days in Israel, was Elijah the Tishbite.

In the chapters before this, how little one seems to find one's way amid the discordant shapes of evil that fill the page, where the son is but spiritually the "brother of his father," as Ahab's name imports, and that which is born of the flesh is only flesh again. It is so beautiful that you get God at once brought into the scene when Elijah steps into it. Then, while there is still darkness all around, it is not unrelieved darkness any more. If you consider, you will see how largely God's people have lived in such times as these; how from the very beginning of all dispensations that which was intrusted to man's care he failed in, and the ruin of what was set up became a settled thing. If you take Israel; God says of their course

in the wilderness, "Ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them; and I will carry you away beyond Babylon." (Acts vii. 43.) The failure in the wilderness is there connected with the Babylonish captivity, though a great number of years intervened. The whole thing failed there, and Babylon was the necessary result of the failure in the wilderness.

Take, again, the Church, before the apostles had passed off the scene. It was the mercy of God that they had not passed away before we get His judgment through them of the condition of things. One of them can tell us, "It is the last time; and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now there are many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." (1 Jno. ii. 18.) Another, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work" (2 Thess. ii. 7); and a certain hindrance has only to be removed for the man of sin to be fully manifested. Look into the writings of those called "fathers," but a generation or so after the apostles. There was a sudden dropping down into the very depths of darkness, we may say, at once. From that time to this, nearly eighteen hundred years, has been a time in which God's people have had to walk with God alone. It is what we ought always to do, of course, but still more does a time of general departure call on those who would be overcomers to walk alone with Him. If the stream be adverse, we need more spiritual energy, that is all.

If you compare the second epistle of Peter, the first chapter, with the first chapter of the first epistle, you will find such a difference. There is a call in the second for greater energy; because God does not leave us to the influences of every kind about us. *He* does not fail, if man does. Yet it is so astonishing that we should be ready almost to credit Him with failure, because we fail.

And at a time of general failure, as if delivered up to it, we claim it as even a sort of humility, not only not to pretend to be Pauls, but even to take his path at all.

Yet such as he were men of like passions with ourselves; and we, as they, are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. The Spirit of God was no more in them than in us; because if the Spirit of God is in us, it has no measure from God. You find everybody almost imagining that there is a "measure of the Spirit," whereas there is not, in that sense, a measure of it at all. That word which the apostle gives in the epistle to the Ephesians, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (v. 18.), is to all Christians. If we were filled with the Spirit, should we be any thing less than men of God? Elijah had a special mission, of course, and so had Paul; but still, as to spiritual character, should we be any other than even these? If the night is dark, will not even the faintest light be brighter?

The times in Israel were not times in which we should look for such a light as Elijah the Tishbite; it *was*, exactly, God's time. God delights in showing, in the very midst of it all, that He is quite as sufficient for the darkest times as for the brightest. Elijah's name shows where his strength was. "My mighty One is Jehovah" is its full significance. "Eli" means "my God," but yet also "my strength," or "my mighty One." It is the word used by the Lord upon the cross,—*"Eli, Eli,"*—"My God, My God;" but the very force of it there is, that He is appealing to One who has got abundant power (if it were only a question of power,) to bring Him out of all the difficulty in a moment; instead of which, the mighty One, His strength, forsakes Him. So here, it is "Jehovah is My mighty One," and it is the power of *God* we see in Elijah,—a power as available for you and me as for him.

"Tishbite" is said by some to mean "the converter,"—

the one in whom there was power to turn men from the way in which they were unto Himself, and who sought to bring a nation back to God. In his own lifetime there might seem to be little apparent success in that ; even so there is the lesson for us. For while God never allows His Word to fall fruitless to the ground, and we may surely trust Him for that, on this very account we may leave success to Him,—not indifferent, but still not daunted, if it do not much appear ; and anxious, first of all, that the seed and sowing should be to His mind, rather than to see results which perhaps the day of manifestation will alone disclose.

That is what God would have before us : success is in His own hands, and God is content sometimes to work in a way to us inscrutable. Look at the Lord's life : how many apparently were converted ?—a few disciples gather in an upper room after His resurrection. There was quite a number at Pentecost, and a mightier work ; but as you go on, you find no such large success, even in apostolic hands, as you would expect perhaps from the gospel. Very various indeed it is : in many places to which the apostle Paul went, instead of having, what people expect now from a few weeks' revival-meetings, converts by the score, very often but a few, so far as we can see. And only in a few places at first was there large response. In an exceptional one, you find the Lord saying, "I have much people in this city ;" but in no wise was that the rule. And the Lord, in His own parable of the mustard-seed, indicates that the growth of the little gospel-seed into the "tree" was as little likely a result as it argued little for Christianity. Alas ! the great spread of this took place in proportion to its adulteration ; and as it became popular, so it became corrupt.

Why do I speak of this ? Because if we make success our object, it will become a snare to us. We shall get our

eyes upon the results, and by this, test our work untruly. For if that were the test, what about His who said, "I have labored in vain: I have spent My strength for naught!" "Yet surely," was His confidence, "My judgment is with the Lord, and My work with My God." God, on the other hand, would have us look, in the most careful way possible, at walk and work and life, and as to what comes of it,—the issue of it all,—leave that to be made manifest in the day fast approaching, which shall make every thing manifest. Are you content to leave it to that? Care for souls and love to them is of course another thing. God forbid that I should say one word which should make that a matter of little moment! but beware of what on every side people are doing; and beware of thinking that quantity, with God, will atone for quality.

Now with Elijah, while God honored the man in the most remarkable way, as you know,—put Himself along with him, authenticated his word, and gave the fire from heaven which consumed the sacrifice,—yet there seemed no adequate result. Did the nation turn to God? "Hear me," Elijah prays,—*"Hear me, O Lord! hear me! that this people may know that Thou art the Lord God, and that Thou hast turned their hearts back again."* (1 Kings xviii. 37.) In the very next chapter, he is fleeing from the face of Jezebel, because she had said, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time." (Chap. xix. 2.) There you find, perhaps, how the ill-success of his mission affected one like Elijah. When he looked at that, he was asking, "Would God I might die!" and sank down in discouragement. There he was, just the man that was not going to die,—just the man who, as you know, was taken straight into heaven without seeing death at all, vanquished by the apparent want of success, after all this wonderful display of power. Is this not to us a

most wholesome warning not to look at the success so much as at the being with God which will insure success? If we are to wait for the success—for the end—in order to see what the thing is we do, is it not manifest that we must do it in the dark in the meantime, as to whether it be of God or not? Yet only as knowing this can we do it in communion with Him. What comes of it is God's account, not ours. We need not be afraid that His purpose will not be fulfilled, or that which is of Him not prosper.

Now let us look at Elijah in the attitude expressed here in a few words. "Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, 'As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years but according to my word.'" (Chap. xvii.) He stood before the living God: God was for him that—the living God. That is the first thing. "As the Lord God of Israel liveth," he says. He can find no way of expressing assurance equal to that. It was the surest thing he knew, the most vividly realized, that the God of Israel lived. And that is just the thing that we want to realize on the way down here. The living God is what we want in the midst of scenes like this; in the midst of all so full of life and activity, the life around and about, brushing us on every side, how we do want to realize the living God!

I know, when you look at Elijah's life, you may say, "Certainly God did manifest Himself to Elijah in a marvelous, miraculous way, which we do not see at all now. To only some is it given to work in that way with God. We cannot see these things now." Yet God is the same living God; and we may be sure of this, that while it is true we do not realize what Elijah did, the failure is clearly *our* failure, and not God's. I do not mean to say there are what people call miracles in the self-same way

now ; that is not exactly what I am speaking of. We do not expect fire to fall from heaven, or any thing of that sort, very likely ; but while all this is true, as we see how the draught of fishes could bring the living God home to a soul ready for the announcement, so we may see, and should be prepared to see, Him acting in every little event of our lives. We only need to look : just as with those people who are not prepared to find great things in the Word, so are never able to find great things in it. The open eye is faith. It is the new sense of the child of God, and more certain than any other. In proportion as this is in exercise will the Word be permeated by a living Presence. "Quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword," it will bring us under the eyes of "Him with whom we have to do."

So with God's presence about us. The earth is still full of Him. What has drawn a veil over His presence? Really, it is unbelief,—that is all. Unbelief ! I grant you that veil is perfectly impenetrable unless the Word has approved itself to us as His revelation in the way we have spoken of. But then creation becomes, from mere materialism, spiritualized and transfigured. Our own history becomes the story of an omnipotent love, under which "all things work together for good to them that love God." He counts the very hairs of our head, goes beyond all our thought and care for ourselves, and fills our loneliest moments with His presence.

It is only that which will make our lives at all what they ought to be ; it is only that which will redeem them, so to speak, from the littleness and meanness and unimportance otherwise attaching to them. The meanest life in His presence ceases to be drudgery, and becomes ennobled ; the noblest without it, what is it but utter vanity ?

You must not imagine that Elijah's life was made up of miracles. How small a part of it these miracles were !

And when he stands forth here to answer for the living God, we do not find that the faith he manifested had been nurtured upon miracles. It is not God's way. Those who believed in Christ's name when they saw the miracles He did were not those in whom He confided. It is when we have faith in His presence and nearness that He will respond to the faith we have. It would be merely tempting God to want Him to show Himself in this wonderful way just to prove He was with us. *To question* is to tempt Him. He *is* near us, and we ought to know it; and when we realize that, then we may see, perhaps, what to unaccustomed eyes may look not unlike miracle even in the present matter-of-fact day.

But again, to Elijah, the living God was not merely his God: He was the God of Israel. That is a beautiful thing, quite characteristic of the man of God. Israel were God's people. He was not standing before Israel, remember; he stood before the *Lord God* of Israel, not before Israel. But Israel was something to him, because his God was Israel's God; and because the Lord God was the Lord God of Israel, therefore Israel was in his thought connected with the Lord God for whom he spoke.

Now, that is of immense moment to us, to whom God has revealed the mystery of His Church. We may easily have the Church before us, and be monopolized with the thought of the Church in such a way as really to take us out of the presence of God. What is the Church without the God of the Church? We may easily be making much of the Christian and leaving out the God of the Christian, and leaving out all that gives Christianity or Christians the least importance.

On the other hand, let us understand that to stand before the God of Israel implies this, that we are linked in heart with what is God's cause in the world. "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it,"—not for a

fraction of it, even the most intelligent,—aye, or the most devoted. Every one of the tribes had its name upon the high-priest's breast-plate; and even so all His saints are upon Christ's heart now. Can we be God's men and yet not in active earnest sympathy with that with which His heart so intimately concerns itself? Surely it is impossible. "I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ," says the apostle, "for His body's sake, which is the Church."

Thus, while God, who forgets not the smallest in His care for the greatest, nor one of His people in His concern for the rest, is to be for us personally and intimately ours, at the same time, He is to be the Lord God of Israel to us, and we are to stand before Him as such. Now, this standing before Him, what does it mean? It is not an expression of confidence—there is abundant confidence you see at once—or of rest, or of peace. Too often we make that the whole thing. He stands before the Lord God of Israel. This is the attitude of service. He is waiting, ready at His bidding. Not merely walking before Him; not running about, surely, with the restless hurry of many, too busy with His service to listen to His word. "Standing" is waiting to have His will expressed. We *stand* before the Lord God when we are waiting for Him to direct us, and do not move without His guidance. There may be much more standing than moving even, no doubt. If you take Elijah's life, how much more of standing, or waiting, or being alone with God, than there was of acting for Him; but the acting for Him, in consequence, came just at the right time. So should we be ready to serve, not merely occupied with the service, much less hurrying about, as if to be doing was the whole matter, but to be in *His* path, to be doing *His* will, conscious that all else is worse than idleness.

Now notice how God identifies Himself with the men who stand before Him in this way. "As the Lord God of Israel liveth before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years but according to my word."

What a bold thing to say! Of course, Elijah did not mean to assert that because of his word the Lord would do these things. It was not that the Lord was going to accomplish Elijah's will, but that Elijah was accomplishing the Lord's. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." "Surely the Lord God will do *nothing*, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets. . . . The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" (Amos iii. 7, 8.) The prophet and the man of God are nearly identical. Would He keep back any thing from those who stood before Him, seeking to be servants of His will and toward the people of His choice? What a wonderful place that is to be in! For God to identify Himself so with one, not to be ashamed of him, as it is said in the eleventh of Hebrews of those old worthies; not ashamed to identify Himself with, and uphold before the face of the world, the word of a poor, untitled man, but to whom *His* word and will were all. Thus was it with Elijah, and so he became linked with the fulfillment of the purposes of One to whom the universe is but the scene of the display of a glory which transcends it still.

Now, that is the character of the man of God. Do we know what it is to have the living God before our eyes in this kind of way? Do we know what it is to be able to see, not only His actings in our lives, but what He is doing in the world, and toward His people, because we are with Him and therefore have His mind? Do we know what it is, as sons of God, to be His servants, working with the zeal and intelligence of those who both know the Father's will and know the Father?

Of course, we must be sons before we are servants; but, being sons, do not let us imagine that this is every thing! People put service in the wrong place often. They are serving before they are sons, or before they are conscious of being sons; and slipping, therefore, into that hired service for which God has no place. On the other hand, it is surely the right thing when sonship ripens into ser-

ice, and the full reality of sonship can hardly be enjoyed when this is not so.

Even so, rest *from* labor develops into rest *in* labor, or it is not the full rest Christ gives. Rest for the conscience is attained when we have known that the work of Christ is what God alone accepts, and has accepted, as justifying us before Him. Therefore He *gives* rest. "Come unto Me all ye that labor, and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. xi. 28.) Does He stop there? Is that all? No; "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall *find rest* unto your souls." (v. 29.) That is the only way in which rest in the full sense is attainable. It is rest, not apprehended by the conscience merely, but laid hold of by the heart; rest from all restlessness,—perfect and complete repose.

But notice, it is His yoke and His burden. It is not a yoke of our own making or imposing. It is not setting ourselves to so much work for Him. It is another thing to take Christ's yoke and His burden, and learn of Him, the Doer of the Father's will, and whose meat and drink it was to do it. In Him, the true Son was the perfect servant. Have we apprehended that because we are sons, from the very nature of the child's relation to the father, we are necessarily and always servants? The child is never released from it, as a mere ordinary servant may be. His very relationship makes him a servant to his father. A servant of love, no doubt, and thus completely one.

Our service, from first to last, is to have His Word to justify it. Our own wills religiously are no more really right than irreligious. God has one path for us to walk in, one work at any moment for us to be about. While the Word guides, it must be a living guidance—guided by His eye.

The Lord grant it to us, for His name's sake.

(To be continued.)



CURRENT EVENTS.

DR. WALDENSTRÖM AND NON-VICARIOUS ATONEMENT.

I.—*Continued.*

DR. WALDENSTRÖM'S additions to Lutheranism necessitate an important modification of it. The Lutheran creed is, that "the unworthy and unbelievers receive the true body and blood of Christ, so that, however, they shall *not* thence derive either consolation or life." Dr. Waldenström, believing that the blood *is* the life, cannot, of course, hold that unbelievers receive it. "This participation in the life of Jesus" is "by the *believers* in Him" only. Faith he presses as a necessity, yet it is in the *sacrament* that "through the bread and wine we really become partakers of Christ's body and blood,—that is, we become one body with Him, and are made partakers of His life." Whether this is possible apart from the sacrament I cannot find that he has said. Our Lord's words are absolute, "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.) Dr. Waldenström may not take these words as referring to the Supper, and he would be surely right in this; but then it is possible to eat and drink thus by faith alone, and there is no ground for maintaining any other presence of Christ in the sacrament. As for membership in the body of Christ, that is by the baptism of the Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 13; comp. Acts i. 5), and not by any sacrament at all. Thus all is confusion in these views from first to last.

Dr. Waldenström lays stress in this connection upon 1 Cor. x. 16, 17, the last verse of which he translates

“more literally : It is one bread ; we, the many, are one body, for we all have part in that one bread.” “Paul,” he adds, “says, in effect, ‘Here is a communion, a partaking of Christ’s own life, given for us in death ; here is a uniting of believers into one body, by their partaking of Christ’s body, thus making common cause with Him.’”

But it is unfortunate for the argument that the apostle as much speaks of being *κοινωνοι*, or communicants, of the devils (*v.* 20, *Gk.*), and of Israel being (*κοινωνοι*) “partakers of the altar,” as he speaks of the (*κοινωνία*) communion of the body or of the blood of Christ. In either case, he is thinking evidently of association, and so identification, whether with the altar or worship of Jehovah, or with the devils to which under their idols the Gentiles sacrificed. And just so at the Lord’s table, they were associated and identified with the wondrous revelation of God whose central part is the cross of Christ. Dr. Waldenström’s views really displace the cross, turn the supper of the Lord from a memorial of the past into what is wholly inconsistent with it. True, he speaks, forced by what is so evidently there, of a “life given up in death,” but it is not for him *the giving up* of life, the death itself, for participation in death (in *his* sense of participation) could have no meaning. For him, it is participation in life,—not death, but its opposite. For the apostle, in this same epistle, it is a remembrance, and a showing forth the Lord’s death.

I have before said, believers are *not* united into one body by partaking of Christ’s body, but by the baptism of the Spirit ; and the apostle’s language, which our author builds upon, suits better the thought of partaking of the one bread being the *expression* of the one body than it does the idea of the body being *formed* by this. For it is of outward association he is speaking, and not of something entirely hidden save to faith. The *doctrine* of the

body is further on in the epistle (chap. xii.), and there quite different, as we have seen.

"The life that the Son of God gave in death" becomes thus for Dr. Waldenström the truth intended in every passage where the blood or the death of Christ is spoken of in connection with justification, remission, redemption, or whatever else has been procured for us by it. An unscriptural expression is introduced every where for the purpose of making death mean the opposite of death. True, it is admitted, He *gave* His life in death, but the necessity of that death, the meaning of it, we are never given to know. It reminds us of those who tell us, as to the old sacrifices, that the death of the animal was only needed because the blood could not be otherwise procured! Thus that which cannot be altogether ignored is annulled in its deep reality. The awful cry, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" finds no answer. God's making His Son to be sin for us is explained to be only this, that God "allowed Him to be treated *by men* as a sinner." In this light loose fashion, Dr. Waldenström might easily, as he promises to do, "consider briefly all the passages in the New Testament which speak of the blood of Jesus as a means of salvation," secure that if death can be only made to mean life, all is simple. The very texts which most plainly say the opposite become at once the strongest in his favor.

Thus, if the apostle says that "God set forth Christ to be a mercy-seat through faith in His blood," this is by such a process easily made to mean that "by faith sinners are made partakers of the blood of Jesus, or *of His life*, which He gave in death for them." He does not argue about this, nor need to show it from the context. We have only to bring in the new vocabulary, and read "blood" as "life," and we see it at once. It is not pretended that the passage in Romans proves that the blood means life,

or that it says any thing about life. Plainly it does not, but that is no matter.

But why give any consideration to texts that can teach us nothing, and when we have the means of so reducing the most refractory into subjection? In this all too easy work we need not follow Dr. Waldenström. It will be only needful to look at any new argument that may present itself. And here we have what perhaps he would call that :—

“Paul says that ‘God set forth Christ to be a mercy-seat through faith in His blood,—that is, God has made Him to be a mercy-seat by His giving His life in death. . . . So far from the case being such that Christ through His blood should be a shield for sinners against God and His righteousness, on the contrary, God Himself has set Him forth to be a mercy-seat for sinners, in order that He might save and bless them through Him.’ ”

Does Dr. Waldenström really believe that Christ's death is maintained by any of those he opposes to be a “shield *against* God and His righteousness”? Is He not uniformly presented by them as “the Lord our righteousness”? (Jer. xxiii. 16.) Can righteousness be a shelter against righteousness? At any rate, we need not, and dare not, undertake the defence of any one who does not believe that *God* “gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

But there is a deeper question. God gave His Son, assuredly; but why to *death*? why to the cross? why to be made a curse for us! Why *must* the Son of Man be lifted up? Why is it that “except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit”? It is this need which Dr. Waldenström seems never to have realized.

That blood-sprinkled mercy-seat of which the apostle speaks here,—for “mercy-seat,” I believe, with the Swedish translators, to be the proper rendering of the word,—

should surely be the very thing to show Dr. Waldenström his error. For here, if the blood sprinkled speaks of life, it is life *taken*, not communicated. It is sprinkled *before* God, not upon men. It is sprinkled to *make* the throne of God a "mercy-seat;" to cleanse, not sinners, by any impartation to them, but *their sins*, so that God may be able to abide among them. (Lev. xvi. 14-17.) I am aware of Dr. Waldenström's comments upon this elsewhere (The Reconciliation, p. 55), but it is not true that the tabernacle, ark, or altar represent or typify the people, as he says. No instance can be shown, and any one who reads the chapter can see the case to be as I have represented it.

Dr. Waldenström next takes up Rom. v. 9, 10.; and here he makes (rightly enough) "by His death" to be essentially the equivalent of "by His blood;" and then the usual transformation is effected. But thus he makes justification to be also grounded upon a work in ourselves, instead of the work of the cross: "In the blood of Jesus by faith they had become righteous. By faith they had become partakers of the life of Jesus, which He gave in death for them, *and thus had their justification happened.*" And he is bold enough to add, "Here again, therefore, the same doctrine. There is never in Scripture any thing about the obtainment by faith of any reconciliation or grace or righteousness acquired or purchased by the blood for the world,—no, not one single passage with any such idea can be shown to exist in the Bible"(!)

Yet even Dr. Waldenström must admit that the Lord Himself said that "God so loved the *world*, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish," and that this refers to the cross on which "the Son of Man was lifted up, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish," as also that He says that for this the "Son of Man must be lifted up." Why "must"? and was nothing in the way of grace even pro-

cured by this? It was for the world surely, for it was the fruit of God's love to the world; and many similar passages might be quoted. Here, the blood indeed is not spoken of directly, but the cross is, and is illustrated as to its meaning by the lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness: why a *serpent* lifted up? It is a type, and we may differ about the significance, but it must mean something; and if you say, "It just means the 'old serpent' overcome," how does the "lifting up" do this? That is not a picture of life, is it? it is of death, certainly. Why must the death take place that the life might be received? Even the author is compelled by Scripture to repeat, though it seems to have no meaning for him, "life given up in death:" well, *why* "given up in death"? Could we, then, receive it in no other way than by His dying that we might receive it? Must He lose it that we might obtain it? Nay, He laid down His life that He might take it again? Why was it, then, that He must lay it down?

Dr. Waldenström cannot answer this: he *has* no answer. He catches at what is in itself true, that we are recipients of life in Him; but if you ask, Why through death? why "made a curse for us"? how did He "bear our sins in His own body on the tree"? how is it "through His stripes we are healed"? he does not know—has nothing that will stand a moment's question. The value of Christ's death seems for him only to win the hearts of men, if at least I read aright all that I can find upon it in this tractate: "'By the death,' '*in* His blood,'" he says. That Christ by the grace of God had given His life in death for them, that was what had broken their enmity, and reconciled them to God." All well; but is there no more?

To this we shall return, if the Lord will. The strength of Dr. Waldenström's position, it will be seen, is just the

utterance of half-truths for whole ones, and the reiteration of a bald sophistry, that blood shed in death stands for life. This he repeats and re-repeats, and it would be idle to repeat the exposure of it. What makes against him, he omits to speak of: as where, in Heb. xiii. 12, the apostle dwells upon the truth that "Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate," Dr. Waldenström insists upon what every one knows, that to be sanctified is to be "cleansed from sin." It is more, but it is that; and so when he says that "the work of Christ was to remedy just the injury which sin had occasioned," that is a truth, though a partial one. We may agree too that "neither is it said that the blood by its merit should move God to consider us holy, although we were not holy." Few, it is to be hoped, believe any such thing; and there is confusion apparently between *holiness* and *righteousness*. That God "*justifieth the ungodly*" Scripture does say plainly, *righteousness* being "imputed without works" (Rom. iv. 5, 6); but that is the very way in which God *produces* holiness,—not acts as if it were no matter.

But the gist of the passage in Hebrews Dr. Waldenström never notices at all, though it is plain enough in the verse as he quotes it. *Why* must Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, *suffer without the gate*? It is this evidently that gives the very blood of Christ power to sanctify, as in the type he tells us that the "bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high-priest for sin are *burned without the camp*." (v. II.) Why that? If the blood be the life, in the way the author puts it, and the impartation of life be the whole thing, how does the burning without the camp help the blood to sanctify? Dr. Waldenström has not a word—does not entertain the question. Though with the apostle of all importance, with him it seems to

have none: why but that he and the apostle are not in agreement? That is the simple reality.

The apostle is speaking of death, and not of life; and even here, he tells us, death alone would not be enough. "Outside the camp" expresses what "outside the gate" of the city of God does afterward—distance from God, because of sin! Nay, one expression of it in the cross is not enough, but the darkness which throws its pall over the scene must also testify with the agonizing words of the Sufferer which break out from it, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law," says the apostle, "being made a curse for us, as it is written, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree.'" (Gal. iii. 13.) The due of sin is not death alone. The bearing of our sins requires more: and to the real subject of the experience of the twenty-second psalm, the agony of agonies is that which again and again He deprecates—"But be not Thou far from Me, O Lord!"

Dr. Waldenström's system has no place for this: vicarious atonement he refuses. But why this, then?—"Our fathers trusted in Thee; they trusted in Thee, and were *not* forsaken." Why this exception in the case of the One only absolutely righteous?

Here, then, we may leave the consideration of Dr. Waldenström's first pamphlet on the blood of Jesus. There is nothing more in it that presents any difficulty, if we have clearly mastered what has been before us.

(To be continued.)

THE MAN OF GOD; HIS DISCIPLINE.

Lecture II.—1 Kings xvii. 2-9.

NOW we have, from the second verse of the chapter, the Lord's discipline of His servant. We have his character in the first verse,—what he was, how he stood before the living God, the God of Israel. We see him in the presence of God's enemies with His word; one of those who had learned His mind, and therefore who could be used as Jehovah's mouth. He is now called away into the wilderness, himself to be disciplined; to learn some needed lessons under God's hand.

Discipline is needed by us from the first moment of our lives until the last. The discipline of the Father is ours because we are children. And the discipline of *the Lord* is ours too in the character of servants; for He has as much to do in shaping the instruments He uses as He has *by* them when they are shaped.

That discipline of the Lord never ceases; but still there are special seasons of it, and a special season we have here in Elijah's life. He has scarcely stood forth publicly before the world before the Lord takes him away again, apart by himself. No doubt it was not a new thing for Elijah to be alone with God; but there are yet some new features in his present isolation. He is bidden to turn eastward and hide himself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. You know what "Jordan" means,—the great typical river of death. And "Cherith" means "cutting off." The Lord brings him to that significant place, and there makes him drink of the brook, sustained by the ravens, which feed him there.

We have to take these illustrative names to help our understanding of the Lord's dealings here. They show us Cherith as the prophet's Mara, where he had to drink in, as it were, the death from which as judgment he

escapes. Miraculously sustained himself, he learns for himself "the terrors of the Lord," and how sin has wrecked the first creation. And it is a lesson we have to learn. We have to pass through the world, knowing, as far as outward circumstances go, no exemption from the common lot of men. God would not sever us from it. His own Son has come down into the world, as we know, in order to go through it Himself; the One who was ever pleasing to the Father, and had no need of discipline, and could not possibly have to say to judgment except as bearing it vicariously on the cross. Yet, in His grace, He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and passed through all the trials and troubles proper to man. Free from the callousness which sin engenders in us, He entered into them in a way we can little realize. "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." His mere presence in the world was enough to make Him a "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." It did not need that He should personally be subject to it: it was enough for Him to be in the world to realize what the world was. He had come from God and went to God, and He was with God all the way through. That was sufficient to make Him pre-eminently a Man of sorrows, just because He was not a man like us. How little of the misery around have our hearts room for! How even familiarity with it deadens our sense of it! And how our own personal sorrows absorb and abstract us from those around! Think of One all eye, all ear, all heart, for all of this. The Lord knew it divinely, and felt every thing.

Personally, however, He gave Himself up to that which sin has made our condition. His probation was not in Eden, but a wilderness; nor did He use His miraculous power to relieve His hunger there. He had come into the world only to do God's will in it, and His hunger was no motive to act, when that will was not expressed. In

His answer to Satan, He just takes the ground of man, but perfect man:—"Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

And the word of God, whatever trial were involved, whatever suffering it called for, that word was to Him meat and drink. He lived by it. It ought to be that to us. The bare fact of having the word of God to fulfill, whatever it call for ought to be enough, surely, to sustain us. The bare fact of being in His path ought to be enough, as we realize it, to furnish us with the endurance and faith needed for it.

Thus, then, the Lord passes Elijah through the suffering and sorrows coming on the land. He brings him to Cherith, and Cherith yields him water for his thirst. Just as, in the beautiful language of the eighty-fourth psalm, it is said, as to the blessing of those "in whose heart are the ways"—the ways that lead to the presence of God, "Who passing through the valley of Baca," (of tears) "make it a well." Cherith becomes this to the prophet.

Thus God makes things most contrary to work together for good to them that love Him. It is not loss to learn what that world is through which Christ has passed before; nor to be proved by it as He was proved; nor to have had in it the discipline He could not need; nor the opportunity of doing in it, as He did, the Father's will, in the face of suffering and of sorrow.

By and by, it will certainly be no sorrow to have known, in whatever measure, the circumstances of his path down here, in which God was glorified as nowhere else. How could we be so prepared to see, as now we may see, but soon shall fully, what His perfection was, or what the grace that brought Him into the world for us? And then to have shared, in whatever smaller measure, with Him the trial, and with Him the victory! Manna is no *mere*

wilderness food, though it is that. In our Canaan home at last, and forever, it is written that he that overcometh shall eat of the hidden manna.

This is another thing from discipline, of course; but we do need discipline at God's hand continually too; and that discipline is really what God uses to strengthen and bless. You have it in a beautiful way in Balaam's unwilling blessing of the people. "Who can count the dust of Jacob?" Jacob is looked at in the figure of dust. What does that mean? It means that they had been as dust trodden under the foot of the Egyptians. And yet Egypt was the place in which suddenly Jacob had grown into a nation. "The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew." It is the rule in all dispensations that have been, for all God's people. Thus Balaam says, "Who can count the dust of *Jacob*?" "Jacob" is designedly said. It was his natural, not spiritual, name,—Jacob, the "supplanter." And Jacob needed humiliation, but grew by it.

That is what we find in the first place as to the prophet in this chapter. In the second place, God takes him away from the brook, when it fails and dries up, to Zarephath, outside of Israel altogether. Israel had rejected the Lord, and were feeling His hand in consequence. He takes him outside of Israel to be witness that the grace of the Lord will not be dammed back by human barriers, or restricted to the narrow limits to which man would confine it. That is the way the Lord uses that story of the widow of Zarephath. And the gospel in Luke commences with His testimony at Nazareth, that if in Israel the outflow of His goodness is restrained, God will have His witnesses in spite of that. Grace will only show itself the more gracious. Outside of the whole field of privilege, He takes Himself a witness among the Gentiles.

For the Lord's words recorded in the fourth chapter of

Luke are not a mere arbitrary expression of God's sovereignty ;—they have been so taken, but they are not. "Of a truth," He says, "many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land ; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow." (*vv.* 25, 26.) Now you must remember that what they had been just saying, after they had borne witness too of His gracious words, and wondered at them, was, "Is not this Joseph's son?" Before this, He had been declaring to them the acceptable year of the Lord, and the power of the Spirit there in Him for their healing. It is when they were saying, "Is not this Joseph's son?" in spite of the gracious words they were conscious and witness of,—it is then that He warns them that God cannot be shut up by their unbelief : if they reject Him, He will go outside to the Gentiles.

That is what Elijah has to learn in the case of the widow of Sarepta. He has to learn to go out with God outside the limits to which natural ties, and even religious associations, would confine him, and recognize in a woman of Sidon the work of God's sovereign grace,—there in its fullest and most wonderful display. I do not believe we have bottomed the need of man (or, therefore, our own,) until we have learnt the absolute *sovereignty* of divine grace,—shown, however, let us remember, in a scene where man's rejection of it compels Him to be sovereign, if He show grace at all. Man's will, alas ! is in opposition to that will of God to which, if all yielded, all could and would be saved. But if some,—if *we* have yielded, is it because of betterness in us?—were our hearts naturally more docile or obedient? Scripture shall answer for us: "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." Therefore, beloved brethren,

was it needful that we should be born again, "*not* of the will of the flesh, *nor* of the will of man, but of God" alone. The very figure speaks of this; for in our natural birth, was there aught of our own will?—were we consulted? Or in creation, has the thing called into being its choice? And we are not only born of God, but His creation, "His workmanship, *created* in Christ Jesus unto good works."

But then this sovereign grace is grace in its fullest display. It is divine love overtopping barriers that might well be thought, even by it, unsurmountable. It is the heart of God manifested,—His will shown, indeed to be but the energy of His nature who is love.

I know what rises in the mind of some: "Why not, then, save all? Could He not as well save all?" But I can only answer, *The necessary limit even to divine goodness is its own perfection.* God has solemnly assured us He would not have men perish. What infinite wisdom *can* do, I must be infinitely wise myself to know.

Elijah's second lesson is one that it indeed imports the man of God to have learnt well.

All the way through, Elijah has to learn the lesson of dependence. Dependence, of course, is nothing else than faith; and the Lord puts His servant where faith shall be a continual necessity. Thus, what He seeks from us, He gives us practical help toward producing for Him. Faith grows by exercise. God ordains for it, in Elijah's case, continual exercise. He has no stock of his own, we may say, ever to subsist upon. The ravens bring him bread and flesh in the morning and bread and flesh in the evening; and the next day, and still the next, it is the same thing again. And then when he comes to Zarephath, there you find, in the same way, the widow is called upon to sustain him, and there is a little oil in a cruse and a handful of meal in a barrel. The meal does not fail in

the barrel, and the oil does not fail in the cruse. It does not increase, however,—it continues a handful of meal and a little oil; and he is kept, in that way, in constant dependence upon God.

And that is the way the Lord would have us spiritually. He never gives a stock of any thing—of grace or of gift—so that we can say, “I have got enough to last me so long, at least.” That would be taking us out of the place of faith, and depriving us of the blessing God has for us. He covets to show us what He is,—His power, His love, His forgetfulness of us. As it is said of the people whom in His love and His pity He redeemed, “He bare them and carried them all the days of old.” It is a great thing to get this in a real and practical way for ourselves with God. If He keeps us low down here,—and you know it is His way, in more senses than one, to call and choose the poor,—it is not because His hand is niggard, (God forbid!) but that we may not miss realizing this great blessing of His care. Often all we think of is, having our need met; but how little a thing is that with God! It would cost Him nothing, we may say, to meet the need of a lifetime in a moment; and a lesser love than His would supply it at once, and get rid of a constant burden. But that is not His way. To supply the need is a small thing; but to supply it in such a way as to make us feel in each seasonable supply the Father’s eye never withdrawn from us, the Father’s heart ever employed about us,—that is what He means. “Give us day by day our daily bread” is the prayer the Lord taught His disciples; and thus we ask Him continually to be waiting on us. Is it not much more than to ask, Give us now, that we may not have to come again?

What a place the wilderness was to Israel, where the constant manna was a daily miracle, and the cloud of Jehovah’s presence led them in the way! It was the

place, alas! of constant murmurings; but in God's design, and to faith wherever in exercise, how wonderful a manifestation of the living God! Yet that wilderness journey is but for us a type,—only a shadow, therefore short of the reality of what faith in us should realize to be ours. What a spectacle to the heavenly beings, to whom is "known, by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God"! what daily miracles of grace for eyes that are open to it!

And of course these were types (as the manna and the water from the rock,) of *spiritual* blessings ministered to us. And here, the same rule applies. No stock given into our hand; all funds in God's treasure-house, but therefore *unfailing*; and a daily, hourly, ministry of strength according to the need, which not only meets it, but tells of the tenderness of a Father's care, and of the faithfulness of our High-Priest gone in to God.

Precious lessons for more than Elijah the Tishbite!—fresh for our hearts to-day.

(To be continued.)

ON THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST.

DEAR —, The questions you put make me feel deeply all that there is sorrowful in the walk of one whom nevertheless I love sincerely, our friend M. G. To enter upon subtle questions as to the person of Jesus tends to wither and trouble the soul, to destroy the spirit of worship and affection, and to substitute thorny inquiries, as if the spirit of man could solve the manner in which the humanity and the divinity of Jesus were united to each other. In this sense it is said, "No one knoweth the Son but the Father." It is needless to say that I have no such pretension. The humanity of Jesus cannot be compared. It was true and real humanity,—body, soul, flesh, and blood such as mine, as far as human

nature is concerned. But Jesus appeared in circumstances quite different from those in which Adam was found. He came expressly to bear our griefs and infirmities. Adam had none of them to bear; not that his nature was incapable of them in itself, but he was not in the circumstances which brought them in. God had set him in a position inaccessible to physical evil, until he fell under moral evil.

On the other hand, God was not in Adam. God was in Christ in the midst of all sorts of miseries and afflictions, fatigues and sufferings, across which Christ passed according to the power of God, and with thoughts of which the Spirit of God was always the source, though they were really human in their sympathies. Adam before his fall had no sorrows: God was not in him, neither was the Holy Ghost the source of his thoughts; after his fall, sin was the source of his thoughts. It was never so in Jesus.

On the other side, Jesus is the Son of man, Adam was not. But at the same time, Jesus was born by divine power, so that that holy thing which was born of Mary was called the Son of God; which is not true of any other. He is Christ born of man, but as Man even born of God; so that the state of humanity in Him is neither what Adam was before his fall nor what he became after his fall.

But what was changed in Adam by the fall was not humanity, but the state of humanity. Adam was as much a man before as after, and after as before. Sin entered humanity, which became estranged from God: it is without God in the world. Now Christ is not that. He was always perfectly with God, save that He suffered on the cross the forsaking of God in His soul. Also the Word was made flesh. God was manifest in flesh. Thus acting in this true humanity, His presence was incompatible with sin in the unity of the same person.

It is a mistake to suppose that Adam had immortality in himself. No creature possesses it. They are all sustained of God, who "alone has immortality" essentially. When God was no longer pleased to sustain in this world, man becomes mortal, and his strength is exhausted: in fact, according to the ways and will of God, he attains to the age of near one thousand years when God so wills, *seventy when He finds it good*. Only God would have this terminate, that one should die sooner or later when sin enters, save changing those who survive to the coming of Jesus, because He has overcome death.

Now, God was in Christ, which changed all in this respect (not as to the reality of His humanity, with all its affections, its feelings, its natural wants of soul and body; all which were in Jesus, and were consequently affected by all that surrounded Him, only according to the Spirit and without sin). No one takes His life from Him; He gives it up, but at the moment willed of God. He is abandoned, in fact, to the effect of man's iniquity, because He came to accomplish the will of God; He suffers Himself to be crucified and slain. Only the moment in which He yields up, His spirit is in His hands. He works no miracle to hinder the effect of the cruel means of death which man employed, in order to guard His humanity from their effect; He leaves it to their effect. His divinity is not employed to secure Himself from it, to secure Himself from death; but it is employed to add to it all His moral value, all His perfection to His obedience. He works no miracle not to die, but He works a miracle in dying. He acts according to His divine rights in dying, but not in guarding Himself from death; for He surrenders His soul to His Father as soon as all is finished.

The difference, then, of His humanity is not in that it was not really and fully that of Mary, but in that it was

so by an act of divine power, so as to be such without sin; and, moreover, that in place of being separated from God in His soul, like every sinful man, God was in Him who was of God. He could say, "I thirst," "My soul is troubled," "it is melted like wax in the midst of My bowels;" but He could also say, "The Son of Man who is in heaven," and, "Before Abraham was, I am." The innocence of Adam was not God manifest in flesh; it was not man subjected, as to the circumstances in which His humanity was found, to all the consequences of sin.

On the other hand, the humanity of man fallen was under the power of sin, of a will opposed to God, of lusts which are at enmity with Him. Christ came to do God's will: in Him was no sin. It was humanity in Christ where God was, and not humanity separate from God in itself. It was not humanity in the *circumstances* where God had set man when he was created, the circumstances where sin had set him, and in these circumstances without sin; not such as sin rendered man in their midst, but such as the divine power rendered Him in all His ways in the midst of those circumstances, such as the Holy Ghost translated Himself in humanity. It was not man where no evil was, like Adam innocent, but man in the midst of evil; it was not man bad in the midst of evil, like Adam fallen; but man perfect, perfect according to God, in the midst of evil, God manifest in flesh; real, proper humanity, but His soul always having the thoughts that God produces in man, and in absolute communion with God, save when He suffered on the cross, where He must, as to the suffering of His soul, be forsaken of God; more perfect then, as to the extent of the perfection and the degree of obedience, than any where else, because He accomplished the will of God in the face of His wrath, instead of doing it in the joy of His communion; and therefore He asked that this cup should pass, which

He never did elsewhere. He could not find His meat in the wrath of God.

Our precious Saviour was quite as really man as I, as regards the simple and abstract idea of humanity, but without sin, born miraculously by divine power; and, moreover, He was God manifest in flesh.

Now, dear——, having said thus much, I recommend you with all my heart to avoid discussing and defining the person of our blessed Saviour. You will lose the savor of Christ in your thoughts, and you will only find in their room the barrenness of man's spirit in the things of God and in the affections which pertain to them. It is a labyrinth for man, because he labors there at his own charge. It is as if one dissected the body of his friend, instead of nourishing himself with his affections and character. It is one of the worst signs of all those I have met with for the church (as they call it) to which Mr. G. belongs, that he has entered thus, and that it presents itself after such a sort before the Church of God and before the world. I may add that I am so profoundly convinced of man's incapacity in this respect that it is outside the teaching of the Spirit to wish to define how the divinity and the humanity are united in Jesus, that I am quite ready to suppose that, with every desire to avoid, I may have fallen into it, and in falling into it, said something false in what I have written to you. That He is really man, Son of man, dependent on God as such, and without sin in this state of dependence, really God in His unspeakable perfection—to this I hold, I hope, more than to my life. To define is what I do not pretend. If I find something which enfeebles one or other of these truths, or which dishonors what they have for object, I should oppose it, God calling me to it, with all my might.

May God give you to believe all that the Word teaches with regard to Jesus! It is our peace and our nourish-

ment to understand all that the Spirit gives us to understand, and not seek to define what God does not call us to define; but to worship on the one hand, to feed on the other, and to live in every way, according to the grace of the Holy Ghost. Yours affectionately, *J. N. D.*

AN OUTLINE OF SECOND TIMOTHY.

IN the first epistle, oversight is committed to Timothy, that purity and order might be kept in God's house; but in the second epistle, when confusion and evil have prevailed, the faithful servant is addressed, and aroused to overcome and persevere.

The outline is this: the servant is strengthened in the first part, then prepared unto every good work, then furnished by the Word, and, in chap. iv., solemnly charged before God, and sent into the field, encouraged by the crown held forth.

The gift is to be rekindled; for God never gave a spirit of fear, but of power and love and a sound mind; and afflictions are to be faced, that the gospel brings, in the power of God, who hath saved and called us; and in the summing up we have (chap. ii. 1), "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

This is the first thing. If we are overcome with fear, we have no ear to hear any further exhortation. What effect have orders upon panic-stricken troops? The fearful heart, then, must be strengthened—by faith in the power of God that nothing can overcome. The power of God! let this take hold upon us. This is the first part of the outline,—a rocklike basis for further instruction and exhortation for effectual service.

It was Saul and his men who trembled before the enemy, and not David; or any of the cloud of witnesses.

David encouraged himself in the Lord his God. Let us not yield, but maintain the conflict.

Note some of the exhortations in this part: "Stir up," or "rekindle the gift"!—"Hold fast"!—"Be strong"!—"Endure"!

Such an one is a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Paul took a long look ahead as to consequences. "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

Secondly, a man must purge himself from vessels to dishonor to be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and *prepared* unto every good work.

"Evil-communications corrupt good manners." (1 Cor. xv.) Corrupt doctrine or corruption in life the Christian is to have no fellowship with. "Awake to righteousness, and sin not"! Grace teaches us to be firm and uncompromising in rejecting evil in ourselves and in others, that we may not be overcome by the devil. Hymeneus and Philetus said the resurrection was past: this was overthrowing the faith of some.

As sanctified ones, we are priests, and so prepared for every good work in service as Levites. As holy priests, we draw near to God, and maintain diligently and reverently in our souls the doctrine of Christ, as the priests alone could view and handle the altars and the vessels of the sanctuary; then the Levites, who were joined to the priests (Num. iv. and xviii.), came and carried the burdens along the way; so Christians, as Levites, bear witness in ministry of the truth received in communion with God as priests. When holiness is absent, there is no priestly discernment of the truth, and no preparedness to serve.

Paul said, "I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. iv. 7); and to Timothy he says, "That good thing which was com-

mitted unto thee *keep* by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." (2 Tim. i. 14.) So in Ezra viii. 28, in carrying the vessels of the house of God, not now from Egypt (or the mount) to Canaan, but from Babylon to Jerusalem,—a similar lesson,—the word to the priests is, "Ye are holy unto the Lord; the vessels are holy also. . . . Watch ye, and *keep* them, until ye weigh them . . . at Jerusalem."

"If the faith is not kept, there cannot be true service for God, nor is there the sweet sense of His approval amid the stern realities of warfare.

But how well balanced the Christian character! With holy firmness in departing from iniquity must go gentleness and meekness in maintaining the truth to instruct opposers, counting upon God to bless and give effect to His Word. The energy to refuse the evil must be tempered by meekness, lowly confidence in God, who is above all the wiles of Satan, and able to deliver.

This gives repose to the character amid all distress, and gives glory to God, and effectual ministry.

Thirdly, the man of God, to be perfect, must be furnished for work by the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures; without that, he is not complete. Whatever else he may have, he cannot use the Word without what has already been spoken of. But without the Word diligently searched and learned, he has no weapon to use, however full of courage and zeal. Like a storekeeper without goods to supply his customers, or so little acquainted with his stock that he is unable to lay his hand upon the goods before his customer has gone.

But if I am unable to use the Word for others (according to my measure) it is because I am not using it for myself. Therefore the exhortation here is, first, "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, . . . knowing . . . that the Holy Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation." Then follows the word that

all Scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, furnished unto every good work. For it is only as I am myself living by the Word that I can use it for others. But diligence is needed, or, with all advantages and sincerity at the start, the soul becomes famished, and the Christian life a failure, and Laodicean lukewarmness destroys all freshness,—the condition of many Christians, though they have known both peace and liberty before.

We may feel we have excuses, of course,—sorrows, trials, vexations, fears, burdens; but they were not overcome, and the fact remains, vigor has departed, and appetite for the Word and reading with the household has ceased, because it has become a form only; and lack of gift is pleaded, or timidity. Such is the common condition in souls and in households. "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber (Prov. vi. 10, 11); . . . so shall thy poverty come as one that traveleth, and thy want as an armed man."

"Through wisdom is a house builded, and by understanding it is established; and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches." (Prov. xxiv. 3, 4.)

We might say that in the first chapter of our epistle we have wisdom enjoined, the house is builded, and the soul encouraged; in the second chapter, by understanding it is established, for "to depart from evil is understanding;" (Job xxviii. 28) and in the third chapter, the chambers are filled with precious things, by knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. Compared with a neglected, tenantless house, a house—a home well filled and adorned is a picture the Spirit of God presents to us of a soul that is diligent and instructed in the Word. The mind is not habitually dwelling upon trouble or vanity, but upon

God and the word of His grace, and the profiting appears unto all.

Chap. iv. we leave for another article.

E. S. L.

IS PROPITIATION GODWARD?

“**B**Y Aaron’s work within the holiest propitiation was effected, for the blood was sprinkled on the mercy-seat. Thus the claims of God’s holiness were met. The action of the throne in judgment, with which the cherubim were associated, was stayed; and their faces being toward the mercy-seat, they gazed, as it were, on the blood, which never, that we read of, was wiped off or washed away. Provision, as we see, was duly made for the blood to be sprinkled thereon, but nothing was said or provided for obliterating all trace of it afterward. There it remained; and because it had been put there, propitiation was made, and God was seen to be righteous in dealing in grace with sinners: for the action of propitiation is Godward,—the making good the ground on which God can righteously deal in mercy and favor with those who have sinned against Him; but that being made, it is evident that, as far as God’s character and nature are concerned, He can righteously deal in grace with all sinners if He can righteously deal in grace with one. Whether all will submit now to God’s righteousness is another matter. Propitiation, however, having been once truly made by the blood of Christ, it can avail for the whole world, as John the apostle teaches us.”—(*From “Atonement as set forth in the Old Testament,” by C. E. Stuart.*



CURRENT EVENTS.

DR. WALDENSTRÖM AND NON-VICARIOUS ATONEMENT.

II.

WE now pass on to consider Dr. Waldenström's larger work—"The Reconciliation." "The term, 'reconciliation,' " he tells us at the beginning, "sets forth the real essence of salvation, for salvation consists just in the reconciliation of man to God." He confounds this with propitiation; or rather, expunges the latter thought from Scripture to make way for the former, as we shall see: Mr. Princell, his translator and editor, assuring us in a preliminary note to explain the author's view, that "*hilaskomai*" (to propitiate) means, "in the two New-Testament passages in which it occurs, plainly this and nothing more: I show grace, mercy, or kindness with respect to,—that is, I pardon; Luke xviii. 13, rendered 'be merciful,' and Heb. ii. 17, the *A. V.* rendering, '*to make reconciliation*,' the *R. V.* rendering, '*to make propitiation*,' plainly meaning, to show mercy with respect to,—that is, to pardon." As we are to have the passages before us, I will not anticipate what will come before us then; but it is strange if it be really so, that the "aim" of the heathen "to appease God," of which Dr. Waldenström speaks a few pages further on, should have found expression in this very word! Any Greek dictionary will satisfy us that it did so.

"All their worship of God proceeds," says the author, "from the principle that God is *angry* with them," and this is so deep-rooted in human nature, somehow, "that men often consider Christ, whom God has sent in His grace to reconcile us to Himself, as One on whom God

has poured out His wrath, in order that He might be gracious to us." "Contrary to all such perverse imaginations," he goes on, "the Scriptures teach that *no change took place in God's disposition toward man* in consequence of his sin; that therefore it was *not God who needed to be reconciled to man*, but that it was *man who needed to be reconciled to God*; and that consequently *reconciliation is a work which proceeds from God*, and is directed toward man, and aims, *not to appease God, but to cleanse man from sin, and to restore him to a right relation with God.*"

Now that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son," is the text of many a sermon and the joy of many a heart, thank God, among those who yet believe that Christ's voice it is which in the hundred and second psalm speaks of having endured God's indignation and wrath (*v. 10*; comp. *v. 25* with Heb. i. 10-12); and it only deepens inexpressibly in their hearts the wonder of God's love. God's wrath upon sinners, Dr. Waldenström will presently himself assure us, is not enmity against them; and it is true that He does not need to be reconciled—His heart toward them needs not to be changed. There is no need for confuting what in fact is not held. Even those who do use the language rightly reprobated, as to reconciling God, do not mean by it in the least that Christ's work is the procuring cause of God's love to us, but rather the expression of that love, and that which enables it righteously to manifest itself toward us. But righteous wrath against sin there was and is, which when the soul is turned to God, needs to find holy expression also, in order that the sinner may be received. And thus Christ, "made sin for us, who knew no sin," proclaimed the righteousness of the penalty upon it, when bearing our sins in His own body on the tree (1 Pet. ii. 24), He was "made a curse for us." (Gal. iii. 13.)

"*There is not to be found,*" says Dr. Waldenström, "*a*

single passage in the Bible setting forth the atonement as having its cause in this, that the justice of God needed satisfaction." Boldly, as always, he emphasizes this. Has he forgotten that Christ "was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the *righteousness of God* in Him"? God's righteousness is expressed in giving us our place of acceptance as the result of His taking the place of sin. Substitution is here the very thing that proclaims God's righteousness: was it yet unrequired by it? or when it said that "God hath set forth [Christ] to be a propitiation [or mercy-seat] through faith in His blood, to declare *His righteousness* for the remission of sins," (Rom. iii. 25) was it still not righteousness that required this blood-shedding? If the passage required is not to be found, it is by blind men that it is not to be found. The whole warp and woof of Scripture declares the same.

"But," he says, again, "love and justice are never, in the Bible, set forth as being in conflict with each other, so that one can bind the other. *On the contrary, it is right and just, both for God and men, to love—to have compassion on and to save sinners.* It was right and *just* that God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son for its salvation." Of course, but why give His Son?—what need of that? Again and ever this utter blindness as to the meaning of the cross! Righteous to give His Son to "suffer, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God"! Righteous to "lay on *Him* the iniquity of us all"! (1 Pet. iii. 18; Isa. liii. 6.) Was it all meaningless, this? Nay: it was "the chastisement of our peace," and by *His* stripes *we* are healed. (v. 5.)

Yet Dr. Waldenström can quietly reply to the suggestion that God's punitive righteousness demanded satisfaction,—“It is nowhere thus written; and, as something outside of the Word of God, it is not well to assert any

such thing"! And he can actually assert, "To punish in order to inflict evil on the one punished is unjust and unrighteous, and only he that is evil can do evil; but God is not evil, for He is love: but to punish in order to produce repentance is righteous, just, and good"! What, then, was the chastisement [or "punishment"] of our peace which Christ endured? And how can God punish the finally impenitent? Alas! Dr. Waldenström knows not the glory of the cross.

I may pass briefly over the whole of the next chapter, inasmuch as there is no question either of changing God's hatred of sin, or of changing God at all, or of averting His wrath from those that go on in sin. Many of the arguments here are very much like beating the air. Late in the chapter, however, is one that cannot but create astonishment. "For the unrighteous man (as such) there is no salvation, however gracious and merciful God may be; and for the righteous man (as such) there is no condemnation, however righteous God may be." And then, after his manner, he emphasizes the words, "*Yea, it is the very righteousness of God which makes it impossible for the righteous to be condemned.*" No doubt; but who can claim for his own righteousness such recognition by the righteousness of God? The apostle says of some who imagined the possibility, that "they, being IGNORANT of *God's righteousness*, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have *not submitted themselves* to the righteousness of God." And the "righteousness of *faith*," which he goes on to contrast with "our own," is *Christ* as "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. x. 3, 4.)

It will be said that Dr. Waldenström believes in justification by faith. Nominally, he does; in reality, rather by the change which faith produces. And this leaves Job's question (who was certainly a believer,) still unanswered:

"But how shall man be just with God?" Our author would make it a very easy matter.

In the third chapter, he turns to the consideration of the Old-Testament sacrifices; and here we must follow him more closely.

In the first place, he catches at the words of the apostle in Heb. ix. 22, that "almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission," to point attention to the "almost," upon which he argues, "the apostle has laid special emphasis." But it is hard to realize this, as the apostle never refers to it again, and as his object is to insist on the rule and not the exception! Moreover, the position of the word at the beginning of the sentence merely extends the application of it, as he rightly says, to the whole verse. It is true that there were exceptions under the law to the general rule that all things were purged by blood, and without shedding of blood was no remission; but the apostle immediately goes on in a way entirely contrary to what might be gathered from the "almost,"—"It was *necessary*, therefore, that the patterns of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." What becomes, then, of the great importance of the "almost" to the apostle's argument?

To his own also it is as difficult to see it. According to Dr. Waldenström himself, apart from the communication of the life which is in the blood, forgiveness there cannot be! Why, then, insist on the "almost"? It looks as if he had begun to realize that the "shedding of blood" must mean *death*, and not life, and would as much as possible diminish the importance of a witness which is against him. Our wills often act in a way of which we are little conscious. But how much is gained by it? The law puts forward a broad principle with a few exceptions:

if the law be not the very image of the things (chap. x. 1), where is the wonder?

He goes on to the question of the vicarious character of the sacrifices. First, he asserts, in his usual manner, that God never puts forth such a principle any where in Scripture as that God's righteousness demanded that the "punishment must be endured by some one if sin should be forgiven." Now, if he means in the way of abstract statement, it is very little in the manner of Scripture to put things in that way. God speaks of how He acted or will act, and that is enough; although really the passage in Hebrews comes very near to such a proposition. If the shedding of blood be *necessary* for remission of sins, then it is certainly the blood of another, not of the sinner, that is shed, and what is that but the principle of substitution? And what are we to learn from "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all"?

He then, as in his smaller treatise, denies the Lord's work to be the payment of debt. I do not contend for it, and need not repeat what has been already said.

He goes on to what is more at the root of the matter, that "the Scriptures never represent, in any way, that it is just or righteous to punish the innocent instead of the guilty." He is here on common ground with Unitarians and others every where; but an essential element of this case he has omitted. It is the One who has imposed the penalty who stoops to suffer it; it is His own as well as the Father's glory that is to be shown forth; the Father and He are one. Who shall forbid Him, not to execute the law upon other sinless ones, but to bear its penalty Himself? Who shall bind the hands of the Holy One, that He should not be able to sacrifice Himself? and who shall be bold enough to stigmatize it as unrighteous?

Yet Dr. Waldenström affirms, "Neither is it ever said in the Bible that God has inflicted punishment upon Christ

instead upon us. Yea, the prophet Isaiah represents it as a *delusion* that the Jews believed that Christ was punished by God. The prophet says, "We did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted; but He was pierced through by our sins, He was crushed for our misdeeds." "

On the other hand, Delitzsch, than whom there is no better Hebraist, and with whom few critics can compare on such a question, says of the text quoted, "Here again it is Israel, which, having been at length better instructed, and now bearing witness against itself, laments its former blindness to the mediatorial vicarious character of the deep agonies, both of soul and body, that were endured by the great Sufferer. They looked upon them as the punishment of His own sins, and indeed—inasmuch as, like the friends of Job, they measured the sin of the Sufferer by the sufferings that He endured—of peculiarly great sins. They saw in Him *nagua*, 'one stricken,'—i. e., afflicted with a hateful, shocking disease (Gen. xii. 17; 1 Sam. vi. 9),—such, for example, as leprosy, which was called *nega* especially; also *mukkeh Elohim*, 'one smitten of God' The construction "*mukkeh Elohim*" signifies one who has been defeated in conflict by God his Lord."

He adds, "In ver. 5, 'but He,' as contrasted with, 'but we,' continues the true state of the case as contrasted with their false judgment—'Whereas He was pierced for our sins, bruised for our iniquities: the punishment was laid upon Him for our peace; and through His stripes we were healed. . . . As *min* with the passive does not answer to the Greek $\nu\pi\omicron$, but to $\alpha\pi\omicron$, the meaning is, not that our sins and iniquities had pierced Him through like swords, and crushed Him like heavy burdens, but that He was pierced and crushed on account of our sins and iniquities."

Further, he says, "We have rendered the word *musar*

'punishment,' and there was no other word in the language for this idea."

Dr. Waldenström now comes to the Old-Testament sacrifices themselves, which, he contends, "*could not express a penal suffering instead of the sinner.*", Here, first from the peace- or *thank-offerings*, he finds "something which is of the greatest importance as to the question of the meaning of the sacrifices: to wit, *that we must never draw the conclusion that a sacrifice expressed penal suffering just because it was bloody.* When, therefore, it is concluded as to the sin- and trespass-offerings, *that because they were bloody they expressed penal suffering*, then is drawn an entirely too hasty conclusion."

The "hasty conclusion" is Dr. Waldenström's alone. He should have *proved* that the peace-offerings could not express penal suffering. In fact, it is Christ's work which, as bringing to God, is the foundation of peace, as our apprehension of it is communion with God. Why could not a thank-offering, because such, speak of that blessed work, which is the ground of all our good,—for which the heart that knows it praises and blesses God forever?

The author thinks, however, there is no need to tarry upon this, and goes on to the expressly atoning offerings. And here, his first objection is, that "sacrifices were never allowed to be made *for other sins than such as were not to be visited with death or capital punishment.* . . . how, then, could any one think that the animal which was offered suffered the punishment of death instead of the offender? Why, his sin was not at all liable to be visited with the death penalty."

This is singularly inconclusive, however, and only reveals the objector's low thought of sin and its desert with God. Rome may distinguish between her venial and her mortal sins, but the Word of God proclaims, "The

soul that *sinneth*, it shall die." Reason enough there was for not allowing a great offender to escape with the easy offering of a sacrifice; but God would have all men know that death has entered upon the heels of sin, and that it has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Dr. Waldenström's argument is worse than poor: it is a revelation of the one who makes it.

The second argument is derived from the provision of an offering of fine flour as a sin-offering in a case of poverty. It was one of the few exceptions to the general rule, for it was emphatically proclaimed that it was the *blood* that made atonement for the soul. In case of deep poverty, God's mercy abated the demand; and so where a soul might be spiritually so poor as not to know what work was needed for his sins, yet clung to Christ as meeting them, such an one could be accepted of God; not because sin needed not a true atonement, but because Christ's work has met the full need as God knows it.

The third argument is again weakness itself. Where a man-slayer was not discovered, the law decreed "that the people—mark, the *people*—should be forgiven [literally, atoned for or reconciled, *v.* 8] by the sacrifice of a young heifer." This could not mean, he urges, that it died instead of the people, for the people were not guilty of the sin, and had not deserved to die; nor for the man-slayer, for it was forbidden to take ransom (or atonement) for him!

Did atonement mean *nothing*, then? Suppose we were to argue that if atoning means reconciling or being gracious to the people or the man-slayer, should we not still have to say, the people did not need it, and the man-slayer could not have it? It is evident that if sin were not in some way imputed, it could not be atoned for, *whatever* the meaning of atonement; and that if it were imputed, God's one way of atonement was by blood?

His fourth argument is, that the laying on of hands on the victim did not signify that the penalty was transferred

to the animal; first, because this took place in the case of the peace-offering, where there was no question of penalty.—This has been already shown to be a mistake. Secondly, because in Lev. xvi. 21 it is “clearly represented to be an expression of the confession of sin”! As if the confession of sin were not the suited accompaniment of the action which transferred it to a victim! Thirdly, that “on the day of atonement, the hands were *not laid on the animal which was killed, but on the one that was kept alive* :—another of the exceptions to the ordinary mode; and for a plain reason, that God would show to the people the complete *removal* of sin, which could only be done by the living animal. Yet it was identified with the other goat that had died as one sin-offering. (See v. 5.)

These are all the reasons given against the true expiatory character of the Old-Testament sacrifices; but before we are entitled to come to the conclusion, we have yet to see what Dr. Waldenström believes to be their actual meaning.

(To be continued.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 1.—“Had the Lord Jesus a soul? and will the saved have souls in resurrection?”

Ans.—Man is body, soul, and spirit; and the Lord was in every particular true man. “Thou wilt not leave My soul in hades, as “applied to Him by the apostle (Acts ii. 27, 31), shows that He had a soul, and that He took it with Him beyond death. So does the human soul survive death (Matt. x. 28), certainly not to pass away afterward. Little as is made known to us of the resurrection-state, there need be no doubt whatever as to the eternal existence of the soul, as of the spirit.

Q. 2.—“To what time do the words, ‘He was made a quickening spirit’ apply?”

Ans.—“The last Adam was made” this. In resurrection, after His work accomplished, He became last Adam, and as such breathes upon His disciples (Jno. xx. 22) as God breathed upon the first Adam. There is connection, and as plain contrast also. As last Adam, He is the new-creation Head and Lord, as the first was of the old.

Q. 3.—“Was Adam perfect as he came fresh from God’s hand?”

Ans.—Surely, perfect in the sphere for which God made him,—“upright,” innocent: holiness could not be when as yet there was not the knowledge of evil.

Q. 4.—“Was it possible for the Lord Jesus to have departed from the path of obedience had He so chosen?”

Ans.—It was not possible for Him to have chosen to do so. There is often a great mistake in our conceptions of freedom. God cannot lie, cannot repent: is He not free? And so with the Lord Jesus: absolutely perfect and perfectly free.

Q. 5.—“It is said that Pentecost was the only baptism of the Spirit, does not Acts x. 44, 45; xi. 15, 16, show otherwise?—the expressions, ‘fell on,’ ‘poured out,’ ‘baptized with,’ ‘as on us,’ being used?”

Ans.—The brother who, I think, first advocated the view of baptism of the Spirit having taken place once for all at Pentecost says,—

“As to a person subsequent to Pentecost being baptized with the Holy Ghost, I should say he was introduced into an already baptized body but by receiving the Holy Ghost, by which he is united to the Head—Christ. I am not anxious as to the word ‘baptism,’ but it is not generally employed as to the individual reception. Acts xi. 17 and 1 Cor. xii. are the nearest to applying it to an individual or individuals, but it is not actually used. But the receiving of the Holy Ghost is equivalent, they having what was originally treated as baptism of the Holy Ghost, and are looked at, as they are, as partakers of the same thing.”

It seems to me to be in this way a distinction of very little moment, even if real: of which I have never been convinced. For 1 Cor. xii. 13 positively says, “For by one Spirit have we all been baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks;” and there were no Greeks baptized on the day of Pentecost. Acts xi. 17 certainly looks in the same direction.

Q. 6.—“Is the distinction ‘came upon’ and ‘dwell in’ sufficient to mark the contrast between Old-Testament and New-Testament times? Is it not rather the fact of (1) the Spirit’s *abiding*, instead of transient visits; and (2) forming the one body, instead of using individuals for special occasions? In the case of the prophets (1 Pet. i. 11), and of John the Baptist (Luke i. 15), ‘in them’ and ‘filled with’ are used, as they would be now.”

Ans.—In the case of John the Baptist, we find, not even transient visits, but one filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother’s womb. We read this of no other, and yet one such case is sufficient to show that the first distinction is not exact. Of even John, however, it could not be said, as to the Corinthians, “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?” Plainly, the Spirit had not yet come; and though controlled fully by Him, he was yet not indwelt. Then again, the Spirit of Christ was “in” the prophets, but only *as* prophets,—that is, in their prophecies. I still think, therefore, that the indwelling of the Spirit is truly distinctive of the present time.

Q. 7.—“What is the force of ‘The supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ’ (Phil. i. 19.)?”

Ans.—The ministry of grace by that Spirit by whom Christ had been anointed for His work on earth.

THE MAN OF GOD; HIS DISCIPLINE.

Lecture III.—1 Kings xvii. 17-24.

IN this last scene in the verses I have read to you we find the third thing in the discipline of the man of God,—and a thing that is above all needed to be known in order that he should really fulfill this character. As I have said, it is what we all are by position, it is therefore what we all must be practically, or else our very profession of Christianity condemns us. Being a man of God is not being something very exalted, and which God would leave, so to speak, to our choice, whether we would be so or not. As we have seen already, all Scripture is given to furnish the man of God thoroughly unto all good works. Mark well, it does not speak of furnishing any body else, and we are necessarily *God's* by the fact that we are purchased by the blood of Christ. Beloved friends, to be according to his mind, therefore, is what we are called to, and throughout history,—especially, I may say, that of the Church of God,—the very failure of His professing people has only forced those true to Him the more to take that character.

You have here, in the very last verse, something which especially makes known the man of God. The woman says to Elijah, “Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.” What is it that makes the man of God specially known to her, and gives specially to his testimony the character of truth? It is this: not merely that he knows the living God, but that he knows and has had to do with the God of resurrection. Death visits the house of the widow of Zarephath. God has taken away her son. Not the widow alone, but Elijah himself is brought face to face with this fact of death; a death which the woman's

conscience realizes, as ours do if in activity at all, to be the fruit of sin.

Death is the stamp upon a fallen creation—the solemn witness upon God's part of the ruin which has come in. Every where, in every language, whatever the darkness of man's mind, whatever the religious corruption of those not wishing to retain God in their knowledge, it has testified plainly to men's souls of wrath against the creature He has made. Why else undo what he has done? Why take again the life that He has given? He is not a child, to break and cast away His plaything of an hour.

Death is what we all have to do with,—the liability to which God has not delivered any one of us from here. If the Lord Jesus comes, of course we shall not die; but in the meanwhile, each of us is personally liable and exposed to it. And what we need is, surely, to know the God of resurrection. We need a God of that character in two ways: for ourselves, of course, as a matter of simple power for our own life. We need to know this also as a power for testimony, as Paul the apostle,—“We also believe, and therefore speak: knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus;” or, as you see it here in the widow of Sarepta, “Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.”

Resurrection, God's power over death,—power available and displayed in our behalf, is thus God's testimony to Himself among men. But I may say, in these times it is particularly the testimony He is giving. You know, if you take the Lord Jesus through His life even down here, as you have Him in the first chapter of the epistle to the Romans, “He was marked out the Son of God.” How? He was, on the one hand, Son of David after the flesh; but He was “marked out the Son of God, according to the spirit of holiness, by resurrection of the dead.”

By the fact that He could meet death, and manifest divine power over it,—by that fact He showed Himself as evidently the Son of God; for He met it, not as Elijah meets it here,—by prayer and supplication, looking up to another for help about it, but in His own power and name alone. By His simple word He met it and dispelled it; a condition hopeless for man to deal with. Man says, "While there is life there is hope." When death comes there is no hope; he can only bury his dead out of his sight. That gives God the opportunity to come in. It is just there He testifies to Himself as One who has available for man the power of resurrection. The Lord thus manifested His power on earth before His own death and in His own name. He showed that He was the Son of God there with practical help for man,—a power that could deal with sin itself, or it could not deal so with its fruit and penalty.

When the Lord met death, He met it fully;—Jordan filled all its banks for Him. He knew it in its full character as penalty, bearing in His own body what had brought it in. Three days and three nights He lay under it, and when He arose from the dead, there took place what had had its type long before, when for Israel the ark stood in the bed of Jordan; when those who bore it stood on the brink of the waters, and they rolled away right and left till there was a road no woman's heart need fear to travel from shore to shore. Then His own words received their full interpretation which He had spoken to the sorrowing heart of Martha before that—"I *am* the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever *liveth* and believeth in Me *shall never die*." (vii. 25, 26.)

In the past, there had been death; in the past, people had to go through it. No doubt He was with them; and so the Psalmist says, "Though I walk through the valley

of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil ; for 'Thou art with me.' (Ps. xxiii.) Still it had to be gone through, though resurrection eventually for them also should banish it, whereas now the Lord having been in it, and come through, there is no real death impending for us, but a clear path made right through it. "I am the resurrection and the life ; and he that *liveth* and believeth in Me"—has no death to go through at all,—“shall *never* die.” Now are we not called as Christians to realize the truth of that? It is truth, of course, for faith ; it is not truth evident to sense and sight. Yet by and by, when the Lord Jesus comes, it will be manifested as to those that are in the body at that time ;—it will be manifested as to us then, if we should be, as we easily may be, here, that death has no title over us at all. He will take His own to Himself without dying. Until that time, it is a fact that faith has to realize. For faith it is simple, that Christ having passed through death and come up out of it, His resurrection no less than His death is ours. Divine power has shown its exceeding greatness toward *us*, “according to its working when God raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places.” (Eph. 19, 20.) In Him, quickened and raised up with Him, we too “are seated in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Therefore in God’s mind we have no death to pass through, for we have passed through it in Him who is as much our representative in the heavens as He was upon the cross. We are rightly expected, therefore, to know resurrection in a way in which even Elijah could not know it—in a way in which no saints of the Old Testament could possibly know it. We are called to know it as those who in themselves, in their own persons, are living examples of it.

True, we did not know what death was in passing through it : there was no water in Jordan for us. The

waves and billows, so terrible as *God's* waves and billows, spent their force on Him alone. We have come through the dry bed only. But we have come through. This is the simple fact in God's account; and God's is ever the truest—the only true one. Being dead with Christ, we are also quickened with Him out of death, and raised up and seated together in Christ in the heavenly places.

It is one thing to have this, of course, in Scripture,—nay, to recognize this truth in Scripture; but another thing for ourselves to have known what it is practically—to have got hold of it experimentally, to have apprehended in this respect that for which we are apprehended of Christ Jesus. It is this latter alone that makes us men of God, and gives us to be real witnesses for God, accredited witnesses of heavenly things. This makes us lights indeed in the world: for earth's ordained lights are heavenly; sun and moon and stars light her up, otherwise dark. So, if the Church is the responsible witness for God on earth—the candlestick,—the true light, the “angel” is the heavenly “star.” (Rev. i. 20.) Nature is one with God's Word in affirming thus the character of all true witnessing; because it comes from God, it must be of necessity heavenly, for He is. Resurrection puts us there. Resurrection carries us outside of the world through death, its boundary-line. Left in it for a while, no doubt, in another sense, but even so pilgrims and strangers, merely passing through it. We belong to it no more than Christ belonged to it.

And is there not such a thing as getting hold of this in reality? It is a different thing to say, “I know it is there in Scripture,” from saying, “I know it for a truth in my very soul.” Such recognition will make us of necessity something of—in one sense much more than—what Elijah was. It will carry us into a new sphere of rela-

tionship, of thought, of interests ; and where all is deathless and eternal. We shall appreciate the Lord's words to the lingering disciple, to "let the dead bury their dead." That will be no unintelligible mysticism, as to many a believer we fear still it is.

The simple recognition of the fact requires faith. All spiritual realization is by faith,—a faith to which the surest evidence and the highest reason are that God has spoken. And although the Spirit of truth must make it good to us, and to grieve the Spirit is necessarily to deaden spiritual sense and dim perception, yet it is as the Spirit of truth He acts—by truth, and our faith in it. Thus alone can we pass through death and beyond, to where Christ is before God, and there for us.

If you look at the eleventh chapter of John's gospel, you will find there the great chapter which speaks of resurrection as God's witness. All the way through, you find how even Christ's disciples are under the power of death. The sisters of Bethany send to Him to say that His friend Lazarus is sick. The thought is (one so natural), if Christ were there, he could not die. They want His presence in order to put off death, which yet could be merely a reprieve, staving it off for a little while. That is all they think of. He has other thoughts. He stays away, in his love to them (for it comes in here so beautifully, "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus), and lets him die.

When the Lord proposes to go to Judea again the disciples say, "Master, the Jews of late sought to stone Thee, and goest Thou thither again?" Thomas says, "Let us go also, that we may die with Him." Death is upon all their souls,—nothing but death. When He comes, He finds them overwhelmed at the thought that death had come and touched one of the Lord's own. Instead of Lazarus being this making it better, it made

it worse in one sense. Was He indifferent? or was death master even over His? What does He do? He has said from the beginning "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." Facts might seem to be against Him, for Lazarus does die. But even so is it seen, as else it could not, that He, not death, is Master. Lazarus is raised. And what is the consequence? Such a testimony to Himself they never had before: crowds come out from Jerusalem to learn about this wonderful thing; and the very presence of Lazarus there, the man who had actually come through death, is the thing that draws them. They come, "not merely that they may see Jesus, but to see Lazarus also, whom He has raised from the dead." Think of a man who had actually come through death and come out of it! If we apprehended that we are just such a people,—if we did apprehend, in any proper sense, that we really belonged to another sphere, what a testimony for Christ it would be! It would indeed bring persecution. It brought it in that case. It was then that the Pharisees consulted about putting Christ, and Lazarus also, to death, because by reason of him all men, as they thought, would believe on Him. They would like to put out the lamp which God had lighted; but it just shows what the power of such a testimony is. And let me say again, there is no real and sufficient testimony—there is no proper Christian testimony now—but that.

Some may call it high truth; and some, again, to whom it is outwardly familiar, may think it truth that needs very little insisting upon. I wish it did. What is the fact, when practice comes to test the actuality and power of the belief we have? What, for men who really knew the power of resurrection, would be the serious business of their lives? Would it be their aim to make money,

beloved brethren? Trying to get things comfortable around them? To keep up their station in the world, and live as well as their neighbors? Of course we have got to get through it, and have to do with it in the way of business. He who was "the carpenter" has sanctified honest labor, and there is nothing at all derogatory or unspiritual in it. But I need scarcely remind you what He was down here, all the way constantly and absolutely a heavenly man. Let me ask you, beloved friends, do you think that Christ could have set his heart on making money? Do you think He could have come into the world in order to seek a comfortable place in it, or anything of that sort? You know it was the very opposite of that. And what are we? We are distinctly His representatives in the world, as He was Himself His Father's representative. "As My Father hath sent Me into the world," He says to us, "so have I sent you into the world." What is the consequence? Why, we must not talk about this being "high truth," and we must not think that after all the humble part is not to pretend to so much. We are Christ's representatives down here in the world. True or false, no doubt: that is what it comes to; *true or false* witnesses for Christ down here. The responsibility of the place is ours, and if we are Christians, we must frankly accept it.

It will not do to value ourselves upon our morality, honesty, benevolence, and that sort of thing. The world knows perfectly well there is no testimony merely in that, because it will find you honest men, benevolent men, and moral men, without the least pretense to religion. The world is keen-eyed, and knows that that is no sufficient testimony. "If that is all you have to show," they will tell you, "we can do without your Christianity. We have just such people who have none." But if we appear as people of another sphere, people who have their

backs upon the world, as having beyond it a sufficient and satisfying portion, such as in it they have not,—that is another matter. “There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.”

Elijah of course could not know, as we now may, the power of resurrection. We have in this case the exhibition of it in a very different way, because we have Old-Testament truth, and not New Testament. Still it was resurrection that made Elijah known as a man of God, and the word of God in his mouth as the truth. So nothing else will make the word of God in our mouth known as truth in any sufficient sense, or approve us as men of God.

You will find, if you turn to the fourth chapter of the second of Corinthians, the apostle speaking very plainly about this. What opened his lips to speak? He was continually exposed to death, given up to it, not merely of his own accord, but by God's will too, God everywhere exposing him to that which he had given himself up to. “We are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” (v. 11.) He was “always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus,” (v. 10.) and God gave him up to death, to meet it practically,—“in deaths oft.”

That was the very thing which made *life* work in those around about. This death which was working in him (v. 12) was the power of his testimony to them. Death, so to speak, had a fair opportunity to show its power over him; but it only showed that it had none at all; all it could do was to make life shine out brighter. “Death worketh in us, but life in you.”

The power of resurrection opened his mouth: "I believed, and therefore have I spoken," (*v.* 13), "knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." (*v.* 17, 18.)

That is where his eyes were; that is what his heart was occupied with; and you find at the opening of the next chapter how fully for him Christ had met death and judgment. To die was to "depart and be with Christ." The thought of the judgment-seat moved him for others: "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

Listen to him again: "We have this treasure (the treasure of divine grace,) in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (*v.* 7.)

What is the practical value of the "earthen vessel"? The bird of heaven, the leper's offering in *Lev. xiv.*, needed an earthen vessel too!—to die in!

It was one thing impossible for God—to die. He who had that in His heart of love for us, if He remained that simply, could not die. He took an earthen vessel—a human body—to die in. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, and death works in us. God has taken us up as earthen vessels, in which He can accomplish something for Himself. He takes up what is just proper material to be broken into potsherds,—poor, weak creatures, who can stand nothing, we may say; and then, like Gideon's men, having hid his lamps there, He breaks the vessel to make the light shine out. Death may have power over Paul's body, but the very fact manifests that there was that in Paul over which it had not power. His true life is

beyond it, untouched by it. The life of Jesus—the risen heavenly life of Jesus—shines manifestly out in him.

“Death worketh in us, but life in you.”

The life of Jesus belongs not to the world. It is eternal life, with the Father before the world was, and manifested to us in Him in whom the world found nothing kindred to itself, therefore no beauty. His home was elsewhere. His delights with the sons of men did not alter that. In us, too, it will manifest itself as that which has its source and attachment elsewhere, and there where alone no want, no unrest, no instability, is found. We manifest it when Christ is our realized sufficiency and strength, and our circumstances alter nothing, as with regard to this they can alter nothing. When we pass through the world debtors to it for nothing it can give. This is not misanthropy, not asceticism, not giving up this world in order to get another,—that is only living to ourselves in another form, and from that we are delivered. It is the very opposite,—giving up the world because we *have* what is beyond. God is our portion, and to the fullness which is ours in Christ the world can add absolutely nothing; nor, blessed be His name! can it take any thing away.

This is real testimony to Christ. It is when we can say, “He is enough for us; and know how to be abased, and how to abound, for He strengthens us. Why, oftentimes God has to put us on a sick-bed, in order to show us practically what He can do. Blessed it is, surely, to see how He works thus,—to see how He proves His sufficiency to those whom He lays low. But the blessing of a sick-bed is often just that God takes away all other things to show us that in reality we have lost nothing, whereas before we did not quite believe this. And what Christ shows us there, He is ready to show us without the need of a sick-bed at all. I do not say that all there need it in this

way. I am not reflecting upon these at all: God has His own mysterious working, and there are many and diverse purposes worthy of Himself He can accomplish thus. Still this is often what we learn and have to learn there, to be weaned from nature's breasts, and find what is our sufficiency elsewhere.

The power of resurrection is divine power, and He who is in us, come down from His own abode to link our souls with the place to which they belong, is not limited in His power to do this for us. No doubt we, by our unbelief, may practically limit Him, and as with Elijah on the mount, the storm and earthquake and fire may be needed to prepare the way for what after all must do His work with us—the "still, small voice."

Let us remember, too, one thing as to resurrection which connects itself with our first gospel-lessons. I have already spoken of it, but not as fully as it needs. Until Christ died,—until the work was done by which righteously He could do it,—God could not show Himself upon our side, or His heart out as He would. There was a time when the blessed Sufferer had to say, "I cry in the day-time, and 'Thou hearest' not." He had to be delivered *out* of death, not from it,*—out of it as the One gone into it for others.

As soon as His work was accomplished, then God stepped forth and showed Himself at once on the same side as the One who took that place for us,—by raising up His Son from the dead. It was the acceptance of Christ's work. He showed Himself there upon our side. Therefore the apostle says, at the end of the fourth of Romans, "If we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification," (vv. 24, 25.) That is, believe on the God who is for us righteously by

*So the passage in Heb. v. 7 should be read.

the death of Christ. Who is for us, and showed Himself for us the very moment He could ; and He could be for us now, with all His attributes displayed and glorified. He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father ; righteousness required it, while love shone out in it.

That is what resurrection makes us know. It is the full and bright display of divine glory now shining in the face of a man in the nearest place that can be to God in heaven ; yea, and that man *is* God,—His image. To attempt to know Christ after the flesh, as the apostle says for himself he did not, is to lose all the blessedness of this. Nor is there any Christ to be known but up there in heaven. If our souls are occupied with Him up there, in the light over which never more comes a cloud,—there where all the glory of God is displayed, shining with perpetual sunshine down into our souls,—what will the world be to us ?

With our eyes and hearts up there, where Christ in the glory is the revelation of a divine object for a heart brought back to God, they will necessarily be off the whole scene from which temptation comes to us. He is for us there in the glory. We are before God in Him, those upon whom God's eye rests with fullness of satisfaction, His own beloved. And so, practically, outside all that now tempts and defiles and weighs down here ; that is what God has provided for us, and our first duty as Christians—taking the epistle to the Philippians—is to “rejoice in the Lord.” To be happy where happiness is full and uninterrupted. The only possible power we can find for going through the world aright is the power of the enjoyment of Christ. If Christ is known in this way,—if Christ satisfies, in that is strength to do all things—to be abased and to abound—as the apostle ; to go down into the scene of

death, and, while it works upon us, to give forth the testimony which God seeks from us. The Lord give us grace to realize what I have so feebly shown you here. Thus only can we be practically men of God.

The Lord enable us to realize what we are, as those who have learned the power of resurrection—the power which has raised up Christ from the dead, and which works toward His people in the same energy, raising us up with Him and putting us in Him in the heavenly places before God.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

MANY souls have been led into spiritual darkness by giving heed to the monstrous delusion of so-called "Christian science"—which, in fact, is neither Christian nor scientific. Christians have allowed it to pass unchallenged because its egregious folly appeared to them unworthy of notice. Intelligent people having been insnared by it, warns us that when professed followers of Christ lend an ear to teaching which is so dishonoring to Him and God's Word, they are punished by being given over to "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."

Its dogmas are generally vague and confusing, but where doctrines are clearly stated, they are utterly antagonistic to the gospel. They deny the existence of matter, the atonement of Jesus Christ, and other distinctive doctrines of Christianity; declaring that the material world is not real, and what seem to be facts are only ideas. "God is all—there is no room for evil, hence any thing other than good is a belief, an unreality, that has no substance. You are well, for God made all things, and all that He has made is good. You are spirit, hence

true and perfect." Of course this teaching dispenses entirely with the atonement; for if there is no sin, there is no need of redemption.

These false teachers assert that there is neither personal Deity, personal devil, nor personal man—a revival of old and oft-refuted heresies under a new name; the errors of the Docetæ, who taught that matter was unreal, and our Lord was born, died, and rose only in appearance; and the Gnostics, who held that the body of our Lord was a myth; also that spiritual beings could not be defiled by contact with matter, any more than a diamond by lying in the mire. St. John wrote a portion of his first epistle in refutation of the Gnostic heresy, wherein he sets forth, by divine authority, that Jesus was a veritable person. (1 John iv. 2, 3.)

It is a reproduction of the old idealism of Hume and Berkley, ignoring the existence of matter or disease as a fact. It is related of Berkley that having fallen into a ditch, a friend in passing said, "So you have really got into a ditch." "Not exactly that," replied the bishop, as he shook the mud from his clothes, "but you see I have an idea that I am in a ditch."

If, as these teachers maintain, "disease is not a reality, but only a delusion of the mind—the effect of fear," how can they account for the physical sufferings of infants? Our Saviour treated sickness and disease as real and actual, for we are told that He healed all who were sick, in fulfillment of prophecies concerning Him.

It has been urged in favor of some who set forth these doctrines that they cannot be anti-christian, because they quote Scripture in support of their tenets. When Satan made his most desperate effort to accomplish the everlasting ruin of mankind, he used the Word of God as a means of attaining his end.

Some of the expounders of this belief have been re-

ceived with favor on account of their mental and moral graces—the loveliness of their daily lives. Satan is too clever to select ignorant disreputable agents for his most powerful assaults on Christianity. He craftily uses persons of scholarship, deep thought, refinement, benevolence, and amiability, as decoys to lure unwary souls to destruction. Some one has truly said that “one of the many hindrances to the cause of true Christianity is, that a counterfeit of the Spirit’s work is often presented in the lives of refined moralists, devout religionists, benevolent philanthropists, who are yet as much disowned of God as the most notorious sinners.” Never having been born from above, they do not belong to His kingdom, but are aliens and strangers to the covenants of promise, and without Christ.

Let Christians beware of any entanglement with this anti-Christian medley of oriental mysticism, German pantheism, and English deism, which is now presented to them under the misnomer of “Christian science.”

Anon.

THERE is no service to Christ which is without a cross. As it is written, “He that taketh not his *cross*, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me.” (Matt. x. 38.)

The disciple is called to be as the Master (x. 24, 25); and he will find faithful discipleship leads to much suffering; and the worst of all is that which comes from what bears God’s name upon earth, without the power of it.

Cruelty, shame, and disgrace are the three things which service to Christ will gain for you from earth. For the cross of Christ is not a thing that can be used merely to moralize, or to obtain a good or a healthful *influence* over men’s minds. It is either eternal life, delivering a man into the liberty of a son of God, or it is the manifestation that Satan is blinding his eyes. *G. V. W.*



CURRENT EVENTS.

DR. WALDENSTRÖM AND NON-VICARIOUS ATONEMENT.

II.—*Continued from p. 139.*

THE first point that he insists on with reference to the meaning of the Old-Testament sacrifices is just that which we have already considered, and without which he could not get on for a moment,—that “it is never said in the Old Testament that atonement, or reconciliation, was effected by the *death* of the sacrificed animal. No; atonement was effected by the *blood*,” that is, for him, as we have seen, by LIFE, not death. To which he adds here that “not by the *shedding of the blood* was atonement made, but by the *sprinkling of the blood*.” “But what did this sprinkling signify? It signified *cleansing, or purging, from sin*, as the apostle says, ‘Almost all things are by the law *purged* with blood.’” For some reason Dr. Waldenström does not complete the quotation here, “and without *shedding* of blood is no remission.” I may not assume to know his reason for the omission, but it certainly would seem to need accounting for. The passage thus completed lies, in fact, in the very teeth of his argument; and it is safe to say that it is a complete refutation of it.

Why without shedding of blood was there no remission? Probably Dr. Waldenström might suggest (for, as he has said nothing, we can only suggest for him) that the blood could not be sprinkled if it were not shed; but this answer is not as satisfactory as it seems it ought to be. For, in the first place, the apostle should have said, and it cannot be conceived why in that case he did not say, “without *sprinkling* of blood,” instead of “without

shedding." We would insist as much as Dr. Waldenström on the exact force of Scripture words, and here plainly (for *him*), the apostle has put the emphasis upon the wrong point, and is in that measure accountable for the doctrine we have been getting from it.

But again. Suppose an Israelite who had sinned under the old economy. Should we say to him, The *shedding* of blood is not what makes atonement : it is *sprinkling* of blood ; and, acting upon our suggestion, he was to go to the priest and say, " Here is the fresh blood of a newly killed animal ; put it, I pray thee, upon the horns of the altar for me." Would that avail ?

He might add, " And here is the beast itself for the fat to be offered, and for the priest." Still the priest would have to say, " Sir, is this beast your own sin-offering ? Did you designate it as your own by laying your hand upon it, and then kill it in the place where they kill the burnt-offering before the Lord ?"

All this is nothing for Dr. Waldenström. The shedding of blood is not the point, but the sprinkling of blood. One cannot see why the animal should even die at all : for the type would be much more perfect, according to his view, if it were some of the blood of a living animal than as the blood of a *dead* one ; it would surely better signify LIFE !

And why need every one that sinned have his *own* sin-offering ? Why must there be this solemn shedding of blood for *each one*, and the whole of the blood poured out in each case—save what anointed the horns of it—at the bottom of the altar !

The sprinkling, however, says Dr. Waldenström, is the important thing. It is this that cleanses from sin, and atonement is just cleansing from sin ! Think of the Israelite again, as instructed in this new theology. He brings his beast according to the manner : it is slain, and

the priest takes the blood. To do what with it? To anoint the horns of the altar, and to pour out all the rest of it at the bottom of it? The man looks anxiously. "But, sir, have you left none to sprinkle upon me? That is what atonement means; it is to be sprinkled upon me, to cleanse me." "I have none left," says the priest; "I have acted strictly according to the ritual. The animal was killed before the Lord; its blood is poured upon the ground, except what you can see upon the horns of the altar. I have no word to sprinkle any upon *you*; but atonement is made nevertheless, and your sin is forgiven!"

Dr. Waldenström's doctrine does not consist with the facts. The blood of the *trespass*-offering is sprinkled upon the leper, as also the blood of the bird killed at the beginning of his cleansing; the blood of the covenant is sprinkled on the people in Ex. xxiv., but it is the blood of burnt-offerings and peace-offerings only; the ashes of the heifer are sprinkled upon the defiled person in Num. xix.; and to these last two the apostle refers in Heb. ix.; we shall see the significance of this shortly: but the blood of the sin-offering, or of the ordinary trespass-offerings, was NEVER sprinkled upon the person, while it was, nevertheless, again and again declared that atonement was made by it, and that the person was forgiven.

We see, then, that the apostle knew what he was saying when he declared that "without *shedding* of blood is no remission." He knew all about sprinkling, and insists upon it in the very same chapter; but had he said "without *sprinkling* of blood is no remission," the whole Jewish ritual would have borne witness against him, as now it does against Dr. Waldenström. He has made the exception the rule, and misinterpreted both alike; and Scripture, which is no "nose of wax," and will not speak as we please, but only according to the truth of God which

it declares, witnesses decisively against him. The whole Levitical ritual, while it does say that atonement is by blood, unites to show that the blood is the testimony of *death*, not life, only of a death substitutionally offered to God, and so making atonement as lifted up to God upon the altar's horns. The blood is given *upon the altar* to atone. Thus is the sinner forgiven; and "without *shedding* of blood"—death—"there is *no* remission."

In what follows, Dr. Waldenström repeats what is well known, that the Hebrew word "to make atonement" is literally "to cover," and that is in the sense of annulling,—if you please, blotting out. But he is wholly wrong in interpreting this of a work done *in* the sinner: it is a thing wholly distinct. The blood of the sacrifice covers—atones for—sins, puts them away from before God, because it is the blood of a legal substitute, the type of One precious, perfect Lamb of sacrifice, upon whom was "the chastisement of our peace."

But, asks Dr. Waldenström further, "Who is set forth in the first and foremost place as one that atones for sins? Answer: It is *God*. But if God is the one who makes atonement for sins, then it cannot mean that He makes atonement for or appeases Himself in regard to sins"! A clever, bold, and absolute deception; though no doubt he is first self-deceived. If I were to ask, seeking answer from Scripture, "Who is set forth in the first and foremost place as the one who atones for sins?" I should have to answer, *The priest*, assuredly; and that is *not* God. So says the Old Testament; so says the New. "The *priest* shall make atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him." God it is who forgives, and forgives on the ground of atonement, and the atonement is thus made to God, and to none but God. "A merciful and faithful High-Priest," says the New Testament, "to make propitiation for the sins of the people" (Heb. ii. 17). So

the Revised Version ; and it is undoubtedly right. The thought of propitiation cannot be taken away from *hilasko-mai* here,—the very word used by the heathen every where for it. But “propitiation”—if there be such a thing at all—is Godward. The doctrine of the Old Testament and that of the New is one.

“Go quickly unto the congregation,” says Moses to Aaron, “and make atonement for them ; for there is *wrath gone* out from the Lord.” (Num. xvi. 46.) “Every day shalt thou offer the bullock of the sin-offering for atonement.” (Ex. xxix. 36.) “It is the blood that maketh atonement.” “When I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you.” “He that offereth the blood of the peace-offerings.” “Thou shalt not offer the blood of any sacrifice with leavened bread.”

In all this work of atonement, then, is it “set forth in the first and foremost place” that it is God who makes the atonement, and therefore that the atonement cannot be offered to God, because God could not offer or make atonement to Himself? No : assuredly it is not God who offers to God, and yet the atonement *is* offered to God, or words are altogether deceptive, and there is no use in discussing this or any other matter.

But what about the passages quoted by Dr. Waldenström, as Ps. lxx. 3, for instance, “As for our transgressions, Thou wilt purge them away,” where, he says, “it is literally, ‘Thou wilt *atone* for them,’ or ‘cover them’”? Let us consider this, and we shall find assuredly that there is in it neither the difficulty which he sees for us, nor the doctrine he advances for himself.

Now it must be owned that there is a difference in some respects between the way in which atonement is presented in the Old Testament and our common way of putting it. When, for instance, on the day of atone-

ment, Aaron goes in with the blood to make atonement in the holiest of all, and then coming out to the altar, sprinkles upon it and makes atonement for it,—though we are accustomed, no doubt, to the words, it can hardly be said that we are accustomed really to the manner of speech here. In our way of putting it these would not be separate *atonements*, but *applications* of atonement. The literal meaning of the Hebrew word (*kaphar*, “to cover,”) perfectly accords with and accounts for this use, as our word “to atone” does not. In reality, for us, atonement is that satisfaction made to the holy and righteous nature of God which enables Him to manifest His grace; and that work was not done in heaven—which the holiest typifies—but on earth, upon the cross. So God says of the blood, “I have given it to you upon the *altar* to make atonement for your souls.” That does not hinder, as we have seen, the making atonement with it elsewhere. This difference, it is plain, there is between the Scripture use and our own; and it accounts for the expressions which Dr. Waldenström brings forward.

When God *applies* to this purpose or that, to this person or that, the value of the atoning blood, He would, as we see in Old-Testament language, be making atonement thus. With us it would be misleading to speak so. The corresponding expression with us would be that He “purges.” And this is no more difficult to understand than that any other word should have different meanings or shades of meaning. Such almost every word has, and to confound them would produce just the confusion which has resulted here in Dr. Waldenström’s mind. Every translation of the Bible, I suppose, makes the difference here which he would obliterate. And yet even he, if we translated Prov. xvi. 14, that “a wise man will *atone* the wrath of a king,” would rightly admonish us that *kaphar* has other meanings. So be it, then, and the

difficulty is ended, this special meaning being also fully accounted for in accordance with the general doctrine, as we have seen.

We need not, then, examine at length the passages brought forward to show that atonement is simply cleansing. It is never significant of an internal work. It is by blood shed, poured out; death, not life, offered up to God as on the horns of the altar, or the mercy-seat, turning aside the wrath of God from him on whose behalf it is accepted. All this is the teaching of facts that cannot be denied, and ought not to be misinterpreted.

But we must look more closely at what is said of the day of atonement, though I cannot agree with the statement that the sacrifice on that day was "the sum of all the sacrifices that were offered for sin." The atonement for the holy place, for the tabernacle, and for the altar, Dr. Waldenström urges, is not that "God should thereby become gracious toward" these, (who ever thought so?) but "to *cleanse* and *hallow* from the uncleanness of the children of Israel."

He anticipates, however, an objection:—

"Some one objecting may say: 'But the holy place could not really have any sins from which it needed to be cleansed. Answer: The cleansing of the tabernacle was a type of the cleansing of the people. Therefore, also, it is said that the holy place, the tabernacle, and the altar should be cleansed '*from*' [thus, literally; the versions have it "because of"] the transgressions of the children of Israel.' (v. 16.)

This is surely arbitrary enough; for the verse quoted can scarcely be contended for as *proving* that the tabernacle represents the people of Israel! It should, on the other hand, (if only he had quoted it entire,) have taught him better: "and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation which *remaineth amongst them* in the midst

of their uncleannesses." The tabernacle that is specially marked as remaining *amongst* them cannot rightly be confounded with the *people amongst whom* it remains. And it should be plain that no typical significance of the tabernacle is at all in question, but the simple fact of God dwelling thus in connection with sinners.

But we have come to what is indeed utterly opposed to Dr. Waldenström's system, and which he seems to have no capacity to see. "The holy place could not really have any sins from which it needed to be cleansed." True, but could not the sins of the people defile the holy place so as to make it no fit dwelling-place for a holy God? Surely, it is plainly asserted here; but then the difficulty for Dr. Waldenström results: *how could atonement meet such a case as this?*

For him it could not; for atonement with him is the cleansing of people, and this is expressly stated to be for the tabernacle itself. Look at the full specification in the thirty-third verse: "And he shall make atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar; and he shall make atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation." The mention of all these distinctly in this way precludes the thought of the one being but the type of the other.

But here, then, as there are confessedly no sins belonging to the sanctuary itself, atonement *for it* is not the cleansing of sins, but of *defilement* from the sins of the people; and this is accomplished by the bringing before God the precious blood which vindicates His righteousness so entirely that no patient going on with sinners in grace can raise a question of it.

But for Dr. Waldenström no atonement of this kind could be needed. God is *always* righteous, he would say, in going on thus with men; just as it is also righteous of

Him to show grace when they turn to Him apart from atonement altogether. How, then, can His tabernacle among men be defiled? The author's incompetence to explain such a thing is shown by his having to make the tabernacle only the type of the people themselves. The apostle's interpretation is, "It was necessary, therefore, that the patterns of *things in the heavens* should be purified with these ;" although the blood could scarcely be the figure of life communicated in the case of "things in the heavens"!

The scape-goat, however, is to make all plain, it seems. There is confessedly a difficult phrase in connection with the scape-goat, that he is to be "set alive before the Lord, to make atonement with him, to send him away for a scape-goat into the wilderness." So the common version ; but the revised gives, "to make atonement *for* him," and this is allowed to be the regular use of the Hebrew words. This appears to suit Dr Waldenström, who claims that "atone for" means here the same thing as at other places,—to wit, *make holy, sanctify, or cleanse*. "That atonement should be made for the goat meant, therefore," he adds, "that in a typical or symbolical way he should be *sanctified* [separated or dedicated] for the purpose of carrying away the sins of the people."

But surely this is a strange reading of atonement. First, it means "to cleanse ;" but where in Scripture do we hear of a sacrificial animal—and the two goats are one sin-offering (*v.* 5),—needing to be cleansed for such a purpose? This "cleansing," therefore, has to be attenuated into a "dedication" with no thought of cleansing in it! But certainly *kaphar* never means this. Indeed the only "cleansing" by it is, not *inward* cleansing, but the removal of guilt—a very different thing. Moreover, this removal was by blood ; but no blood was shed for

or sprinkled upon the scape-goat, and it would have been an extraordinary thing indeed in such a case.

But what are we to make, then, of an atonement for the scape-goat? We must leave the phrase as it stands in the Revised Version, I believe. It is the regular force of the words: "atonement *with*" is not correct; "atonement *upon*,"—the resort of many translators,—has no clear meaning, and what it might have scarcely seems consistent with the facts.

But what, then, does "to atone *for* it" mean? The facts will, I doubt not, themselves explain, if we will follow them only with attention.

The *two* goats are, as already said, but one sin-offering; and the object of the sin-offering is to atone: the two goats illustrate atonement; they are a double type, like the two birds in the cleansing of the leper. One bird only dies, as one goat only dies: in each case the second one of the two is needed for a purpose for which its death, without a miracle of resurrection, would have incapacitated it; and this is the only reason why there are two at all.

Thus if atonement be by blood, only one furnishes the blood, *only one properly atones*. The atonement, illustrated by the two, is yet but actually made by the one, who in *this* sense *atones for the other*. And thus the words following in this case are explained,—“to make atonement for him, *to let him go* for a scape-goat into the wilderness.” This is why the other must die, in a sense, for him, that he may be sent away alive, as, in fact, he is.

This, which is plain, is a complete answer to Dr. Waldenström's real perversion.

The Old-Testament doctrine of sacrifice is clear. It is the shedding of blood by which comes remission, and the blood shed is all poured out at the bottom of the altar, save what is put upon the horns in testimony of

death, not life,—a death offered to God, as the blood upon the altar shows, for it is upon the altar, the place of offering, that it atones for the soul. It is not ordinarily sprinkled upon the person at all, but upon the altar; and thus the wrath of God is removed from the sinner that turns to Him. He sees the blood, and passes over. He says as to Noah, that He will not curse; or as to Abel, gives testimony that he is righteous, testifying of his *gifts*.

The sacrifice is substitutional. The hands of the offerer mark it out as this. It is henceforth his *sin*, or *sin-offering*, for the words are the same. Death is entered into the world through sin, and “the soul that sinneth, it shall die,”—so the victim dies. The sword of judgment is sheathed, for the ransom has been found. The Old-Testament doctrine of sacrifice is the doctrine of *vicarious atonement*.

But we have still to inquire as to the New Testament: will it reverse or confirm what we have gathered from the Old?

(To be continued.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 8.—“Were the fowl as well as fish in Gen. 1. 20 out of the waters?”

Ans.—The generality of modern commentators prefer the marginal rendering, “Let fowl fly.” But Tayler Lewis, in a note to Lange’s “Genesis,” says that the words “cannot, we think, be rendered in any other way than as we find it in our English version, ‘and fowl that fly;’ and in all the ancient versions, the Septuagint, and the Vulgate. The Syriac is exactly like the Hebrew in its construction, and can have but one possible sense, *birds that fly*. . . . The idiom of the Hebrew seems fixed, requiring us in such a case to regard the future as descriptive—like a participle or an adjective. In the Arabic, the corresponding usage is so established as to put any other translation out of the question. It occurs frequently in the Koran

with the same subject, and in just such a connection as we have it here. The other rendering, '*and let birds fly*,' would require a different order of the words. The more modern rendering has come from the fear of what would seem gross naturalism, namely, the eduction of the birds from the water; but we know nothing here except as we are taught."

Q. 9.—"How is 'eating the herb' part of man's punishment (Gen. iii. 18), when it had already been named as his food (i. 29)?"

Ans.—It is 'the herb of the *field*' instead of the *garden*—paradise.

Q. 10.—"The 'sanctifying' of the Sabbath, was it not for man? And, while not mentioned in Genesis again, was it not owned as already given in Ex. xvi. 23?"

Ans.—The first question can only be answered in the affirmative. God could not 'sanctify' a Sabbath for Himself, and we have no reason or authority for saying it was for the angels. But we must remember that this was while every thing was good. The fall came, and after that we have no history of the Sabbath till Ex. xvi., except it may be a hint of the weekly division of time in connection with the flood. (Gen. vii. 4; viii. 10, 12.) People may have kept it—or the godly ones, but "from Adam to Moses" there was no *law*.

Ex. xvi. 23 is not conclusive; for the same or a similar formula is found elsewhere in connection with what is newly instituted (vv. 16, 32). And in the law, "*Remember the Sabbath-day*" may only point back to chap. xvi. This is a doubtful basis for any clear faith, but it seems all that in the wisdom of God we are permitted.

Q. 11.—"What is 'perfect in his generations' (Gen. vi. 9)?"

Ans.—Blameless among the people of his day.

Q. 12.—"Why in Num. iii. 39 are the Levites 22,000? The total is 22,300,—more, not less, than the first-born?"

Ans.—The total of 22,000 is right, evidently, and it would seem there must be a copyist's error in the text as to one of the tribes. Keil suggests that in ver. 28 the 600 should be 300. It would easily result from the dropping out of one letter (l).

Q. 13.—"Explain Acts vii. 16, 'sons of Emmor,' etc."

Ans.—There is again some mistake, apparently the word "Abraham" should be omitted; but the MSS. give but little help. It is an old and well-known difficulty.

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART II.—Continued.

The First Woe. (Chap. ix. 1-12.)

AT the sound of the fifth trumpet a star is seen, not to fall, as the common version puts it, but already fallen from heaven to earth. This seems naturally to connect thus with the apostasy under the third trumpet, nor is it likely that the apostasy of any other should be as noteworthy as his whose course is recorded here. At all events, it is an apostate, surely, that is before us, and to him is committed "the key of the abyss."

The force of the words have first of all to be considered. A "pit" is in the Old Testament often a synonym for a dungeon, and every thing unites to show this to be the meaning here; while the "abyss" is not other than the pit itself, but only a further definition of it*—the dungeon which is the abyss. So the demons pray that they may not be sent into the *deep*, or "abyss" (Luke viii. 31), and Satan is, in the twentieth chapter, shut up there. In the Old-Testament parallel to the same in Revelation, it is said, "They shall be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in prison." (Isa. xxiv. 22.) Here the abyss is the "pit," or prison, clearly. The key is used in this place as in the later one—here, the "key of the pit of the abyss;" there, simply "the key of the abyss."

The abyss is not, however, "hell"—the "lake of fire,"—as we may see by the fact that it is, in one passage (Rom. x. 7), used in connection with the Lord: "Who

*The genitive of apposition, as Jno. ii. 21, "the temple of His body."

shall descend into the deep (the abyss)?—that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead." Here, as the heavens are inaccessible to man for height, so is the abyss for depth. The literal meaning ("bottomless") must not be pressed, as our own use of the word shows, and the Greek was similar; the Septuagint use it for the "deep" upon which darkness rested on the first day.

The connection of the "pit" with the state of the dead in the Old Testament is similar to that of the "abyss" here in the New. We have this again in Revelation, where the "beast," in its last phase, is said to come up out of the abyss. This seems naturally to refer to the wounding to death, and revival (chap. xiii. 3, 12, 14). Some have even contended, seeing the identification of the beast (the empire) with its last head (chap. xvii. 11), for the literal resurrection of a person in this case; but this is only a wild extravagance: for resurrection literally could only be from God, and the beast in its last form is wholly under the power of Satan. (xiii. 1, 2). The rising up out of the abyss is figurative, therefore, as the beast itself is; and indeed the use of the word seems figurative throughout.

Now Christ has "the keys of hades and of death" (chap. i. 18); and it is not to be imagined that He should give up into the hand of an apostate, whether man or spirit, any portion of His own authority. We must not think, therefore, (as has been done,) of a literal opening of hades, and an irruption of the spirits of the lost upon the earth. Fancies like these easily gain ascendancy over a certain class of minds; and yet who could seriously maintain such an outbreak of wickedness on the part of those shut up, like the rich man in hades, to await judgment? Were it so, there would be "deeds done" out of the body, as well as "in the body," to give account of in the day of judgment. But, in fact, the locusts are

not said even to come out of the pit. Nothing is said to come out of it but the smoke which darkens the sun and air; and out of the *smoke* the locusts come. It may be natural to think that, after all, they cannot be bred of the smoke, and that they must come with the smoke out of the pit; but naturalistic interpretations may easily deceive us, where the spiritual sense is the whole matter, and for the spiritual meaning there is no difficulty. The smoke is not, as in other places, the smoke of torment, but the fumes of malign spiritual influences which darken the air and the supreme source of light itself. Out of this darkness we can easily understand the locusts to be bred.

It is quite in accordance with their origin that their power should be represented as that of the scorpions of the earth—that is, in their poisonous sting—and their distinction from natural locusts is seen in this, that they do not touch the locusts' food, but are a plague only upon men, and these the unsealed. Remembering that it is in Israel that the sealing is found, the inference seems just that these unsealed ones are Israelites, and the sphere of this plague is in the east. They do not kill—as, in general, the scorpion does not,—but inflict torment to which death is preferable; and their power lasts five months.

We next find them pictured as warriors—a military power subordinated to what is their grand interest and aim, the propagation of poisonous falsehood. Thus "the shapes of the locusts were like horses prepared unto battle;" and, as in the certainty of triumph beforehand, "upon their heads were as it were crowns like gold." Little matter of real triumph had they, as the limiting words here show. "Their faces were as faces of men" also,—they had the dignity and apparent independence of such; while yet "they had hair as the hair of women," being in the fullest subjection to the dark and dreadful power that ruled over them. "Their teeth as the teeth

of lions " show the savage, tenacious grip with which they can hold their prey ; their breast-plates of iron, perhaps, the fence of a hardened conscience; the sound of their wings, like that of the locust-hosts they resemble, conveys the hopeless terror which they inspire. Finally, we are again told of their scorpion-stings, and their power to hurt men five months.

They have a king over them—the angel of the abyss, whose name is given, almost exactly the same in meaning, in Hebrew and in Greek. The use of the Hebrew unites, with other indications we have had, to assure us that it is upon Israel that this woe comes, while the Greek no less plainly indicates that the angel here has also to do with the Gentiles: according to both, he is the "destroyer;" and it is natural to think of Satan in such connections, while it seems *not* probable that the angel of the abyss is the same person with the fallen star.

The historical application in this case is one in which there is great unanimity among interpreters. They apply it to Mohammed, and the Saracens, whose astonishing successes were manifestly gained under the inspiration of a false religion. They came in swarms from the very country of the locusts, and their turbaned heads with men's beards and women's hair, their cuirasses, the sparing of the trees and corn, and even of life where there was submission, with their time of prevalence, according to the year-day reckoning, one hundred and fifty years,—all these things have been pointed out as fulfillment of the vision. It has been objected, on the other hand, that such points as these are below the dignity of Scripture, and that the terms are moral. While this is surely true if we think of the full intention, it is to be considered, on the other hand, whether God does not allow and intend oftentimes a correspondence between such outward things and what is deeper, just as the face of a man may be a

real index to his spirit. Just *because* they are external, they are well fitted to strike the imagination; and the parable is, as we know, a very common method of instruction every where in Scripture. Thus God would open our eyes to see what is indeed all around us; and to stop at what is external, or to ignore it, is alike an error.

In any case, and for reasons which we have already considered, we cannot take this Saracenic scourge as any complete fulfillment of the locust-vision. Nor can we, on the other hand, connect it as fully and certainly with other prophecy as would be necessary for very clear interpretation. What seems indicated, however, with regard to its final fulfillment in a time yet to come, is the rise and propagation of that delusion to which we know both the mass of mere Christian profession and of the unbelieving Jews will in the end surrender themselves. (2 Thess. ii.) The antichrist of that time will be, there is little doubt, both an apostate from Christianity and from the faith of his Jewish fathers (Dan. xi. 37); and his apostasy will remove (under divine permission) the present restraint upon the power of evil. It will be as if the abyss had opened its mouth to darken the light of heaven; a mist of confusion will roll in upon men's minds, which will under satanic influence soon find definite expression in forms of blasphemy and a host of armed adherents ready to force upon others the doctrines of the pit. As has been said, it is apparently with Israel that this trumpet has to do, but yet the Greek name of the leader seems to speak also of the connection with the Gentiles. If the application here made be the true one, then we know that the "wicked one" will not be a Jewish false Christ merely, but will also head the apostasy of Christendom. In this sense also it may be that the "beast" under its last head—the revived Roman empire—is said to come up out of the abyss, its actual revival

being due to the dark and dreadful power which is presented to us here,—so exceeding in malignity all that has preceded it, that its advent is called, in the language of inspiration, “the first woe.”

A GLANCE AT PROPHECY.

THERE is a constant tendency to follow, in our reading of the Word of God, certain lines of teaching: those most easily discerned by us, or that have most impressed themselves upon our minds and hearts perhaps; and these, engrossing the attention at the expense of others, become the limit of our spiritual horizon. How many Christians of years standing are still where they were when perhaps they began to live to God—only that where this is the case, the old truths will have lost their freshness and real interest for the soul. Theology comes in to develop this tendency, and to limit the pasture of the flock of God often in such a way as to keep believers always babes in the faith, instead of proper growth being attained to full manhood. But the loss and damage to the soul is immense; and for the lack of knowing the distinct and definite teaching of the Word, souls are exposed to the blighting effect of the “winds of doctrine,” which are so many and so various. How well does Rome know the advantage to her that is gained by keeping souls in ignorance of the Word of God, of which she proposes to be the sole interpreter! but may we not with an open Bible, and perhaps keeping up the daily reading of it, yet be much in the dark as to the teaching of the Spirit of God concerning the greater part of what its blessed pages contain? How many souls would have to acknowledge this to be their state, and that they have little intelligence of the scope of the Word, or of the plan

so perfect and harmonious which it contains, which God in His infinite wisdom is working out in this world of sin, and which He is pleased to communicate to His beloved people by the Spirit and through the Word !

All truth is so linked together that you cannot leave out one part without marring or losing something else ; whilst here, surely, it must be ever true that "we know in part, and prophecy in part," awaiting the time of full and perfect knowledge when we shall see face to face the One who died for us, and of whose glory all truth is but a ray.

The key to the dispensational lines of truth is, of course, prophecy : a subject many consider too deep for them, and from which others are frightened by the rash speculations of those who, not content with humbly and reverently searching the Word, proving all things, and holding fast that which is good, have set out to be prophets themselves, or who, for lack of light on certain points of importance, have perhaps overlooked dispensational distinctions, and so gone quite astray. It may be the fruit of traditional teaching with many an upright soul, which perhaps has missed the mind of God through receiving from man, and not having learned to cease from the creature, and trust only in the living God. How few have really been brought to that, and have to do with God directly about what they hold, so that even if it is truth they have on any point, it is held but weakly, so that they are not able "to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in them !

There is no portion of truth which is so neglected by the mass of believers as prophecy. Yet we are told it is "a light that shineth in a dark place," and that we do *well* to take heed to it. Do we not, then, do *ill* to neglect it ? Would God advise the study of that which was hurtful or dangerous ? In a dark place is it not dangerous to go without the light ? So God has told us that it

is a light shining in a dark place. But so many are taken up with human advancement and progress that they do not any more consider the world a dark place; it is regarded as growing more and more enlightened. For such, I need not say the light shines in vain; they are in spirit identified with the progress of the age; they have not yet learned the lesson of the cross, nor can they say with Paul, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Yes, perhaps many would answer, I can glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; it is that by which pardon and justification are procured me. Well, so be it; this is surely matter for thankfulness truthfully to own that. But it is not this that Paul says here; he adds, "By which the world is crucified to me and I to the world." This is another story, surely,—a step beyond the other, and an important one indeed—important in the practical side of Christianity. It puts the cross between us and the world which has rejected and still rejects the Son of God. It puts us on God's side of it, as sharing in the rejection of His Son, and as sharing too, through grace, in the love which prompted Him to give that Son, and that still is holding back the wrath so long and well deserved, that the message of grace may be preached, and God's servants may still, in Christ's stead, be beseeching man to be reconciled to God. But it shows the world as lying in the wicked one, as enslaved by sin and Satan, though passing on insensibly to its doom, asleep in false security. The Christian's path is through the world to the glory of Christ as a stranger and a pilgrim. How many, alas! are deceived by morality and religious profession, all which Nicodemus had when the Lord Jesus said to him that night, "*You must be born again.*"

But if my reader is a believer, and it is for such this is written, I entreat him or her to consider if the greater

part of the Word is not really locked up from sight, and beyond its history, perhaps, and the truths of the gospel necessary to be known for salvation, hardly any thing of its wonderful and blessed contents is understood. Beyond the Sunday-school lesson, perhaps, the interest in it is small, just because the soul has not been laid hold of by the precious things which need to be searched for as for hidden treasure,—treasure compared with which all that the world has is not worth considering, because it is “the unsearchable riches of Christ,”—an expression often quoted, but little understood.

For the present, then, I press upon my reader the great fact that the subject of the Bible is Christ, the Son of God; that the burden of the prophets is “the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” The first is past, and the last, it may be, near at hand; but the One who has been crucified will surely come to reign. Let him remember, in view of the prevailing opposition or indifference to the coming of Christ again, that at His first coming such blindness had fallen upon the professed people of God—the Jews—that they rejected and crucified Him, thus fulfilling the very scriptures they were ignorant of; so too to-day, how many are sharing in the unbelief which has substituted something else for the coming of the Lord! How many are saying, “My Lord delayeth His coming”—the mark of an evil servant; and besides all this, how scoffers abound, saying, “Where is the promise of His coming?” Men will be saying, “Peace, peace, when sudden destruction cometh upon them . . . and they shall not escape.”

Do the armed hosts of Europe look like progress? does the present strife between labor and capital augur well for the future? do the corrupt practices in trade; the increasing crime; the ascendancy of the Jesuits, which is increasing rapidly; and the blindness of politicians to the

growing menace to their boasted liberties, assure us of peace? Assuredly not! And if it be said that the world is now open to missionary effort as never before, yet this, too, does not promise the world's conversion, but exactly fulfills the word of Christ, who said, "This gospel of the kingdom must first be preached among all nations for a witness, and then shall the end come." All this fulfills His word as every thing must, for He knows the end from the beginning. In succeeding papers, God willing, some points will be looked at with a view to present this truth for the consideration of the Lord's people, with the assurance that it is a subject full of blessing for those who are simple and upright in heart, and who, casting aside human sophistry and reasonings, have learned in faith to take God at His word, and if blessing for them of glory to Him who always links together His own glory and His beloved people's welfare.

R. T. G.

THE RESURRECTION.

IN the course of his wandering among the pyramids of Egypt, Lord Lindsay, the celebrated English traveler, accidentally came across a mummy, the inscription on which proved to be at least two thousand years old. In examining the mummy after it was carefully unwrapped, he found in one of its closed hands a small, round root. Wondering how long vegetable life could last, he took the little bulb from that closed hand, and planted it in a sunny soil, allowed the dew and rains of heaven to descend upon it, and in course of time, a few weeks, to his astonishment and joy, that root burst forth and bloomed into a beautiful flower. This interesting incident suggested to Mrs. S. H. Bradford the following thoughts upon the resurrection:—

Two thousand years ago, a flower
 Bloomed lightly, in a far-off land;
Two thousand years ago, its seed
 Was placed within a dead man's hand.

Before the Saviour came on earth,
 That man had lived, and loved, and died,
And even in that far-off time,
 The flower had spread its perfume wide.

Suns rose and set, years came and went,
 The dead hand kept its treasure well;
Nations were born and turned to dust,
 While life was hidden in that shell.

The shriveled hand is robbed at last:
 The seed is buried in the earth;
When, lo ! the *life* long hidden there,
 Into a glorious flower burst forth.

Just such a plant as that which grew
 From such a seed when buried low,
Just such a flower in Egypt bloomed
 And died, two thousand years ago.

And will not He who watched the seed
 And kept the life within the shell,
When those He loves are laid to rest,
 Watch o'er their buried dust as well?

And will not He from 'neath the sod
 Cause something glorious to rise?
Ay ! though it sleep two thousand years,
 Yet all that buried dust shall rise.

Just such a face as greets you now,
 Just such a form as here you bear,
Only more glorious far will rise
 To meet the Saviour in the air.

Then will I lay me down in peace
 When called to leave this vale of tears;
For "in my flesh shall I see God,"
 E'en though I sleep two thousand years.

EVIDENCES, AND THEIR SCRIPTURE USE.

"And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments."

"But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in Him."

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (1 Jno. ii. 3, 5; iii. 14.)

IT can never be held too simply that the foundation upon which our souls alone can rest is a work wrought for *sinner*s, so that *as* sinners we may build on it. We have not to look in at ourselves for the evidences of being born again, in order to know we are. The moment we do so, we are off the ground of simple faith, and involved in a process of reasoning which naturally and necessarily produces doubt and anxiety of soul. Have we not deceitful hearts? Have we not a subtle adversary ever ready to take advantage of our readiness to flatter ourselves,—to hush our souls into a false peace? Thus, while the careless may be readily persuaded that all is well, the more sincere and earnest we are, the more perplexed and anxious we must be. No word of God seems there to be to throw its light into the gloom and dispel it. Granted we are "justified by faith," who shall assure me that I have it? Granted, "he who believeth on Him hath everlasting life," what word of God settles for *me* that *I* believe in Him?

True, there are marks—evidences: Scripture gives such. The application of them to myself is the difficulty. *Scripture does not settle that I have the marks.* That must be a reasoning of my own, prejudiced naturally in my own favor, blind as I often find myself, and with the solemn utterance of divine wisdom before me, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." (Prov. xxviii. 26.)

Thank God, to no such reasoning are we left. He who "justifieth the ungodly," because for ungodly ones

Christ died, has assured me that, without need of further reasonings, *all* who trust in Him are blessed. (Ps. ii. 12.) Without *any* trust in myself of any kind, I may trust One who died for the ungodly. My title to confide in Him, my Saviour, is thus *not* my godliness but my *ungodliness*. And "to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 5.) Observe, it is not here, "that justifieth the *believer*,"—true as that is,—but justifieth the *ungodly*; for what my faith sees if it look within is not itself or its virtues, but that ungodliness which is but the dark background on which shine forth, in all their glory, the virtues of Him who loved me and died for me when I was only that.

Sweet and precious faith, solid and unshaken, that trusts not itself but Christ! My ungodliness is no delusion. No deceitful heart betrays me there! No word of the old liar am I listening to in that, but the true and faithful word of the living God. So, too, that Jesus died for the ungodly, that same word is my warrant. Once again, then and there it bids me "trust in Him," and tells me it is no deception—can be none—to *know my blessedness*. Test every link there as you will, it is a threefold cord, not quickly broken.

Various are the objections, however, raised to this. The truths of Scripture themselves, torn from their proper connection and misapplied, become apparently the most formidable of all. *Texts*, too, no less than *truths*, used after (I must say) the most careless fashion, lend seeming authority to what is simply sad, injurious error. Who has not heard, for instance, the words, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves," taken and dwelt upon as the plainest possible command to look into one's self for evidences of being born again? And how many even now need to be told that the

whole sentence, as the apostle wrote it, conveys exactly the opposite thought? And yet that is the truth. We have only to remember that a certain part of this sentence is a parenthesis, and, for the moment laying it aside, we have, "*Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, . . . examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves.*" They had got *in themselves* the proof of Christ speaking by the apostle, for themselves were the fruit of it. How could they doubt whether Christ had spoken by Paul, when *through* Paul He had spoken to them? If they questioned that, they might well question the reality of their own conversion. But that he was persuaded they could not do; and so he goes on to ask, in the very next sentence, "*Know ye not, your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you?*" As much as to say, Do you need to look?

This passage, then, so often quoted for it, certainly does not prove what it is quoted for—that it is right and needful to examine ourselves to see if we be Christians. To look in for peace is *never* right. It is the sure road to doubt, with the earnest, and to get off the ground of real confidence; for it is always well to *doubt self*, and we are never called to have faith in ourselves. There is no word of God that *I* am born again; but if I know myself a sinner, there is abundant assurance that I may trust Jesus *as one*. If I cannot trust myself—even my faith,—I can trust *Him*.

But then, are there no evidences? I have already said, assuredly there are. The texts that stand at the head of this paper are the undeniable proof of it. The question is simply, When and how do I obtain them? and what use do I put them to?

It would be a poor thing to say that this faith we are speaking of wrought nothing one could be conscious of in the soul. It would be a poor account to give of

faith, and no honor to it, and no comfort to the possessor of it to believe or find it so. Would it be comfort to say or think that I should never be conscious of true love to God, or true love to my brethren? I think there would be as little of comfort as of truth. "We *know* that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." We *know*, then, we are conscious of, our love.

But how differs this from building upon evidences?

In this way, that such evidences are only possible to one who is *already* building upon Christ.

Let me prove and illustrate this. The seventh of Luke may supply us both with proof and illustration from our Lord's own words.

"A certain creditor had two debtors: the one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both."

There is the divine picture of divine forgiveness. Two debtors, differing in the amount of their debt, differing not at all in this—they had *nothing* to pay. Beloved reader, have *you* ever stood before God so? If you have not, you shall. In the very truth of your condition as He knows, and as He has pronounced it. Solemn, most solemn anticipation, that! What must be the reality? But it shall be; and your entire lot for eternity depends upon this, when and where you shall meet Him so—whether in the day of grace and salvation, or in the day of account and doom.

But, O beggared and bankrupt soul, thou hast not even a promise to make more, thou art so lost! not a right feeling, nor a sigh or tear that thou canst take comfort in any more! bring that hard heart thou canst neither break nor soften, and set thee down in the presence of this Speaker, and see and own thy God in Him! Listen now, and let thine ear drink in those precious

words, "*When* they had NOTHING to pay,"—was ever a sad truth so sweetly uttered?—"he,"—mark who this "he" is in our Lord's intent!—"He *frankly forgave them both.*"

How sweet and simple this utterance! Does it need, think you, the ransacking of my thoughts and feelings with reference to it, to know it is for me? Nay, the Lord cuts off the thought of that by the question that follows. "Tell me, therefore," says He to Simon, "which of them will love him most?" A question that even a Pharisee has to answer with "I suppose that he to whom he forgave most." Jesus said unto him, "Thou hast rightly judged."

Thus even human experience is competent to give the answer as to how love is to be produced in the soul. By the *knowledge* of love. "We love Him because He first loved us." And here in the seventh of Luke, how is this love shown? By full and free forgiveness. The *knowledge of forgiveness* it was that caused in the heart of the debtor the love of him who forgave him to spring up.

Now, weaken the certainty of that knowledge, and you weaken the spring of all this feeling. If I am doubting the reality of the forgiveness which I have from God, will it have no effect in hindering the outflow of my love to Him? According to our Lord's words, it surely will. Or will my heart go forth in full, conscious delight in Him at the very moment I am doubting, whether He may not banish me from His face forever? And if I am *not* doubting, I have surely no need to examine my heart for evidences.

No, Scripture has, in perfect knowledge of what we are, and in perfect wisdom 'as to how we need to be dealt with, decided this. An apostle who came short of none in entireness of devotion to One blessed object,

he who could say, "To me to live is Christ," gives us the very secret of that life given to Him, in the words, "And 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.*"

Nay, it is "as the elect of God, holy and beloved," we are exhorted to "put on" the things which suit such. (Col. iii.) It is God's way, and good, to give *all* the blessing freely, which is ours in Christ, and then say, "Now walk worthy." How different from spelling out, or seeking to spell out, in the worthiness of my walk, whether I have the blessing!

It is as the love flows *in*, the love flows *out*. "If any man thirst," says our Lord again,—*thirst*, mark there is your title to Christ in all His fullness,—“If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and *drink*; and he that believeth in Me (so having drunk, remember), out of his belly shall *flow* rivers of living water.” (Jno. vii.)

Well then, we must *drink*,—DRINK,—DRINK! Man can create nothing,—no, not love in his own heart! he must receive and enjoy, and the living waters shall flow forth. We shall be conscious of love as we are conscious of *His* love, and how it has been manifested in His giving Himself for us.

But how about, then, "We know we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren"?

Why, simply, so we do. But it is not the first way of knowing. It is the knowledge of a saint who has drunk in the love of Christ into his soul, and knows what he has got. But it is not the way a doubting soul acquires peace. Peace is got by believing, not our own feelings, which as a foundation are all untrustworthy, but the word of God about the blood of Jesus.

But still there is a solemn use and need-be for the apostle's statements here. Who can read his words,

“Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments,” without feeling he surely is thinking of some who say they know Him, and are *not* keeping His commandments. So indeed he is; and if there were need in the apostle’s days of testing the tree by its fruit, how much more is there now? Thus, if I find still professors, orthodox enough in form of speech, but whose lives show nothing of the power of the gospel, I am entitled to take them up upon the ground of their professed confidence in Christ, and say, Are you keeping His commandments? Do you love the brethren? No other ground is it possible to take with such, for their *profession* is all right and orthodox. Now, if the soul is really firm in Christ, it can afford to look at itself, and stand a shake. If after all it is not building on Christ, the conscience may get alarmed, and the man find out his condition.

But it is quite another thing to say to one who does *not* take the ground of confidence, but of *doubt*, “Do you keep His commandments?” There I should be doing positive mischief and wrong to speak so. Such a soul wants *Christ* to *confirm*, not *self* to *shake*, him. And I must deal with him accordingly. Only can he keep commandments when he keeps the first of all—the loving God. Only can he love God as he knows he is loved. Only can I exhort him to holiness when I can do it upon the ground of his being “elect of God, holy and beloved.” Otherwise Christ is made to men a more rigorous law than the law of Moses; but not so of God.

What we want is “rightly to *divide* the word of truth”—to apply it as itself teaches. The Lord Himself apply it, beloved reader, to every one who has need, and whose eye may rest upon this paper.

HE LEADETH ME.

IN pastures green? Not always; sometimes He
Who knoweth best, in kindness leadeth me
In weary ways, where heavy shadows be—

Out of the sunshine, warm and soft and bright,—
Out of the sunshine, into darkest night;
I oft would faint with sorrow and affright—

Only for this : I know He holds my hand.
So, whether in a green or desert land,
I *trust*, although I may not understand.

And by still waters? No, not always so ;
Ofttimes the heavy tempests round me blow,
And o'er my soul the waves and billows go.

But when the storms beat loudest, and I cry
Aloud for help, the Master standeth by,
And whispers to my soul, "Lo, it is I."

Above the tempest wild I hear Him say,
"Beyond this darkness lies the perfect day :
In ev'ry path of thine, I lead the way."

So whether on the hill-tops high and fair
I dwell, or in the sunless valleys where
The shadows lie—what matter? He is there.

And more than this ; where'er the pathway lead,
He gives to me no helpless, broken reed,
But His own hand, sufficient for my need.

So where He leads me I can safely go;
And in the blest hereafter I shall know
Why in His wisdom He hath led me so.

Anon.



CURRENT EVENTS.

DR. WALDENSTRÖM AND NON-VICARIOUS ATONEMENT.

II.—*Concluded.*

NO one of those whose doctrine Dr. Waldenström is opposing would think of denying that Christ's blood cleanses from all sin. If they were bold enough or ignorant enough to do so, it would certainly be easy work, with but a single text such as he quotes, to refute them. As it is, his first arguments, when he comes to the New Testament, are but another instance of the strange half-sightedness which so constantly afflicts him. *Why* should it result that because the blood of the Lamb cleanses, it cannot atone? or that cleansing and atoning should be but the same thing? Surely it cleanses, purifies, sanctifies (we affirm it with all our hearts), and yet it atones! And more: its power to atone is just what gives it power to cleanse, as we shall see.

Even as to cleansing, the washing of water and the sprinkling of blood have to be distinguished as he does not distinguish them; and likewise the sprinkling of blood upon the *person* from the sprinkling of blood upon the *altar* or upon the mercy-seat. All this he entirely confounds; and to disentangle the confusion is enough completely to destroy his system.

He begins with what is indeed an important text—Heb. ii. 17, 18, where the common version gives, “to make reconciliation for.” The Revised has, rightly, “make *propitiation*.” He says, Christ’s “work as High-Priest was to make *propitiation* for the sins of the people.” The apostle does not say, “to propitiate God,” but

"to make propitiation for the sins of the people." Dr. Waldenström turns back to the Old-Testament sacrifices to explain this in the manner already familiar to us, adding, "As John says, 'The blood of Jesus, His Son, *cleanseth us* from all sin. (1 Jno. i. 7.)' But to cleanse is to cleanse, or purify, and nothing else. . . . and when once all His work shall have been consummated, then there shall stand around His throne a great multitude which no man can number—a multitude of human beings, pure and holy like Himself. And were you to ask how they have become so pure, they would answer that they '*washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*' (Rev. vii. 14.) Mark, mark, not that they by the blood of Jesus have *appeased God*; no, but that they, in the blood of Jesus, have *washed their robes.*"

The style of argument I have already indicated: "The apostle does not say, 'to propitiate *God*'"! Not, it must be confessed, in so many words; but does he say, to *make propitiation*? It is the only possible rendering of the text. WHOM, then, does He propitiate, if not God? How did He make propitiation at all—that is, *appeasal*,—if there were no one to *be* appeased? If there were, who was it but God? Surely, if He is not named, the reference is, plainly enough, to Him.

Mr. Princell, as we have seen, is bolder than his leader. *Hilaskomai* here "plainly" means only "to show mercy with respect to"—that is, "to pardon"! But this is only assertion, against which we have the whole doctrine of the Old Testament, as we have seen, as well as the regular use of the word. In Luke xviii. 13 the correct force of the passive is also "be propitiated." The sacrificial system shows any thing rather than simple "forgiveness" without atonement made, and the sinner's repentance was not the atonement.

Then the quotation from John can scarcely, one would think, be meant for proof. Of course, to cleanse is to cleanse, but "to *make propitiation*" is not "to cleanse." The latter is the *effect* of the former—not the same thing. And even to *cleanse* here is not to make inwardly pure, in the sense of regeneration, or communicating a new life, but answers to Heb. x, 22—the "heart sprinkled from an evil *conscience*." The meaning of purging by the blood Hebrews will presently show us.

As for the blood-washed throng in Revelation, they are witnesses *against* Dr. Waldenström, not for him. For the white robes are (*δυναμικά*) "the righteous acts of the saints" (Rev. xix. 8, *R.V.*), which cannot be meant, therefore, to have been internally purified, but freed from the imputation of the evil which had been in them after all; the washing here was from *guilt*, and it is by its atoning power that the blood of Christ avails for this.

But the doctrine of cleansing by the blood is in the ninth and tenth chapters of Hebrews, to which Dr. Waldenström now goes on, having quoted chap. ix. 13, 14, he asks, "What, then, according to the idea of the apostle, were the sacrifices of goats and oxen meant to do? Answer: To appease God? No; but *to sanctify the unclean unto an outward cleansing*. To effect any spiritual cleansing, or to make the worshipers perfect as touching the conscience, that they could not do. (*v. 9.*) 'For the law made nothing perfect.' (chap. vii. 19.) But the sacrifices of the Old Testament were only types. In the New Testament, there is a better sacrificial blood—the blood of Jesus Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit has offered Himself unto God; and what was its significance according to the idea of the apostle? Did he say, "How much more, then, shall the blood of Christ appease God, so that, again, it may be possible for Him

to be gracious unto us?' No; but he did say this: 'How much more shall the blood of Christ cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.' . . . To cleanse, to cleanse from sin, *that* is the power of the sacrificial blood in the New Testament."

Now, what is the theme of the apostle in all this part of Hebrews? It is the cleansing of the *conscience*, so that we can now do what under the law they could not—draw nigh to God. The vail before the holiest showed that under the law,—that is, by its works,—this was impossible. The vail is now rent, and Christ has, by His own blood, entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption. What does this mean, entering in as high-priest by His own blood? Does it mean power in the blood Godward, or simply manward? How has He obtained redemption? Does the blood speak of death here, or of life? Now, *immediately following* the verse which Dr. Waldenström has quoted we find this: "And for this cause He is the mediator of the new testament, that, *by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions* that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

Why has not Dr. Waldenström quoted this? Would it have helped his argument, or spoiled it, to have done so? And the apostle goes on to insist upon the necessity of death, and to connect with it what was, indeed, the testimony of it—the blood so necessary even under the law, and without *shedding* of which was no remission? We see that this shedding of blood does not stand alone in this chapter; but that it is connected with the doctrine clearly announced, of the necessity of the *death* of Christ for redemption, and that the shedding of blood must (of course) furnish the blood which now sprinkled upon the heart purges it from a bad conscience. The knowledge

of redemption through Christ's death sets the soul at rest, and enables us to draw near to God.

But more: by the same precious blood the heavenly things themselves are cleansed for us,—“that is,” says Dr. Waldenström himself, “the heavenly sanctuary.” He catches at this to say that whatever may be meant by it, “yet surely we must see that [the apostle] sets forth the meaning of the sacrifices to be that of *cleansing*.” If he had said ‘*a*’ meaning, who would have contested it? But he thinks he has gained all when he states thus a half-truth for a whole. Nay, it is no matter to him what the heavenly sanctuary means; nor, therefore, what the cleansing itself is, for that must be affected by it. His view imperatively requires, as we have seen, that it should be internal cleansing,—the communication of life, for the blood is the life; but how can the heavenly sanctuary be cleansed thus? It cannot, and cleansing from defilement has no real place in Dr. Waldenström's thoughts.

Yet he can venture to tell us that the apostle “explains this cleansing as meaning that Christ once for all, now at the end of the ages, has been manifested ‘*to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself* (v. 26);’” and that “in verse 28, he repeats the same thought, saying, ‘*Christ was once offered to bear* [that is, for the purpose of bearing, or taking away] *the sins of many.*’” Thus, what in other places is called atonement for sins through sacrifices, that is here called a *putting away* of sins, or a *bearing them away*!”

This is bold enough: the two words are quite different, the “putting away” of sins the effect of atonement, the *bearing* of sins, the essential element of atonement itself. The last is the same word that Peter uses when he says, in a text which seems, like some other important ones, to have escaped our author, “Himself bare our sins in

His own body on the tree . . . by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Pet. ii. 24.) Is this the same as 'bare away our sins in His own body' and that "on the tree"? Even if it were, awkward as would be the conception, it could scarcely obscure the vicarious character of atonement here; but it is not, as Dr. Waldenström must know it is not: it is "bare up," "sustained," bore the burden of. How nearly the repetition of Isaiah's words: "He shall bear their iniquities; . . . He hath poured out His soul unto death; and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many"!

Thus alone could sin be taken away, "the chastisement of our peace" being "upon Him." How vain to deny it! how terrible to slight or deny the need and value of a work so precious! It is needless to follow Dr. Waldenström into the tenth chapter of Hebrews, where his argument is but a monotonous repetition of the same half-truths. The sacrifice cleanses, therefore it does not atone! it sanctifies, therefore it does not atone! What is supposed to be a part of our intuitive knowledge he does not seem to have apprehended, that a whole is greater than its parts. Let us repeat it for him, that it is just because the blood of Christ atones for us that it can cleanse,—that it is just because He bare our sins upon the tree that they can be taken away from us. The truth he refuses is the natural, necessary complement of the truth he sees.

Nor does it need to take up the passages cited from the first epistle of John, which even all his effort cannot make otherwise than clear. It is only when he introduces such thoughts as that of "propitiating sinners from their sins"—to which he rightly enough appends the doubt, "if we could use such an expression"—that there is any difficulty at all. He does not, as we have seen, even mention the passages in Peter. His arguments, with

the most wearisome reiteration, do but affirm and re-affirm these two things, that because the blood is the life, blood *poured out*, or sprinkled is still life, not death; and secondly, that once prove that the blood sanctifies or cleanses, you have *disproved* vicarious atonement. Meanwhile, he has scarcely attempted to meet the arguments on the other side, or looked even at the texts upon which they are founded! And while he admits, in a general way, that Christ died for us—I suppose, for our sins,—yet why He should have died, we cannot, in the two books we have been examining at least, understand at all. It may be that it was for the moral effect of it: *Scripture* says it was “for redemption.” That “the chastisement of our peace was upon Him;” that “the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all;” that thus “He was made sin for us,” “bare the sins of many,” “bare our sins in His own body on the tree,” “suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust,” “redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;” that He “tasted death for every man;” that “the Son of man *must* be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish,”—all this, and much more, must be for him as inexplicable as, in fact, by him it is unexplained.

We do not propose to follow him into the last three chapters of this book, where, from the common confusion between reconciliation and atonement, he gains some points against those who make it. In this there is little interest for us, and in much that he says we should have to agree with him; but it is striking and characteristic that, when he has shown us how, in those who are ambassadors for Christ, God beseeches men, as it were, and they pray, in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God,—there, as if a mountain lay across his path, he stops and goes no further. From his book you would never learn that the *ground* of the appeal for reconciliation lies in

this, that "God has *made Him to be sin* for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the *righteousness* of God in Him."

And this mountain, though with the eternal dawn bright upon its summit, lies still as an insurmountable barrier across the path of Dr. Waldenström and all those who plead the cause of non-vicarious atonement.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 14.—"Would you explain the meaning of the Saviour's words in Luke xxii. 36-39, concerning the wallet and the swords? Does 'It is enough' refer to the conversation, or the swords?"

Ans.—The Lord is preparing His disciples for a different state of things, now that He is definitely rejected, from that which they had found when sent out by Him at the beginning (Matt. x. 9, 10). Then, they were on a mission to Israel only, seeking out the "worthy" ones; now, to go forth in the face of a hostile world. They were to be prepared, therefore, for rejection, carry their own provision, and arm themselves against opposition. But He speaks figuratively, and when Peter would use the sword rebukes it with the assurance that "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword"—words which forbid the literal sense. Nor could "It is enough" apply to the swords, if each of the disciples was to be armed with one: rather, He means, "That is all I can say now; by and by you will understand." For "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." (2 Cor. x. 4).

Q. 15.—"Does Luke xvi. 9 apply to the Church?"

Ans.—It is a general principle, and always applicable. "That they may receive you" is equivalent to "that ye may be received;" and verse 25 is the same carried out. The rich man had made his riches his enemy instead of his friend,—had taken his good things in the present life, and was not received, but shut out. Of course this might be taken in such a way as to deny the gospel, but the gospel does not set aside the truth that it is "they that have done good" who come forth "to the resurrection of life;" it explains how alone there can be any such.

Q. 16.—"What is the difference between giving money as they did in Israel for 'a ransom for the soul,' and similar things in Romanism?"

Ans.—Romanism is essentially Judaism, but to go back to it when God has set it aside is, in principle, apostasy. It is one of the enemy's most successful devices to bring in that which was once of God to displace with it the present truth. And the thing thus brought back will always be found to be really different from what it was as given by God: it is now impregnated with falsehood, a fatal heresy. So it is in this case: the atonement-money in Israel was a figure of redemption, for us entirely done away; *we* "are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." (1 Pet. i. 18). But in Israel therefore (as the apostle says of the sprinkling of blood, etc.), it was never supposed to have virtue beyond death, or for the real cleansing of the soul before God, but only an external "purifying of the flesh" by which they held their place among the people of God, but the conscience was never set at rest. (Heb. ix. 10-14). And its being called "a ransom for the *soul*," must not make us think of "soul" in the ordinary sense now. The "soul," in the Old Testament, often stands for both the "life" and the "person." Balaam's "let my soul die the death of the righteous" (Num. xxiii. 10) is only an emphatic "let *me* die."

Q. 17.—"Is there a difference between being 'reproached for the name of Christ,' and 'suffering as a Christian?' (1 Pet. iv. 14-16.)"

Ans.—The latter is more comprehensive, I should say; but that is all.

Q. 18.—"At what time does judgment begin at the house of God (1 Pet. iv. 17)? and is the house of God here what it is in 1 Tim. iii. 15?"

Ans.—The house of God and the people of God were in Judaism quite distinct: only in Christianity are they identified. Here it is the people of God upon whom judgment comes as chastening in this present life, that they may not be condemned with the world (1 Cor. xi. 32), for God must be holy as well as gracious. Judgment begins here with the saints of God: what will it be for the ungodly then, upon whom it *rests* in eternity?

Q. 19.—"Are there any other than the three classes, 'the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God'? Is the house of God the same as the Church of God?"

Ans.—The Church of God in its relation to God is His house, —to Christ, His body. The three classes spoken of by the apostle clearly embrace the whole world: he supposes none other to whom to give offense.

PARTIAL RECOVERY.

ALL Christians recognize the great danger (to the unconverted) of coming short of salvation. "Almost persuaded" is sadder than altogether rejecting. Such passages as Heb. vi. and 1 Cor. ix. do not, as we well know, refer to children of God, but to those who, through outward privilege, have been "not far from the kingdom of God," of whom the apostle says, "It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." (2 Pet. ii. 21.) The rich young ruler in Luke xviii., who seemed so near, was in reality as far as the proud Pharisee from that justification which, taking his place *as* distant, the publican found. Such cases as those of Ahab (1 Kings xxi. 27-29), who walked softly after his fearful sin in the matter of Naboth; of Shimei (1 Kings ii. 36-46), who lived at Jerusalem, the place of outward blessing and nearness, but *on conditions*, are alas! but too common in this day of outward reformation, and profession of being under grace, while really an unchanged enemy, under law. Is the reader of these lines, after all, only almost a Christian? only apparently saved, not really so? Be *sure* (you cannot be *too* sure) that self, works, associations, professions, have *no* place in the foundation upon which you are resting. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. iii. 11.)

But these lines are not written for such as know not our Lord Jesus, but for those who are really "children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." (Gal. iii. 26.) To such, the title at the head of this paper should be suggestive. It refers, not to questions relating to our standing as Christians, but to our walk and our communion.

Recovery presupposes declension. Were the believer always in a state of communion, there would, happily, be no need for recovery. But, alas! God's Word, as well as our experience, assures us that "in many things we all offend." (Jas. iii. 2.) There need not be some open lapse into flagrant sin, as in David's case, or that of the man in 1 Cor. v. Declension is most insidious. It may be present when there is much labor, as in Ephesus (Rev. ii.); many gifts, as at Corinth (1 Cor. i.); much outward zeal, as among the Galatians. (Gal. iv.)

It is departing from the living God, in whatever degree, shown in the loss of that freshness of first love, that tenderness of conscience, that brokenness and holy fear, which are the sure effects of being consciously in the presence of a holy as well as gracious God. Ah! beloved brethren, many of us who may not be chargeable with any thing immoral may at this moment be in a sad state of declension—saddest proof of this is the unconsciousness of its being the case. Like Samson, we may not know that we have lost the hidden source of strength, till the bonds of the Philistines awaken us to the real facts.

It is, however, only in passing that one would allude to declension—merely to ask each one who may read this, "How is it with *thee*?" Our subject is recovery. Those who are conscious of having wandered—who desire to return—are the ones who need both the encouragement and the warning which are suggested here. For, oh! *what* encouragement is held out to those who have lost the joy of salvation! If God yearns over returning *sinners*, does He do less over returning *saints*? Rom. v. assures us that "much more" is true of the saint as compared with the sinner.

There is warning too, for, strange as it may seem, it is when a saint is awakened to a sense of failure that

he is in greatest danger of self-righteousness. No hearts but ours could find in the realization or confession of sin material for pride. Saddest proof of corruption—to feed upon itself! This is one of the clear marks of but partial recovery. Confession of sin is eminently fitting and necessary, both to God and often to our brethren; but the moment that confession is enjoyed, or a certain satisfaction taken in it, we see the signs of but partial recovery—nay, of only a subtler form of sin. True confession comes from a horror and loathing of sin—farthest removed from that flippant or surface-acknowledgment of wrong, which is often but the prelude to still greater failure.

There are, in general, three marks of true recovery :
 1. God Himself becomes again the object of the soul. One may have grieved his brethren, and acted so as to lose his self-respect, but neither amends to them nor a restoration of self-complacency marks true recovery. "If ye will return, return unto *Me*." When Jacob had returned to the *land*, he had been but partially restored, and worldliness and defilement mark the state of himself and family. *Bethel* must be reached—the place where God is all and self nothing—before Jacob, or any one, is in his true place. How beautifully David exemplifies this in Ps. li. "Against *thee*, thee only, have I sinned." Sin there had been against the individual, and against the nation, but David measures his guilt in the presence of God. So too, my brethren, will we find that whatever there has been in us,—whether worldliness in thought and ways, or deep moral evil, the conscience of one truly restored is *alone with God*. What deep work this means! It is to be feared that many have had their understandings only convinced of failure, and not their consciences.

2. Growing out of a return to *God* will be manifested

a submission to His government, in letting us reap the consequences of our wandering. How often do resentment, impatience, restlessness under the results of our own wrong, mark that recovery is but partial, and, so far, still worthless! Again, David shows that the deepest repentance, the fullest confession, does not avert the government of God—the child of his sin dies, and he bows to and owns the rod. The truly broken soul will not be contending for rights, seeking to accuse others, or pushing himself upon the notice of his brethren. He will quietly wait, owning God's hand, even if the pride of man be the instrument used. "Let him curse, since God hath bidden him curse," says David of Shimei.

3. It will hardly be necessary to more than mention the third proof of true recovery—a ceasing to do evil. Without referring to those who turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness, we may warn one another to beware of a mere sentimental recovery,—tears even, and what not, but no practical, true change of life,—no breaking off sins by righteousness. True sorrow, true recovery, is thus known by the fruits of an upright walk—all else is worse than worthless, because deceptive. The deceitfulness of sin is manifested in these careless, formal, surface-confessions. God keep his people from them! Better not go through such a form, which only hardens the heart and makes sin easier. Do any, on approaching the Lord's table, or on other solemn occasions, thus salve their conscience? The Romanist does as well when he confesses to the priest.

Again, let it be pressed—true recovery is a deep work. On the other hand, a stiff rigidity—an unbending attitude toward the weak and erring not only may retard the work in their souls, but would indicate that our own state is not right with God. God sees when one honestly turns to Him, and owns all that He can, though

He may have to say, "Howbeit the high places were not taken down." Let us, in conclusion, see a picture of true recovery. "For, behold, this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you; yea, what clearing of yourselves; yea, what indignation; yea, what fear; yea, what vehement desire; yea, what zeal; yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter." (2 Cor. vii. 11.)

S. R.

CHRIST'S WORK AS PRIEST ON EARTH.

THE question of the Lord's having been a priest on earth is one to which, now that the attention of many is being drawn to it, should be given due and patient consideration. Mistake on this point may easily lead to further error, as should be plain to us, and there needs no apology for another review of the subject here, in which especially it is my desire to look at some things which as yet have had but brief and unsatisfactory notice in these pages, if any. I shall, however, briefly state the whole argument.

1. The *main* ground for the belief that the Lord was not a priest on earth is certainly Heb. viii. 4, which, however, says nothing of the kind. Speaking of Christ as "a minister of the sanctuary, and of the *true* tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man," it says, "If He were on earth, He should not be a priest." And why? "Seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law." That is, the *place is occupied already!* Well, but what place! Plainly that of offering gifts *according to the law*. But would any of the Lord's work on earth have interfered with that? The question is idle, of course. *So, then, is the argument which needs to*

raise the question : for it is this, and only this, from which the apostle argues, that there are priests already installed in the legal sanctuary, and doing the legal work. Could the work of the cross come in here? Nay, if you will observe, with the perfect accuracy of Scripture, while in the third verse the apostle says that "every high-priest is ordained to offer gifts *and sacrifices*," when he goes on to the argument of the fourth verse, he drops the "sacrifices," because in the Lord's present priestly work there is *no* sacrifice, and only says, "Seeing that there are priests that offer *gifts* according to the law." Backward he does not look : he does not say, "When He was on earth He was not a priest"—how would that look in connection with what follows?—and to import this into it is surely unallowable. Put in its connection, the whole statement is, "If He, a minister of the sanctuary, were on earth, He would not be a priest, for there are priests that are already fulfilling that office as to the sanctuary on earth." This is surely clear, and we may pass on.

2. A second objection to the doctrine of the Lord's having been priest on earth is derived from the fifth chapter, where it is stated that being "made perfect" . . . He was "called of God a high-priest after the order of Melchizedek : " thus it is urged, if He were made perfect through the things which He suffered, as all will allow, then it must be *after* His sacrificial work that He became high-priest.

Two things need, however, to be considered : first, that the word for "called," in this case, is not that for calling to an office, and that the actual word for that occurs before, where His calling seems clearly grounded, not upon His work, but upon His *person* : "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron ; so also Christ glorified not Himself to be made high-priest ; but He that said unto Him,

'Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten Thee;' as He saith also in another place, 'Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.'" Then there can be no just doubt that the call to office is implied in the acknowledgment of Sonship. Otherwise these words would be irrelevant, and the last quotation would be the true and sufficient one. On the other hand, it is really His being the Son of God in humanity that constitutes His fitness for the priesthood,—that is, for the mediatorial office. Aaron's anointing without blood shows that His work was not needed for this; and the *acknowledgment* of Sonship would thus be tantamount to the call, and the two quotations exactly harmonize.

It is after this that His sufferings are introduced; and then, "being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation. . . . *saluted* of God a high-priest after the order of Melchizedek." The work is done, and God greets the Victor by the title under which He has done the work. How suitable this when we know that every thing, with the great High-Priest Himself, had been under the cloud from which He has just emerged! That here there should be the reaffirming of a title which was before His own, need cause no difficulty.

But it is affirmed that "perfected" means "consecrated," as it is translated in chap. vii. 28, "consecrated for evermore." If, then, He was only consecrated as priest through the sufferings He endured, it is plain that He could not have been priest before His sufferings.

Yes, it is plain, if the basis of the reasoning be true; but is it true? As to the word, "perfected" is truly the sense, as every one the least competent will admit; the margin and the Revised Version have it even in chap. vii. 28. As to application, of course the force may vary according to this, and abstractly, the perfecting of a priest *may* be his consecration to office—*may* be, not must; and the

application and the force are alike open to question here.

The application :—for the passage itself does not say “being made perfect as priest,” nor is this connected in this way by the structure of the chapter ; and the strictly parallel passage (as it would appear), chap. ii. 10, substitutes (if we may speak so) for priest, “the Captain of salvation :” “it became Him . . . to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” Is not this very like : “And being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation” ?

But if the connection be admitted (and I for one cannot be unwilling to admit that the Priest is *as* priest the Author of salvation), the conclusion does not follow that is supposed. It must then be asked, In what sense are we to take “perfected” ? If as consecrated through sufferings, was that not at least *on earth* ? and if He were consecrated through sufferings on earth, is not that inconsistent with the thought of a consecration by His being saluted as High-Priest after death, or perhaps resurrection ? Take it as “perfected,”—the Scripture word—and you may say as Priest, and I for one have no question and no difficulty. I believe there was such a “perfecting” of our blessed High-Priest, and that the lack of seeing it occasions much of the perplexity that many are in to-day. For since the apostle is addressing Christians, who have their place as Christians as the result of His accomplished work, it is necessarily a risen and ascended High-Priest with whom we have to do, and whom we need ; and thus his words are very simply applicable to Him as He now is : “Such a High-Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and *made higher* than the heavens.” (Chap. vii. 26.) Yet even such statements show that he does not mean to deny that Christ was not High-Priest *before* He was “made higher than the heavens,” or “passed into the heavens”

even (chap. iv. 14), but in fact *affirm that He was* : for his language would be, otherwise, that He was passed into the heavens, and become Priest ; but this he never says.

3. But does not the apostle say that, in contrast with the Levitical priesthood, in which those who were priests "were not suffered to continue by reason of death," "this Man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood" (chap. vii. 23, 24); and does not this imply that only after He had passed through death could He become Priest? No: this is but an inference, and a false one, derived no doubt from too close a reference to mere earthly priests. Death *would* remove one of these from his place of office: could it remove similarly a heavenly priest? It would rather *introduce him to it*. And the "endless life" after the power of which Christ was made Priest could only be that "eternal life," though in man, over which death could have no power. But this will be supplemented by after-considerations.

4. We must now look at some other statements of the epistle to the Hebrews, which seem to affirm in the strongest way the fact of the Lord's priesthood upon earth. In chap. viii. 4, we have already found the apostle saying, "For every high-priest is ordained to offer gifts and *sacrifices*; wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." Again: "For such a high-priest becometh us . . . who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to *offer up sacrifices*, . . . for *this He did* once, when he offered up Himself." (Chap. vii. 27.) "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 (*R.V.*) for the sins of the people." (Chap. ii. 17.) "But Christ being come, a High-Priest of good things to come, . . . neither by the blood of

bulls and calves, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." (Chap. ix. 11, 12.)

Now what is the consistent testimony of these passages? Is it possible to say, in view of them, that it was not high-priestly work to offer sacrifice? Surely not: they were *ordained to do* it. But was this typical of what Christ did as priest, or was it something in which the types failed to represent the truth, as shadows, but not the very image? Nay, He was a merciful and faithful High-Priest *to make* propitiation—for that purpose,—and as the high-priests offered daily, so He offered up Himself. And then, as High-Priest still, by His own blood He entered the heavens.

Surely the texts are plain, and must be forced, to make them speak otherwise than upon the face of them they seem to do. Where did the High-Priest offer Himself up? In heaven, or on earth? How did the High-Priest enter heaven by His own blood, if He were *not* High-Priest *till* He entered heaven? Will the perfection of Scripture allow me to say that the High-Priest did these things, but not *as* High-Priest? and even where it is asserted that He was High-Priest *to make* propitiation, still that He did not make it "as" High-Priest?

No; as believing in the perfection of the Word of God, we dare not say these things. If we were at liberty to interpolate Scripture after this fashion, it would soon cease to have authority over us, because it would cease to have meaning for us. Any body, in this case, could see how simply such passages could be altered for the better; and if it be the exigency of what has seemed to us the meaning of some particular verse or verses which requires this, have we not the very best reason to see if indeed we have interpreted such passages aright? The apparent contradiction is the result only of partial views

of truth : with the whole, the perplexity clears. Scripture has not to be perfected by our thoughts, but cleared from the mists which our thoughts introduce into it.

5. But, it is said, the priests did not kill the sacrifices, except where for themselves, and that this shows that Christ's work on the cross was not a priestly work. But in this way evidence might be brought against evidence : for the burning on the altar or on the ground, the sprinkling and pouring out of the blood, were so strictly priestly functions that no private person dare ever assume them. Yet these are but different sides of one blessed work. It is not even strictly true that the priest never killed the victim except where for himself ; for he *did* kill the burnt-offering of birds. (Lev. i. 15.) But in any case the burning upon the altar or upon the ground was the most strictly sacrificial part, and it belonged to the priest expressly. On the other hand, it is not difficult to see that in the death of Christ we have the victim side, as we have the atoning side, and that the death at the offerer's hands may represent the victim, as the priest's work the atoning side. This, I have no doubt, is the truth, the offerer for his part marking out thus the penalty of sin which he had brought upon an innocent sufferer, while the priest offers it to God as *sacrifice*, and so atoning. The slaying of the bird offered for the healed leper is not by the offerer, and that of the red heifer, between which and that of the leper there are strong points of resemblance, concurs with it, I believe, as showing Christ's death at the hands of the world ; and this is in connection with the truth in both cases of the crucifixion to the world implied in the cedar-wood, scarlet, and hyssop being in the one case cast into the fire, in the other stained with the blood of the victim. Both are lessons as to *purification*.

The offering, in any case, was exclusively priestly, and this was surely the representation of the death of Christ in its divine meaning.

6. One thing more in this connection. In Num. xvii., the true priest for God is known by the blossoming and fruit-bearing of Aaron's rod—a type unmistakably of resurrection. But this only *marks out* the priest, does not make him one, as in fact Aaron already was in office. Resurrection has the most important bearing upon priesthood, *all the more on this account*: for thus it is the acceptance of the work of Him who offered up Himself, and is by this shown to be the Author of salvation to those who obey Him.

7. If, then, the acknowledgment by God of His Son were the call to the priesthood, and if the anointing of the Spirit, and apart from the blood of sacrifice, marked out the great High-Priest,—if it was the High-Priest who offered up Himself, how clearly all this was fulfilled when at the baptism of John the Lord came forward to His public work among men. Then the Father's voice came forth in testimony, "This is My beloved Son," and the Spirit like a dove descended upon him. From that baptism to death which was the shadow of it, the Lord went on to another baptism, and a Jordan that filled all its banks for Him. Yet so was His priesthood perfected, and He entered heaven by His own blood.

A RECORD OF GRACE.

IN the present time of wide-spread disbelief in the inspiration of Scripture, and when one has so often to sorrow over the surrender of an orthodox faith on the part of those who had professed it, it is good to be able to record on the opposite side the working of God's grace in bringing those into subjection to His Word

who have been conspicuous in their opposition to its claims. The clipping from a newspaper given below is an example of this kind in the case of the first contributor to the well-known *Essays and Reviews* which, published in 1860, aroused so much attention and opposition as to call forth in England alone, it is said, nearly four hundred publications. Dr. Temple was at that time head-master of Rugby school, and his appointment to a bishopric some time after was naturally strongly opposed on account of the views to which he had given utterance.

Dr. Temple's essay was indeed one of the least offensive in the unhappy volume, where it appeared, however, shoulder to shoulder with the most pronounced and destructive rationalism. Yet in his own essay on "The Education of the World," he makes Scripture only a means of exalting man's "conscience" to a place above it, which is characteristic of the world's manhood, when, he says, "the spirit or conscience comes to full strength, and assumes the throne intended for him in the soul. As an accredited judge, he sits in the tribunal of our inner kingdom, decides upon the past and legislates upon the future, without appeal, except to himself . . . He is the third great teacher, and the last." So supreme is he, indeed, and so strange is the manner of his adjudication, that even "Christ came just at the right time" * to escape it; "if He had waited till the present age, His incarnation would have been misplaced, and we could not recognise His divinity; for the faculty of faith has turned inward, and cannot now accept any outward manifestations of the truth of God." (! !)

These are published statements, and they are brought forward now only to magnify, as we may be sure Dr.

* I quote from Hurst's "History of Rationalism" here.

Temple would wish us, the grace of God which has changed all this for him. *The Churchman* says,—

It is curious, as a piece of intellectual history, to compare the writer of "The Education of the World" with the Bishop Temple who has recently been lecturing on the Scriptures in London. In that number of *Essays and Reviews*, the conscience of the individual reader of the Scriptures was exalted above the written Word, and given the power to correct it. The dangerous admissions of this essay were recognized and condemned even by Bishop Thirlwall in his charge of 1863. In the Bishop of London's recent Polytechnic lecture, we find a complete and genuine palinode to his earlier utterances.

It is said, only fools cannot change their minds. The Bishop had no hesitation in saying, on the occasion referred to, that the more he read the Bible through from end to end, the more the things in it seemed to be master of him; so that if he differed from it, he was driven to the conclusion that either he did not understand it or that he was in the wrong. The spirit of it was so supreme over all that he could think or imagine of the purest and holiest things *that it was absolutely necessary that he should accept its authority*. When, too, he studied the unique Figure in humanity which stood unapproachable by all philosophers or heroes, his *conscience, which bowed before the Book*, bowed still more before that majestic Royalty which spoke with authority, not as a learned man, not as a philosopher, not as a guide or a teacher who, having gathered knowledge from various sources, communicated it—with a voice which bore eternal truth with no qualification, and which was plain for every one to hear and to understand.

The italics are our own, and this lecture should be read by doubting minds of to-day as one of the most striking examples of a recantation from previous latitudinarianism which have ever been volunteered by a mind at once honest, strong, and thoroughly devotional.

May God in His goodness raise up many such witnesses! and may it encourage prayer for those who as leaders in the present day unbelief may be all the more to the praise of that grace in their being turned from darkness to light, and to Him in whom that light has shined!

THE VALLEY OF BACA.

(NOTES OF A LECTURE.)

Read 2 Sam. xv. 13—xvi. 14, and Ps. lxxxiv.

MY object in reading the chapters I have is, that in them we find something that in this day is very rare, and which I am sure, as we look at it a little together, with the Lord's help, we shall say, "Would God I knew more of it!"

What I refer to is simply this, that we have here before us a man passing through the most trying circumstances, and yet one who looks out of it all and puts his trust in God, and so goes on perfectly calm and at rest, come what will.

Now what we find ourselves constantly saying is, that if this thing were set right that is a trial to me, or if this difficulty were removed, I should be free to enjoy the Lord more.

But change the circumstances, and remove what appears to be a hindrance to our enjoyment, and what will be the result? Shall we be more happy than before? No, we should not; for though circumstances might be altered and brighter, yet what is at the bottom and causes the unhappiness is there still. Whatever I may be, I carry the same heart of distrust with me, and until we have learned to judge that, there is no true rest. How often do we try, and vainly too, to get things right here, and overlook all the time the blessings we might be enjoying where we are. We forget that He has said, "In the world ye shall have *tribulation*; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world;" and along with this, "These things have I spoken unto you that in Me ye might have *peace*." And if really in the sanctuary of God's presence, we should say often, "I would not have it otherwise if I could." Not that our hearts should not feel the state of

things around and amongst us, nor that there is not much in ourselves and elsewhere that should rightly exercise us : surely there is, but we have this in God's Word : "Be *careful* for nothing." What ! not careful about anything ? No, "careful for *nothing*," absolutely *nothing*. And how can this be ? Is it that there is nothing to give us care and sorrow down here ? There is much, surely. But we have in what follows how it can be, "In every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." (Phil. iv. 6.) What a relief ! There is not a sorrow or a burden that I am not privileged to bring there and tell into His ear. And what then ? "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds by Christ Jesus."

Just look at Paul, and see where he is at the time of his writing this, and how far circumstances are affecting him. We find him in prison at Rome, in bonds for the gospel, shut out from the work which was so dear to his heart, and what effect has it upon him ? Does it cast him down ? No ; look at what he says in chap. i. He would have them know that his "bonds had fallen out rather unto the *furtherance* of the gospel." "I do rejoice,—yea, and will rejoice." He thought of Him who was carrying on His own work notwithstanding all that came in seemingly to hinder ; and with all the evil before him fully, and felt by him, he would tell the saints of a joy and rest above all the sorrow. What effect could circumstances have on a man like this ? None whatever : circumstances can have no power when our confidence is in God ; but when that is wanting, we are easily affected by them. They only test how far we are leaning upon God, and simply trusting Him.

But we may give up our Nazariteship, and neglect to walk with God ; our strength is then gone, and we are

"weak as other men," and, just like Samson, say, in view of our enemies, "I will go out, as at other times before, and shake myself." But "he wist not that the Lord had departed from him." The provocation of the Philistines brings out this, but his strength was gone before ; and so with us,—the trials only prove where we are. They do not *make* us weak ; but if we give way before them, they prove that we have departed from the source of strength. And as we have God, by Jeremiah, when recalling to the hearts of Israel the cause of their ruin, saying, "My people have committed two evils : they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." God is practically given up, and something else taken up with.

We see again with Israel at Sinai the same thing. They had got a golden calf in the camp in the place of God, from whom they had turned away ; and when Moses had been in intercession with God, and entreats for their forgiveness, God says that He will not go up in the midst of them, but will send an angel before to lead them into the promised land. His threat of judgment made them mourn ; but the land flowing with milk and honey, and an angel to lead them there, suited very well. But Moses goes deeper. Nothing suits the man of faith but God Himself. Israel may be satisfied with an angel by the way and the land at the end, but faith says, "If *Thy presence* go not with us, carry us not up hence." Let us not move a step on the way without that. What was the angel's presence and the promised land to him if Jehovah withheld His presence ?

And it was just this that brought Israel to Bochim, as we read in the book of Judges, and David into the place in which we find him in these chapters, "passing through the valley of Baca." The place of strength, because of self-judgment, had been left. It was there that the "ark

of God" had made a way for them through Jordan. The reproach of Egypt had rolled away, and Gilgal tells of not only deliverance from the "iron furnace," but of entrance into the promised rest, and circumcision is renewed. In all their wars at first, they returned *there*, to the camp at evening. And where is our Gilgal but at the cross of Jesus, the heart returning there to meditate upon its glories and the results for us of not only deliverance from Egypt, but entrance into Canaan?

There must be walking in self-judgment, denying the flesh a place, to walk in confidence with God and consequent strength. If this is not done, another thing will surely come—we shall find, instead of strength at Gilgal, tears at Bochim. ("Baca" and "Bochim" both from the same root, meaning "tears," or "weeping.") And may we not ask ourselves, Am I at Gilgal, and finding there strength through the circumcision of nature, the judgment of it as before the cross?

But we get when Israel left that, God did not give them up; they did not gain victories, 'tis true, but God still follows them. What wondrous grace! and what comfort for our hearts!

So God uses Bochim to discipline and break us down, as he did with Israel, and here also with David.

David had sinned against the Lord, and is here driven from his throne into exile by his son, and he gets to Baca, and what he finds even there is refreshment and blessing, when bowed to the hand of God. He "makes a well, and the rain fills the pools." There is no place in which God cannot bless us, if we are in a state of soul to receive it.

The first thing I would notice here is the unselfishness that comes out in David. He would send Ittai back: he would not have others to go into exile and sorrow with him. But Ittai, true-hearted and devoted, would cast in

his lot with him, and share his fortunes, whether in rejection or glory. And such is the path of the Church, sharing with Christ His rejection, as soon His glory.

But it is David under discipline we are engaged with now, and the next thing we have to witness is his telling Zadok and Abiathar to carry back the ark of God into the city. Now why was this? Was it that David did not value it? Witness the joy he had in bringing it from Ephratah (Bethlehem) to Zion, type of the journeying of the true ark, the Lord Jesus, from His birthplace to the cross—the place where (or the work, rather, by which) God could find a rest among sinners. Why, then, take back that ark, but to show us that God's rest is undisturbed—remains the same, notwithstanding all the ups and downs of His people, and that rest is where His people look in faith while passing through the trials of this scene? "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts!" etc. And therefore he says, "If He find pleasure in me, then will He bring me back, and show me both it and His habitation."

And is it not so for our hearts amidst all the circumstances that summoned us here! Where can one turn to for comfort and rest in this evil world? Is there one thing not spoiled by sin? Well, if there is nothing here that the heart can find rest in, think of God's tabernacle being open to you. When man had spoiled all down here, both for God and himself, God opens heaven by the cross to sinners, and says, There is the place I have for you now. And where can our hearts turn from all this scene of failure and ruin? Not to the Church, or things being set right here, either in it or in the world, but to God's habitation, in the blessed assurance that He who has gone to prepare a place for us in there in the Father's house will come and take us to it, that we may be with Himself where He is.

All this with David is, "*If* He delight in me:" a question we cannot raise who are accepted in the Beloved; but he adds, "If He say, I have no delight in thee: behold, here am I, let Him do to me as seemeth good to Him." What a blessed state of soul this was! He says, God's will is best; if I am never brought back, yet He does what is right. What lies at the root of half our trouble is that we are not come to this in our souls—our wills are too unbroken; the moment we are broken in spirit, we are happy; nothing but self-will hinders our blessing. We like to have our own way naturally, and practically deny God's right to order every thing in our circumstances for us. But God will be God, whatever people make of it; and He does what He pleases and where He pleases and when He pleases; but what He does is always right. But can we say, "Let God do just what He pleases with me?" There is this thing that is a trial, and that thing which I should like changed; but whilst in prayer I can tell Him all these things, and find relief about them thus, my heart should say, "Let God do as seemeth good unto Him."

What we often do in circumstances that try us, and varied pressure that comes on us, is to turn to wretched expedients instead of the living God. But look at David here, his heart pressed with sorrow, his own son driving him from the throne and seeking his life, yet he accepts it all at the hand of God, and looks out to the place of His dwelling, and leaves all to God to order for him.

They speak to him of Ahithophel being among the conspirators. Now David knew him to be a crafty man, and one likely to do him much harm; and what does he do? He turns to God, and says, "O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel to foolishness." He casts His cares upon God. He goes to the top of the hill and worships, and there receives an answer at once. He finds at

once comfort for his heart and rest about the evil of Ahithophel, and there finds the suited man to do the needed work in Hushai.

In coming to the sixteenth chapter, we find what is sorrowful, in the easy way in which David was deceived by Ziba about Mephibosheth, but we pass from this to a brighter part of the scene. Shimei takes advantage of his sorrow to heap reproach upon him, and attributes his suffering to a wrong cause, and openly curses him. Deliverance is easy, and Abishai would go and "take off his head," and the Spirit of God marks out his being "surrounded with all his mighty men." He had power to deliver himself from his enemy. But for David, God is seen in it all, and deliverance must come from the hand of God, and he will have no other. He would have God put him right, and accepts at His hand the chastisement for his sins. God is the One who occupies his thoughts.

And this is what we have in Ps. lxxxiv., which refers to this time. David's thoughts are about God's house, and His altars, and the One who dwelt there, when himself in exile, and passing through the valley of Baca. He is weeping as he goes along. And what about? About failure. And yet David in his palace, a great man, was not half so happy as when driven out into exile and looking to God's house. He was satisfied with the excellency of Him who dwelt there, and longing to be with Him.

David had enough to give him a bad conscience and a troubled heart; and surely he felt it all, and rightly so. God had forgiven all, according to the word of Nathan, "The Lord hath put away thy sin;" but he was reaping the fruit of his sin, and that fruit was bitter in itself. Yet so gracious the God we know that there is no place in which He will not bless. Even here there is a well springing up in the place of discipline for failure. Have we not found it so ourselves, according to our measure,

oftentimes? Peter got his heart into this scene; his self-confidence leads to a thorough break-down, and he denies the One he professed to love beyond the rest. A look from that Blessed One sends him out to weep bitterly; and after He is risen, the Lord goes on to restore his soul; and did not he find a well there? Surely he did. He had his heart probed to the bottom, that the cause of failure might be seen and judged, and then the well was opened, an abundant spring.

But that is not all, "the rain also filleth the pools." Not only is a well springing up there, but blessing comes down from above, There is no thirst left. It is not saying, "My moisture is turned into the drought of summer," but refreshment full to overflowing. May we not more and more covet this place,—not the failure, of course, but the blessed sense of what God is to us? What He wants to do is, to get at our hearts; and to do that, He must break down our wills. He has a controversy with all that is of the flesh in us, and when our confidence in that is broken, He leads us on from strength to strength: "Every one of them in Zion appeareth before God." And this is what He is doing with us, teaching us our weakness, bringing our hearts to own it, and then bringing in His strength for us. Now the end is all triumph and praise.

It is in the sense of this that David can say, although the world had spread out its glories before him, "A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand; I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of *my* God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

"The Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory." "He will give grace;" He *has* done this, and "He will give glory." You can only have it from Him, and He will give it. What blessedness is this, beginning with grace and ending with glory! But

there is more than that: "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." All along the way we have Him doing this, blessing us at every step. Does He give us every thing we *want*? Oh, no; but "no *good* thing will He withhold." He meets us in every need we have, giving, in His love, what is good for us. Are we happy in its being so? "O Lord of Hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee."

R. T. G.

EXTRACT FROM "AN ESSAY ON FAITH,"

By JAMES ERSKINE.

(Published in 1825.)

IT is possible that the doctrine of "the perseverance of saints" should be so perverted by the corruption of human nature as to lead to indolent security and unwatchful habits. But this is not the doctrine as stated in the Bible. The true doctrine is, that, as it was God who first opened the eyes of sinners to the glory of the truth, so their continuance in the truth requires and receives the same almighty support to maintain it. It is not in their title to heaven as distinct from the path to heaven that they are maintained and preserves. No; they "are kept by the power of God, *through faith*, unto salvation." This doctrine, then, really leads to humble dependence upon God, as the only support of our weakness; and to vigilance, from the knowledge that, when we are not actually living by faith, we are out of that way in which believers are kept by the power of God unto salvation. The reality of our faith is proved only by our perseverance: if we do not persevere, we are not saints.

Any one of the doctrines of the atonement which can make us fearless or careless of sinning must be a wrong view; because it is not good, nor profitable to men. That blessed doctrine declares sin pardoned, not because

it is overlooked or winked at, but because the weight of its condemnation has been sustained on our behalf by our Substitute and Representative. This makes sin hateful, by connecting it with the blood of our best Friend.

There are many persons who may be said rather to believe in an ecclesiastical polity than in the doctrines of the Bible. In such cases, the impression must be similar to that which is produced by political partizanship in the governments of this world. And there are some whose faith extends to higher things who yet attach too much weight to externals.

Any view of subjects, that may be believed or disbelieved without affecting our faith in the atonement, which can produce a coldness or unkindness between those who rest in the atonement and live by the faith of it, must be a wrong view, because it mars that character of love which Christ declares to be the badge of His people. Such a view interferes with the doctrine of the atonement. Love to Christ, as the exclusive hope and the compassionate all-sufficient Friend of lost sinners, is the life-blood of the Christian family; and wherever it flows, it carries along with it relationship to Christ, and a claim on the affection of those who call themselves His. What is a name, or a sect, that it should divide those who are to live together in heaven through eternity, and who here love the same Lord, and who have been washed in the same blood, and drink of the same river of the water of life, and have access through the same Mediator, by the same Spirit, unto the Father? This is a very serious consideration. It touches on that final sentence which shall be pronounced on the sheep and the goats, "Come, ye blessed;" why blessed? "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these *My brethren*, ye did it unto *Me*." "Depart, ye cursed;" and why cursed? "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of *these*, ye did it not to *Me*." It is not a general

benevolence that is talked of here ; no, it is love to Christ exerting itself in kindness, and acts of kindness, to His brethren, for His sake. This is the grand and pre-eminently blessed feature of the Christian character. Its presence is the seal of heaven on the soul ; its absence is the exclusion from heaven. We should take heed to ourselves ; for any flaw in this respect marks a corresponding flaw in our Christian faith. The importance of the blood of Christ is not rightly perceived if it does not quench these petty animosities. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him. An undue importance attached to inferior points is surely not good or profitable to men.

MEDITATIONS ON THE PSALMS.

PSALM CL.

THIS is the closing halleluiah, the praise of God in His sanctuary, His upper sanctuary, "the firmament of His power." The preceding was His praise in the lower sanctuary, "the congregation of saints." There, Israel was heard ; but here, the heavens. His acts and Himself, His greatness and His ways, are the themes of this lofty praise. "All kinds of music," as it were, dulcimer, sackbut, flute, psaltery (for loud joy will, in its place, be as holy as once it was profane, Dan. iii.), are summoned to sound it, and to sound it loudly, and all who have faculty to praise, to join the halleluiah. Every verse teems with praise. Every thought is about it. Every object awakens it. Every power uses itself only in this service.

The Levites have changed their service. No longer have they burdens to bear through a wilderness, but they

lift up their songs in the house of the Lord. (1 Chron. xv. 16; xxiii. 25, 26, 30.)

The heavens have changed their bearing also. They have ended their laughter at the proud confederates (Ps. ii.), for such confederates have been answered in judgment; and they are filled with joy and singing, and with that glory which is to break forth from them, and to be a covering over all the dwellings of Zion. (Is. iv.)

These are "the days of heaven upon the earth." (Deut. xi. 21.) The kingdom has come, and the will of the Blessed One is done here as there. The mystic ladder connects the upper and the lower sanctuaries.

But these closing psalms, I may observe, do not spread out before us the *materials* of the millennial world. Jerusalem, Israel, the nations with their kings, princes, and judges, the heavens and the earth, and all creation throughout its order, are contemplated as in "the restitution" and "refreshing," but they are detailed, as there, in their mere circumstances. It is rather *the praise* of all that is heard. The Psalmist anticipates the *harps* rather than the *glories* of the kingdom; and this is beautifully characteristic.

Praise crowns the scene. The vision passes from before us with the chanting of all kinds of music. Man has taken the instrument of joy into his hand; to strike it, however, only to God's glory. And this is the perfect result of all things—the creature is happy and God glorified. "Glory and honor are in His presence; strength and gladness are in His place." (1 Chron. xvi. 27.)

What a close of the Psalms of David! what a close of the ways of God! Joy indeed has come in the morning, and struck its note for the "one eternal day." Praise ye the Lord! Amen.

Yes, praise, all praise; untiring, satisfying fruit of lips

uttering the joy of creation, and owning the glory of the Blessed One. This is righteous happiness.

And here, in connection with this, and on closing these meditations, let the thought cheer us, beloved, that happiness, and that forever, is ours. There may have been a path through Calvary, and the scorn of the world, and the grave of death; but it led to joy and everlasting pleasures. The way for a season lay by the waters of Babylon, but Jerusalem was regained—as our psalms have shown us. The valley of Baca was the way to the house of God. “Tribulation,” it may be; but, “I will see you again,” said Jesus.

As to our *title* to it, there is to be no reserve, no suspicion in our souls. It is our divinely appointed portion. To come short of happiness will be the end only of revolted hearts. Our title to look for it is of God Himself. It lies in the blood of Jesus, the Son of God, the God-man, given for us, in the riches of divine grace; and faith in us reads, understands, and pleads that title. And there is no reason for hesitating to enjoy its fruit and benefit—none whatever. No more reason than Adam would have had to question his right to enjoy the garden of Eden because he had never planted it, nor for the camp of Israel in the desert to drink of the water from the rock because they had never opened it. The garden was planted *for* Adam, the rock was opened *for* Israel; and so has the Saviour, and all the joy that His salvation brings with it, been as simply and surely provided *for* sinners. Our souls are to make it a question of Christ's glory, and not of our worthiness. He made it so when He was here. He never led a diseased or maimed one to inquire into his own fitness, but simply to own His hand and His glory. “If thou canst believe,” that is, if thou art ready to glorify Me, to be debtor to Me for this blessing, then take it and welcome.

Then as to our *resources*. It is not merely *love* we have to do with, *power* is on our side also. Love and power together shall form the scene we are to gaze on forever, as they have from the beginning been "workers together" for us, teaching us our wondrous resources.

See them thus working together in some little instances in the days of the Lord Jesus. Five thousand are fed with five loaves and two fishes. Fed to the full—and twelve baskets of fragments left! This tells the *wealth* of the Lord of the feast, as well as His *kindness*. And what satisfaction of heart does this communicate! If we draw on the bounty of another, and have reason to fear that we have partaken of what he needed himself, our enjoyment abates. This fear will intrude, and rightly so, and spoil our ease while we sit at his table. But when we know that behind the table which is spread for us there are stores in the house, such fears are forbidden. The thought of the *wealth* of the host, as well of his *love*, sets all at ease. And it is to be thus with us in our enjoyment of Christ.

J. G. B.

"I FEEL that a desire to have been more spent and to have suffered more for my beloved Master in this theatre of His humiliation is the only thing that could make me hesitate in my longing desire to be with Him who is and has been so abundantly with me."

Letters of Lady Powerscourt.

THE DAY OF JOHN'S THIRD EPISTLE.

IT is in the mercy of God that Scripture was not completed before the collapse of the Church which its very beginnings in uninspired history present to us had already in great measure taken place: so much so, that in the epistles to the seven churches we could have a picture of its whole after-course exhibited for our admonition. With this many of us are now familiar. By it God has awakened us to realize our position with reference to the passing of the night, and to see that the hands of the clock point to the near approach of morning.

But these epistles are not the only instructions of a like kind, exhortations which have all the character of prophecies, which we who live in the times to which they have especial application can discern as that. Sometimes, indeed, they are, in fact, upon the face, combined with direct prediction, as in the second epistles, (Thessalonians, Timothy, and Peter,) which, as supplements to the preceding ones, are in direct view of the last days. On the other hand, the second and third epistles of John contain no prediction; yet they too are supplementary, and in them the features of the last times unmistakably appear. Antichrists are such features, as stated in the first epistle; and a warning as to them is prominent in the second. In the third, the Church is seen ruled by a Diotrephes, who withstands the apostle, and rejects and casts out the brethren,—a plain anticipation of what is now history as to the professing church at large.

It is not my purpose at all to take up this at present. The same tendencies and evils manifest themselves continually; and we may find more profitable application in what is nearer to ourselves than Rome. Better still it may be to take up the teaching of the epistle, and let it

apply wherever it shall be found to apply. Certainly we can hardly be at a loss to realize its bearing upon our own day, and to many of us it will be of the deepest, saddest interest, as well as of the most practical importance.

The third epistle follows the second in an order which is moral as well as chronological. Together, they meet two contrary tendencies, which unite, however, in opposition to the Spirit of Christ. One is, the laxity which is not love, although it claims to be this, and will find many to concede its claim; the other is, the narrowness which is not faithfulness to Christ, though often masked under such a name. To both, the apostle opposes the love and light which are one in God, and which separated are alike destroyed: what can the love be worth that sets aside truth? or what truth can there be apart from the love which is the greatest truth?

The union of these is insisted on in both epistles, truth being put foremost in the second, love in the third, neither for a moment any where forgotten. There is recognized the danger of our not holding them together, at least in even balance,—a strange yet a *felt* difficulty, the pendulum swinging so much more readily from one side to the other than resting in the centre; from laxity to harshness or the reverse is a smaller change than to the faithfulness of love. Love is the energy of the divine nature; light, the manner of its display: where God acts, He acts in His whole character, although there may be to us a difference in His actions—a predominance of this attribute or that. But thus love itself cannot be described without bringing in other attributes; and the Word of God needs to describe and define it as the apostle in the first of these epistles does, for in nothing do we mistake more. He gives, therefore, tests and counter-tests: if it be to God, yet "he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

if it be to our brother, "by this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God;" and here he has also to add, "and keep His commandments," and, to define further, "for this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous."

Love must have its object, and this is carefully insisted on. It is first of all Christ in whom God has revealed Himself,—thus, then, those who are Christ's—the brethren. It is not that there is no wider range, but here is what characterizes it: "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love *the brethren*." Here the circle marked out shows sufficiently the centre from which it is described. Lose the centre, and all is lost. It is this, then, on which he insists in the second epistle. If you have not "the doctrine of Christ," you have not Christ, but Antichrist. Thus you must not greet the one who, coming in a Christian guise, brings not the doctrine of Christ. To make this as strong as possible, it is a woman who is warned. Subtlety of intellect is not needed in such a matter, nor official position: it is a question of heart and conscience,—of a soul that knows Christ. If you receive deliberately one who displaces Christ,—if you are an accessory to that displacement, you are "partaker of his evil deeds." Nay, *he* may be deceived, but *you* dishonor Christ with your eyes open. Association is in God's sight one of the most serious questions: fellowship with God and with what is opposed to Him cannot go on together.

Thus the second epistle of John comes naturally before the third. First of all, he fixes the centre before he marks out the circumference. And Satan too, first of all, *aims at* the centre; for could he take away that, there is no more any circumference to mark out. People say it is not a question of the Lord's table; but what table is it

where the Lord is denied, or where He is named and insulted together?

But my purpose is not now to pause on this : doubtless even where the honor of the Lord requires separation there may yet be in fulfilling a plain duty a spirit of harshness which already needs the check of the third epistle. We have ever to remember what Christ's people are to Him, and with what discriminating care and tenderness He deals with them. How little, even here, have we learned to distinguish things that differ, and to take forth the precious from the vile ! How many have we repelled from the truth by the lack of grace that we have manifested ! How many have we abandoned to the evil whom we might have drawn out from it had we had a hand to put forth for their help ! Strange it is that those who have learnt their own need of grace can in their conduct toward others act so readily in the spirit of law, and expect to find results which only grace can produce ! Sad indeed that we should be so little able to count upon and work in the grace which is in Christians, if they are indeed Christians, and that God's way of *loving* us out of our sins should be so little known to us ! Strange too that we should hear of that being righteousness which is not grace, as if it were possible from those who have *received* grace ! We need much searching of heart as to such things, which has engendered a cold, harsh spirit of suspicion, and at best a clear judicial wisdom, which is not the wisdom that winneth souls, but the very opposite. And especially where any departure from what is esteemed a most rigid orthodoxy is in question, tolerance is often counted mere latitudinarianism and indifference ; and the needful "separation from evil" is in fact lost in a real biting and devouring one another which ends, naturally, except the mercy of God prevent, in being consumed one of another.

That which the third epistle of John is designed to meet is but the development of such a condition as this, and it will be found by some of us, what all the inspired Word is said to be, "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." We need, however, for this to have the sharply marked individuality of the "man of God" to profit by it. If for any reason, in any measure, we have resigned our individuality, to become merely part of a mass, Scripture ceases in that measure to have meaning for us. Heart and conscience both belong to the individual alone.

The features of the day of the third of John are easily to be seen in the epistle. First of these, Diotrophes, individual enough he, with his controlling power in the assembly, loving to have the pre-eminence. If the epistle to the Corinthians shows us the Church of God on earth, with the already threatening invasion of primitive order, restless and ambitious spirits, dividing the saints into contentious parties, here we find a further stage, one disputant for power having succeeded (as is commonly the case) in reducing all the rest to obedience to himself. A kind of Romish unity had taken the place of the jangle of many tongues, and they perhaps vaunted it as Rome does, while in reality it was a further stage of decline. One individuality had absorbed into himself the corporate condition, and the assembly practically no longer existed : it was a tool in his hand.

How much for solemn consideration is there in such a state of things existing while yet a living apostle remained on earth ! Doubtless the assembly existed still in form and name,—nay, we see it did. The after-history assures that the "church"—the original meaning, however, soon dying out of the word—became a name to conjure by. Ecclesiasticism grew as the real *ecclesia* (the assembly) was lost sight of. The "ecclesiastics"

were the clergy, from whom the people, or laity, were separated by a continually increasing gulf. When the transformation was complete, the church itself was really but the clergy, the name remaining only as a mystical halo of theoretic sanctity round the heads of the latter.

These things had their roots, then, in the apostles' days; they were, in fact, fast developing, though by a quiet, noiseless development which startled, as it would seem, few. Nay, to most, perhaps, the growth seemed healthy. How much better than the strife of tongues at Corinth was the rule of Diotrephes! Nor was it yet called "rule;" it was but "pre-eminence;" and are there not those who rightly, and of God, have the pre-eminence? who would pull them down from this but those possessed with the spirit of independence—radicals and demagogues? Had not Paul bidden them, "Obey your leaders?" and was there not true humility in such obedience? None the less by such means Diotrephes may come to reign,—the parasitic growth of clerisy striking its roots into the very tree which it destroys, nourished by the sap which it perverts from its true purpose.

There is, in truth, but a narrow path for us, and a scarcely sensible line divides between good and evil. Every where are there ways that *seem right*, and whose ends nevertheless are ways of death. What help, what hope, save in the utter helplessness which needs an almighty arm, and a wisdom only found by those sensible of their folly? God's Word even, apart from God Himself, what help is there in it? Nevertheless it is *through* that Word that help is ministered, but written out, as it were, only upon the road in which we travel with Him. Thus the *wayfaring* man, though a fool, shall not err in it, while the wisest of theorists may go even the more completely astray.

Are there not "leaders"? Yes, assuredly; Scripture

plainly says so (Heb. xiii. 7, 17, *Gr.*). Ought we not to "*obey*" them? Undoubtedly, for here again we have Scripture. Nay, says the apostle, "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." (1 Thess. v. 12, 13.) Here, "over you" is too strong, however: the word is, "who stand before you"—practically much as in the former passages, "your leaders." But there are such, then? Yes, and we are to know them, a peculiar and important word: had they "*known*" a Diotrophes, they would hardly have followed him! If we are to *know* our guides, then plainly there is no responsibility taken off our shoulders, but the contrary: we are responsible for the guides we allow as such; we are, first of all, to "*know*" before we follow, not to follow blindly. And how shall we know a *guide* but by the *guidance*? and by what can we judge as to "guidance" but by the Word of God? So says the apostle once more, "Remember your leaders, who have spoken unto you the Word of God, whose *faith* follow." Believing obedience to the Word of God, then, must characterize such leaders, and we only follow their faith when the Word of God is to us what it is to them. The guidance is by it, and faith must be in it, not in them, and only those are to be followed who follow it.

Just so there are "teachers," who are special gifts of Christ to His Church: was, then, John the beloved a radical, or possessed with the spirit of independency, when he said, even to babes in Christ, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things"? And "the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye *need not that any man teach you*" (1 Jno. ii. 20, 27)? Here only true humility will keep us right; and yet there is no opposition between these

things, and no real difficulty either. Any one of the least understanding would say, Certainly, the teacher is not meant to stand between me and the Word of God, but rather to bring it to me, to make plain to me what is *there*; and when I see this, it is not the teacher I believe,—it is God: I am not dependent on the teacher, though I thank God for him.

It is the truth which accredits the teacher; never, rightly, the teacher the truth: so with the guide; if he can show me God's path for me, it is well and good, follow I must; but woe be to him who stands between the soul and God, and whom men "obey" upon the warrant of his superior knowledge, wisdom, or holiness! Our "walk" is to be "with God."

This will not satisfy one "who loveth to have the pre-eminence;" and therefore he will soon be discerned by such a text. Human authority will be pressed in some way, and the demand for the Word of God treated as pride and independence. Here, the voice of the church becomes a ready resource, and apparently scriptural too: for "if he do not hear the church," he is to "be to thee as a heathen man and a publican." Upon this text ecclesiasticism builds, naturally enough, a lofty edifice upon a narrow foundation, even where there is added to this the words which lie in immediate connection, "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

I do not propose to dwell upon this now: it has been elsewhere done sufficiently. All that need be said about it is, that there is a sphere wherein this authority of the church is to be owned, and beyond which it cannot go, and that we must learn from Scripture the limits of this sphere. Thus, the church cannot define doctrine; the Word alone is authoritative there. Moreover, the con-

text shows that it is a question of trespass as to which the Lord is speaking. The Church is the witness of God's holiness upon the earth, and must therefore put away wickedness, is under responsibility to do that. How impossible, then, that it could have power *against* holiness, to give *false* witness as to what God is, to pervert righteousness, and force men to go with evil! The Church's authority is therefore in due subjection to the Word of God, from which it gets its authority, and conscience is bound by the Word and must listen to the Word: our walk is to be as absolutely with God as if there were no church.

Here, the apostle had written to the church, "But Diotrephes receiveth us not," and his will seems to have been law in it. Did the voice of Diotrephes in the church, which it had no power to resist, in no wise affect the authority of the church's voice which men had to "hear"? If not, did Diotrephes' evil become good when the church assented to it? It is plain the apostle did not accept the casting out of the brethren, though the church must have accepted it. And if not, how many questions might have to be raised as to any given assembly-judgment! Conscience is thus exercised at every step, never released from it: conscience, I say, which we must carefully distinguish from mere *will*; will, apart from conscience, is pride, independence, insubjection; but a conscience exercised by the Word of God means humility, and the spirit of obedience.

The spirit of ecclesiasticism while it speaks loudly of the Church, cares nothing for the individual members of Christ. Its church is not a living organism, of which the Spirit is the practical unity, but a kind of unorganic mass whose component parts are atoms and no more—moulded from without, not from within. With it, conscience is only a troubler, the fruitful cause of strife and

division, with its cry, "We must obey God rather than men." In truth, no government can be effectual with such a living machine, except that of its Head, Christ Jesus. And *His* guides and leaders must be like Himself,—tender of the individual, careful to maintain the sense of responsibility in the soul, nurturers of the life rather than zealots of the form, realizing that the plants of God's garden grow best with the least handling, and that food and sunshine are their first necessities. God gives us guides like these—men who will speak to us the Word of God, and whose *faith* we can follow.

In truth, it *needs* faith: the consciousness that one is but in the hand of God, a worker under Him, having but one's own little bit of service to do, and incompetent to measure the result of that, having to leave results with Him, yet confident, in the face of all seeming failure, that no honest work for Him shall be in vain: His part, to order; ours—all of us—to *minister*, as witnesses and channels of His love to men. Such guides as those of which Scripture speaks, may His people "know," wherever found.

(To be continued.)

CHRIST THE KING,

Being Lessons from the Gospel of Matthew.

I. WITH GENEALOGY AND WITHOUT. (CHAP. I.)

IT has been many times said, and is now understood by many, that the gospel of Matthew presents to us Christ as King. We may see by the first verse that this is true. Jesus Christ as "the Son of David" is the first thought in it suggested, though not the sufficient thought; and therefore the chapter goes on to connect with this two other titles: He is also the "Son of Abraham," the promised Seed of blessing to the Gentiles; and

then much more than this, He is Immanuel, "God with us." These three threads woven together make our Joseph's many-colored coat as He is here put before us.

"Son of David," put first, declares His kingship to be the fundamental thought; "Son of Abraham" widens His dominion into universal reign over the earth; "Immanuel" plants His throne in heaven, and subjects souls as well as bodies to His easy yoke. The last gives us the peculiar phrase of Matthew, nowhere else found, here abundant, "the kingdom," or rule, "of heaven." What fullness of blessing, for which the earth yet groans, is in this thought of a heavenly rule over the earth!

The break-down of thrones which the present day is witnessing, but which was long ago predicted in the Word, speaks not of royalty as a mistake or needless, as men deem; but only that *He* has not taken power to whom it can be safely trusted. When He is come, despotic power will not only be His right, but a necessity, that the blessing of His rule may be realized in its fullness. It is for Him that, as "the desire of all nations," though with unintelligent groans, the whole earth waits; when "all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him; for He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy . . . and men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed."

The genealogy comes first in Matthew because it is the legal proof of the Lord's being David's Son, for which reason also it is traced downward, because the title to the throne descends. In regard to supernatural birth, the law could take no notice of it,—it could not affect the title. Thus Joseph is reminded of his lineage where he is plainly told that "that which is conceived

in Mary is of the Holy Ghost." That it is heirship that is in question is plain in the fact that Jeconias is here said to have "begotten" Salathiel, whose real father, as we are told elsewhere, was Neri, Jeconiah himself being pronounced by the prophet childless (Jer. xxii. 30): his heir is reckoned as if begotten by him, just as seed raised up to him by his brother after his own death might be. (Deut. xxv. 6.)

Luke it is that gives us the true father of Salathiel; and thus the genealogy in Luke is shown to be the *natural* one,—an important help to settling in the affirmative the question whether it is Mary's, as Mary alone is prominent throughout the early chapters. And this is completely in character with the way the Lord is seen in Luke, the gospel of His manhood, not His kingship. Heirship, therefore, in it is out of question: that He is son of *man* need not be proved. Thus the genealogy there does not commence the book: He gets no title from any special line of ancestors; thus also the stream flows backward, as it were, in it also; for it is grace that has connected Him with the family of man, and He is the spring of it. Thus the line of connection stretches back to Adam (reinstated in his old dignity as "son of God"), and the genealogy itself is appended to that part of the Lord's history in which He comes forward from His thirty years' private life to take up openly His public ministry among men. At His baptism by John He is seen and borne witness to as the anointed Son of God.

Returning now to Matthew and his genealogy, he himself points out to us its division into three parts, in each of which he gives and numbers fourteen generations—for a purpose clearly, as there are names left out to make this number right. Why should this be? The number itself, which is twice seven, must be therefore

significant, and the significance would be apparently, according to the meaning of these numbers (2×7), the "testimony of complete divine work." They would assure us that in this carefully measured succession God was bearing witness of His own hand at work in power and wisdom to control and bring order out of that which might seem to be fortuitous, or man's failure merely,—*each name the record of a step toward the final result*, which is the introduction of Christ as the Ruler in God's kingdom, to whom all from the beginning pointed. Read in this way, the three periods in their general character are plain: First, the period of promise from Abraham to David, the two heads of it; secondly, a period of decay and ruin till the carrying captive into Babylon; thirdly, a period of prostration, yet expectancy, ending suddenly in a resurrection of the long-lost royalty, in David's infinitely greater Son. The numbers here, to those who can read them, are again significant, and a divine purpose should be evident to all, which in its details may be difficult to trace indeed, for we have scarcely begun to realize the minute perfection of Scripture, and how as in nature mines of wealth often lie in what seem the most barren spots.

Promise, coming first, lays the foundation for faith, and shows the divine plan, which nothing on the part of man or Satan can alter or interfere with. Then comes the winter-killing of the weeds of self-reliance and confidence in man, who, "being in honor, abideth not;" and then, though still after a long trial of patience, the sudden advent of the promised King. In the first of these periods, just between Abraham and David, when the divine counsel is making itself known, and in a part of the genealogy which no Jew whatever could deny to be Messiah's, occur three of those four women's names, conspicuous as those of the only women there, which show

that not to Jews only is the Son to be born upon whose shoulder the government is laid. Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, are all, as it would appear—certainly the first three—Gentiles, and thus show the blessing for the nations in the Seed of Abraham. Tamar's place is given her by her *sin*, God's grace being supreme above it; Rahab finds hers there through the faith of which she is in the history of the times a prominent example; against Ruth the Moabitess lies the law which forbids the entrance of her posterity into the commonwealth of Israel, yet David is only in the third generation king over the whole. What lessons for the law-confiding Jew of our Lord's day! and still for us what assurances of a grace that has been since fully revealed! Uriah's wife comes into the *second* period, of break-down and ruin, and (how fittingly *there*!) completes the picture of grace that wearies not, nor comes short of the full salvation of those who are recipients of it. Fruit of this perseverance, not so much of the saint as of God toward the saint, is Solomon, the "peaceful," as his name means. Yet from its glory in him the kingdom wanes rapidly and goes on toward Babel when it passes to the Gentiles; Israel is dispersed; God still over all, so as to make that dispersion the preparation for a gospel to be preached unto all nations, and a spiritual reign among the Gentiles of Christ the King.

Here we must leave the genealogy with its riches indicated only, scarcely at all possessed, yet the divine stamp plainly on it all and on the book to which it is the preface. What follows is the sanctuary into which the long line of this succession has conducted us: we learn after what manner and under what suspicion at the first the King of kings comes to His own world. Under a veil, in the distance of a dream, as if His coming were still to be (as it is) to the Jew but a parable, the angel of the Lord

declares to Joseph the dignity of Him who comes. It is the Seed of the woman, the Conqueror, to whom is to be given the name of a conqueror of another time, Joshua, or Jesus, but whose first deliverance is of "His people from their sins." This is the meaning of His disguise; born in poverty,—a manger, not a throne, receiving Him; no room for Him in the "inn," the stopping-place for a night, to which sin has degraded the earth,—how could He assume honor in it? Rather would He take His place here with the very beasts of burden, the patient witnesses of ministering goodness, though in the scene of man's fall, and suffering with him its bitter consequences. "Thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins" had been God's word of old to His people; and here was He now serving who could claim as Jehovah Israel for His own. Yet the place of service is that which glorifies, as the place of honor would have degraded Him. He alone had ability to serve those in such a condition,—to serve as saviour, and thus to secure to them in due time His kingdom also, bringing their hearts into subjection to Him by that which makes His throne a "throne of grace."

He is Jesus, the Saviour, that He may be, according to Isaiah's witness, Emmanuel. Those delights with the sons of men which had been of old are now in Him to find their expression and their justification. The sin which has come in is only itself to be made to witness, more emphatically than all else, of those delights. Emmanuel is the Saviour, the kiss of God for prodigals, in His own person wedding man to God. May our hearts not think of it without making for Him fit music for the marriage-feast! "God *with* us,"—not merely *over* us,—but so with us that He shall be indeed over us; His yoke the badge of freedom,—true liberty as delivered from the lusts that preyed on and enslaved us, the service of love, which is but obedience to the instincts of its

own nature, love that serves in answer to a love that has served us.

“God with us,”—here in our world, on His way to a kingdom, marking out the road in which we are to walk with Him. With Him who would not walk? Not a path but He knows, who has taken up that which we had thrown off, to show us how our meat may be even in such a scene to do His will who sent us into it. The thorns of our path are upon His brow; plucked from it, they are indeed His crown.

Such is the manner, then, in which this new King is introduced to us. King of the Jews, His kingdom is world-wide, heaven-high; the kingdom of One who serves that He may reign, and who if He reigns, serves all over whom He reigns! A glorious King is He,—Jesus, the “King of glory,”—soon and as suddenly to come, as He came in the days to which we are looking back, and to which through all eternity with unabated intensity of interest we shall still look back.

ABIGAIL, THE WIFE OF NABAL THE CARMELITE.

(1 Sam. xxv.)

IN order to have practical communion with the mind of God, through the Scriptures, whilst the conflict still remains between the flesh and the Spirit, it is needful that the soul be established in grace. Now Satan seeks to hide the simplicity of this grace; but it is simple grace toward those who were dead in trespasses and sins that has met us. As the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, so was Jesus on the cross, and He is presented to us by God as the object of our faith. When we look to Him, God says, “Live.” The next thing that Satan seeks to hide from us is God’s preserving grace; and this he does by bringing in many inventions of his

own. God preserves us by something hidden in heaven. We may be looking at our experience—to outward observances—to an outward priesthood, and the like; but if it is not that which is hidden in heaven, connected with the precious blood of Jesus, and *His* priesthood, to which we are looking, it must come from him who is the “father of lies.” All those things which tend at all to promise the soul preservation, apart from this, lead astray.

There is, then, to all believers, sure and everlasting acceptance, because of the precious blood of Jesus which has been shed for them. “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, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption.” (Heb. ix. 11, 12.) This secures their blessing and peace forever. Nothing can shake or alter the peace that subsists between the Father and the Son,—nothing that crosses our path here, none of the circumstances of earth, can alter the peace of the sanctuary. It is established forever between the Father and Jesus. So that, whenever a believer seeks it, whatever the condition of soul in which he may turn toward God, the peace of the sanctuary is there—unchanged. How precious the assurance of this! The soul that has learned any thing of God and of His holiness knows how, every hour, many a thing crosses the path likely to affect this peace—that soul must prize the *unchanged* peace of the sanctuary.

But we know other blessings also. God would have the saints understand and love Him and His ways *here*—His actings in the midst of an unholy earth, where Satan’s seat is. He (God) desires that we should have communion with Himself in His thoughts about all around. By

and by the Church will participate with the Lord in the exercise of power toward the earth—we shall share His glory, for we are “joint-heirs with Christ.” But besides this, there is the place of present association, in service. And this must be in humiliation. Jesus served God in the midst of circumstances of evil and the “contradiction of sinners.”

We read of the apostle Paul saying, “By the *grace of God* I am what I am ; and His *grace* which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than they all ; yet not I, but the *grace of God* which was with me.” Now, very often (our thoughts are apt to dwell so much and so exclusively on acceptance), this passage: “By the grace of God I am what I am,” is looked at as only having to do with acceptance ; but the Lord desires that we should abundantly serve Him in the midst of Satan’s world—having, it may be, to conflict, not only with evil in ourselves, but with evil in others ; and nothing but *His grace* can enable us to do this. It is as much the “grace of God” that has given us to serve, and the “grace of God” that strengthens for service, as it was the “grace of God” that saved us at the beginning.

When “Christ ascended up on high,” He “gave gifts unto men. . . . some, apostles ; and some, prophets ; and some, evangelists ; and some, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints ; for the work of the ministry, to the edifying of the body of Christ.” (Eph. iv. 8–16.) You will perceive how the grace of God leads that way, viz., to strengthen and qualify for service. Thus, if any teach you, they do it that you may be blessed, and so blessed as to become *servants to others*—life in you ministering to life in them, and strengthening that which needs to be strengthened. Now, suppose this be not understood—that I do not see it to be my privilege, I may be very thankful to have one to teach me, but my faith

will be weak, and my prayers hindered, I shall not have the right object before me. Teaching amongst the saints is not intended simply to open up truth to them, to tell them what salvation is, or to give them comfort; but also to open out, and direct the soul to, those things which God desires should be the object of service in faith, as it is said, "Your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father." I need not say, beloved friends, how often we stop short of this, and rest in our own personal blessing. When the soul once recognizes it to be the intention God has in view in strengthening us, that we should serve Him in serving others, it gets quite a new motive for which to live—something worth living for.

Now, I know nothing more important or more blessed than the being able to *discern the true servant of Christ* in the world. Nothing more marks the difference between a soul taught of the Spirit and one untaught of Him than this. It was a blessed thing—the great test of faith, when the Lord Jesus was here, to be able to discern and confess Him as what He really was—the Son, and Sent One of God. And so, at the present moment, the leading of the Holy Ghost is always toward the distinct recognition of that which is of God in the world. Till Jesus comes again, this will be found in the lowly place, that which the flesh likes not to own, but which the Holy Spirit loves to recognize. He leads the enlightened soul to say, There will I cast in my lot, for there blessing is.

Such parts of Scripture as that on which we are now meditating bring us into communion with the servants of God—the family of faith, in past ages. They show us that, in principle, their trials were like our trials, their conflicts like our conflicts, and thus knit our hearts to them in a way which nothing else can.

David had gained the place in which we find him here

because he was of faith, and because Saul was one who was not of faith. He represents the person with whom the truth and the calling of God is. As a simple stripling David had been taught to trust in God—the God of Israel. When the lion and the bear came, he had faith to meet the lion and the bear, and to overcome them. This was a matter between David and God in *secret*. But very soon after, David's faith enabled him to come forward, not for his own deliverance, but for that of God's Israel. Faith led him to take up the current of the counsels of God. As a Christian goes onward in his career, though the trials he has to encounter may be greater, he goes on in the current of the counsels of God; and thus, as Paul says, he is led about in triumph in Christ. Greater things may be done, yet, in one sense, they are felt to be easier, because he becomes more acquainted with the strength of God. But this path must begin in *secret*, and then shall we be led onward of God.

To return to the scene before us. God had anointed David king. Saul was still in power, having offices, etc., which none but one who was of faith ought to have had. David did not lift his hand in vengeance against Saul,—he *left* all that was connected with the place of the flesh, and took his place as an outcast, simply and singly in the *wilderness*. There he was glad of any countenance, of any support. Just so is it at the present hour with the servants of Christ who seek to walk in the truth—those, in a spiritual sense, of the lineage of David. The more they walk in it, the more sensitive will they become to any thing of kindness and love which comes in their way, for their hearts will be often worn and weary. I suppose there is nothing more gladdening to the soul that desires the good of others and the glory of God than to see any uniting with itself *for the truth's sake*. The “cup of cold water”—any little act of kindness connects such with the

truth of God. In this there is distinct and precious service—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto ME." God only sees the heart; but where there is one who says, I receive and countenance, and desire to cast in my lot with, persons who are walking in the truth, suffering for righteousness sake,—there, blessing will be.

David was in need: here was another not in need. Rich in the earth, surrounded by this world's goods, living in abundance,—such was the character of Nabal (*v.* 2). David grudged him not his prosperity (nay, doubtless he felt that he would not have exchanged his place for Nabal's); it was no hard message that he sent—"I do not ask thee," he says, "to leave thy riches and follow me; I say, Peace both to thee, and peace to thy house, and peace unto all that thou hast; only wilt thou show kindness unto me; wilt thou give me that which I deed?" (*vv.* 6-8.) The heart of David was large enough to have rejoiced in any thing that would have identified Nabal's place with his. And so ever, when the heart of a saint is in a gracious state, there will not be the grudging of those around, nor yet the disposition to say, "See what I am and what you are not." No, that heart will rather seek to bind the connecting link between another and itself.

God deals in grace. He knew what the end of Nabal would be, yet this was the gracious test which he put to him. And if there had been a spark of grace in Nabal's heart, of any thing according to God, it must have answered to the test. But there was not. His eye was fixed upon outward circumstances; his rough, outward thought about David's position was this: "Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants that break away now-a-days, every man from his master" (*v.* 10). Now we must remember, dear friends, that we have all of us, naturally, this Nabal feeling; there is no

heart without it as well as other evil; and about this, even as believers, we have to watch and judge ourselves. I ask you whether, because you desire to serve God, there is ready willingness, in full freedom of heart, to give all that countenance and fellowship which you are able, to others who may stand in need of it. This may be done in the way of support, or comfort, or sympathy, either in temporal or spiritual things. Love will find out many a way.

In the present day, there are not a few who, it may be, seem to some of us, to shrink from and shun the circumstances in which they find themselves placed. But about this we may misjudge them, and be saying, in principle, the same thing that Nabal said, little aware of the deep inward struggle and anxiety there has been. David had given up much; many a tie had been broken, many a struggle gone through, ere he took this position. So that, though it was true, in one sense, that he had "run away from his master," *how different was the act in the eyes of God and of man.* That which is outward soon attracts the eye, when perhaps it requires patient, diligent investigation to find out the truth. If the soul desire fellowship with God in His thoughts and ways, there must be this diligence, otherwise we shall never know what to encourage and what not. Depend upon it, all truth, the more it is known and acted on, the more will it lead into the isolated place.

But we may learn a deep and practical lesson from what is shown out here of David's heart.

The flesh was still in David, and (as many of us are often found, when any thing comes upon us unexpectedly) he was unprepared to meet, in *steadfastness of grace*, that which God allowed to be in His path.

No doubt he considered the slight and dishonor put upon him by Nabal "most uncalled for," "most unjust," "rather too much to bear." But he was wrongly

oused. And how often is this the case with the saints of God! They dwell on circumstances, instead of turning from circumstances to God and then acting amidst them according to Him. They say, perhaps, "How unjust! How unjust! do I deserve this treatment? Is it not quite right to be angry?" Thus the place of *grace* is lost. Day by day a thousand things act on our spirits, in one way or another, which are calculated to produce trying and painful effects. Now, if these be met in fellowship with God, they afford an occasion for bringing forth blessed fruit; but if not, we ourselves become contaminated, and have to confess sin. So that, instead of (as the hymn says) Satan trembling and fleeing from us in every conflict, he often thus gains advantage over us. It is a blessed thing to be able to praise God for having enabled us *practically* to triumph and overcome. And this we should seek to attain. The apostle Paul could say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," and "none of these things move me," etc. We can always praise God for what He is in Himself, and for what He has made us in Christ, but we might also praise Him for our own practical victory over Satan and over the world.

"'Mid mightiest foes, most feeble are we;
Yet, trembling, in ev'ry conflict they flee:
The Lord is our banner, the battle is His,
The weakest of saints more than conqueror is."

(To be concluded in our next.)

"SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS"--WHAT ARE THEY?

A SMALL sheet before me, which has been circulated extensively in this town (in California), professes to give the distinctive features of the system, and other points of supposed interest. I propose, with the Lord's help, to define more clearly what they really are.

Passing over some things which scarcely need comment, I learn that, whilst advocating the truth of the second coming of Christ, they excuse themselves from any share in the blame due to those who have repeatedly failed in their attempts to foretell the time of that great event. We are told that they "held to the

position that their computation of the prophetic dates was correct, but they had been *mistaken in the event*."

They do not tell us in this of the unclean device the enemy furnishes to help them to escape conviction, so I invite the reader's attention to it. They tell us that then Christ went, for the first time, from the holy place into the most holy, to cleanse it from the defilements *brought in there by His work about sin in the holy place*, so carnal are their thoughts on this point. Inspired writers tell us that Christ, "after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down *at the right hand of God*." (Heb. x. 12; see also Acts ii. 38, 34, and vii. 56.)

Thus is the truth perverted in their hands who come professedly to give us light. It will be seen that in reality they are seeking to overthrow the very foundations of faith.

Further on, they tell us that they keep the Sabbath, or seventh day, and that this and the Second Coming are the two important doctrines. For them, "all other doctrines are, in a sense, *subsidiary to those*;" and a little further on in this noteworthy sheet, we are informed that, "whilst they do not underestimate the importance of obeying the *whole moral law*, they believe that the fourth commandment is especially neglected," so that we are to understand that to keep the Sabbath is more important than to abstain from idolatry, murder, lying, and covetousness; and all other doctrines are so subsidiary that even the Atouement—the central truth of Christianity—is, with them, completely in the shade, if, indeed, it be really held at all, *save in name*. Scripture makes the true confession of the person of the Son of God the foundation of every thing. With them, of course, it is only subsidiary to keeping Saturday as Sabbath, and a belief in the Lord's return. These and other equally important truths are of very small consequence with them, whilst the paper informs us that abstinence from tobacco and alcohol is necessary for their fellowship.

Fragments of neglected truth are mixed up with errors, and are the sugar-coating to the pill of heresy they wish to have taken without question by their deluded victims. Eternal life as the reward of the faithful is so put as to *seem* to savor their doctrine of annihilation. For they believe man does not possess an immaterial spirit and soul, capable of being unclothed and clothed upon (2 Cor. v. 8), but is simply a breathing mass of clay, existing only in the shape of senseless dust in the grave

after death, and until the resurrection. In an eastern city I knew one who had been a firm believer in their doctrine as to this, but the Spirit of God exercised his conscience, and he could get no peace; for how can one have peace with God under law, and with these views, for they say the judgment is to determine who is to have eternal life, and therefore it cannot be known till that is passed. But to continue,—the one of whom I speak, sitting in their meeting, heard the preacher say that "nobody has eternal life until the resurrection;" a voice seemed to speak in his soul and say, "That's a lie, for the Lord Jesus says, 'He that believeth *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into the judgment, but *is* passed from death to life.' " (Jno. v. 1, 8.) In deep anguish, as one who feared to be deceived in a matter of eternal moment, he lifted his heart to God, and prayed for deliverance from these errors; on returning home, he found a little volume, that taught the way according to the Word, lying on his table, and he sat down to read it, and, to use his own words, read himself "out of darkness into light."

Another interesting piece of information given us is to the effect that the "remnant of Israel" means the "Church." Most people who read this perhaps will not know what is meant by the term "remnant of Israel," but an attentive student of Scripture will soon find that the calling and hope of Israel, as given in the Old Testament, is an earthly one, and the calling and hope of the Church is a heavenly one. They will learn that Israel, given up to judicial blindness for their sins and rejection of Christ, will be taken up again by God in grace, and a *remnant* of the nation will be restored to divine favor and blessing, because "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" on His part. That "He that scattered Israel will gather him." (Jer. xxxi. 10, 11; xxxiii. 1, 8; xxx. 11.) The prophet Ezekiel giving even the detailed description of the millennial temple (Ezek. xi., xvii.), and the arrangement of the twelve tribes in the land. And the universal testimony of the prophets being to the fact of Israel dwelling once more in peace in Palestine,—the moral centre then of the world—and the Gentile nations coming up to worship the Lord at Jerusalem.

But the Church of God has other hopes and destiny. Gathered out of Jews and Gentiles, quickened with the life of Christ risen from the dead, and by one Spirit brought already into oneness

with Him, she waits to share His headship over the new creation, heaven and earth being then subject.

But these "say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie," and they are looking for Israel's blessing as their portion, and mix up things, Christian and Jewish, in a way that betrays them as untaught by the Spirit of God. Romans xi. should be enough to refute their errors on this point. In keeping Saturday as their Sabbath they are quite consistent with their position, for they openly proclaim that they are under the law,—the law of Sinai, and therefore under its curse, and without a Saviour (Gal. iii. 10; v. 5). In other words, they are open apostates from Christ, having carefully eliminated from their belief every vestige of what is proper to it, except the name.

They ask you to consider "what is truth," but they dare not face the truth with any one who knows and reverences, as the only light from God this poor world has, the precious Word of God, and we may leave them where the word of an inspired apostle puts them in that solemn sentence, "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse, for it is written, 'Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them'" (Gal. iii. 10), with the prayer that God may, in mercy, awaken their dead consciences, that they may learn what sin is before Him, and to value that blessed One whom now they put a slight upon, and to give up seeking to clothe themselves with the "filthy rags" of self-righteousness.

Reader, if you have a vestige or regard for divine things, will you listen to those who teach such things, and who, under the garb of lovers of truth, are substituting the most deadly infidel errors? What do you think of men who, to save their own reputation, could invent and propagate such wickedness as that the precious blood of Christ washed the defilement of sin in the inner sanctuary, so that he had to go there in 1844 to cleanse that away, as if one should, in cleansing a floor, wash some of the dirt into another chamber, and need to go in there to finish His work? What ideas can they have of Atonement? You may believe this at their lips; you may give up Christ and redemption for works of law; you may deny man's having a soul and spirit distinct from his body; in fact, it is hard to say what *truth* you may not deny, and as long as you keep Saturday for Sabbath, and believe in the Lord's coming, you can have fellowship with

them. The denial of precious truth is nothing with them, but to touch tobacco or alcohol is to incur excommunication. Truly, they "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."

R. T. G.

APPENDIX.

1. THE NATURE OF MAN.—Adventists and Conditionalists alike teach that it is the body of the man, living or dead, which carries personality. Scripture shows that personality is attached rather to that which dwells within the body. We get the truth "as the truth is in Jesus" (Eph. iv. 21). Jesus distinguishes *Himself* from *His body* (John ii. 19-22; x. 15-18; Luke xxiii. 43). The Person, the "I," "Me," of Jesus, could be apart from the body, and have power to raise it up, and meanwhile be with the "thou" of the thief in paradise. So with Paul and believers (2 Cor. v. 1-8; xii. 1-3; Phil. i. 21-25; 2 Pet. i. 13, 14; 1 Cor. ii. 11; Zech. xii. 1). The texts usually quoted to prove that the body is all give only a materialistic view of man, and are only *half the truth*; or it would follow that between His death and resurrection there was nothing of the Saviour, except what lay in Joseph's tomb. For three days the world was without a Saviour. Incarnation would be needed again, rather than resurrection, and the Saviour on the fourth day would *not be the same Person*. This would be to blaspheme (Heb. xiii. 8).

2. ETERNAL LIFE AND IMMORTALITY.—Adventists make these the same thing, and teach that they are a future *reward* of good works at the Lord's coming. Free, sovereign grace, as taught by Paul (Rom. iv. 4, 5; v. 17; vi. 23; Eph. ii. 7, 8), and the gift and present possession of eternal life, as taught in the gospel and epistles of John, are denied, though so true and blessed (John iii. 36; v. 24; vi. 54; x. 27-29; 1 John v. 11-13, 20; iii. 15). Just as "no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him," the sons of God have eternal life abiding in them *even now*; and of this it can be said, "Which thing is true in Him and in you." But as to their bodies, they will only put on immortality when the Lord comes (1 Cor. xv. 53, 54). Jesus showed what eternal life was (John xvii. 3), and credited the disciples with the possession of it *then*, in knowing the Father and owning that He had sent the Son (Jno. v. 25, 26). Yet they died; so they had eternal life though not immortality, as they will have that at the resurrection. But this leaves untouched the fact that though "mortal" is applied to the body, it is not said of the soul. That "God only hath immortality" (1 Tim. vi. 16) does not prove that men's souls and spirits are mortal, or the same may be said of angels. God alone possesses immortality in Himself, *un-derived*; but by and in Him men and angels subsist (Acts xvii. 28; Heb. i. 7; Col. i. 17).

3. DEATH AND EXISTENCE AND CONSCIOUSNESS THEREAFTER.

—Adventists teach that the state of the dead is that of "silence, inactivity, and entire unconsciousness." Scripture applies "dead" to the prodigal, and to sinners active in sin (Luke xv. 24; Eph. ii. 1-5). The one that lives in pleasure is *dead while she liveth* (1 Tim. v. 6; John v. 25). The germ in the grain of wheat, nor the human personality in Jesus, *did not cease to exist* by death (John xii. 24; 1 Cor. xv. 36-38). By virtue of the new life he has in Christ, the believer is free from the law of sin and death (Jno. v. 24; Rom. v. 18; vi. 11; viii. 2; Col. iii. 3, 4). If the "me" of Rom. viii. 2 died in Rome, that scripture is untrue; but if it is true, Adventist teaching is false. False it is, as the new man is of the last Adam, new creation, incorruptible, and from heaven (1 Pet. i. 23; Eph. ii. 10; iv. 24; 2 Cor. v. 17; 1 Cor. xv. 45-48; 2 Tim. i. 10). For the believer, Christ *has abolished death*; he can say, "Death is ours." So Lazarus, Stephen, Paul, like the one who was a thief, have been in the conscious enjoyment of the Lord's presence for about eighteen hundred years. Even the unsaved, though dead, as to men, all live unto God (Luke xx. 37, 38). That "the dead praise not," or "know not any thing," is spoken from where we are—"under the sun," and does not take in the unseen condition of spirits (2 Cor. iv. 18; Luke xvi. 19-31; ix. 29-36; Rev. vi. 9-11).

4. DESTINY OF THE WICKED.—Adventists say that the wicked, finally, will be "consumed root and branch, becoming as though they had not been." The proofs are mostly from the Old Testament, which treats of the cleansing of the earth by judgment in the setting up of the earthly reign of Christ. Scripture says explicitly that it is "in the earth" not when it has passed away (Ps. viii. 6-11; ci. 6-8; Mal. iv). This is the judgment of the quick, *the living*, previous to the millennium; whereas Adventists take the texts and apply them to the judgment of the *dead*, over 1000 years afterward, and in eternity. So, to prove annihilation, they are convicted of "handling the Word of God deceitfully." "*Destroy*," in Scripture, means *the ruin of the thing as to the purpose for which it was designed*, not that the thing is rendered as though it had not been. The steamer "Quetta" is destroyed, but divers have seen her at the bottom of the sea. The destroyed antediluvians are the "spirits in prison" in Peter's day (Gen. vii. 23; 1 Pet. iii. 19-20). So as to Israel (Deut. xxv. 61-63; xxx. 1-3). Likewise, "everlasting destruction" and "to destroy both body and soul in hell," are not annihilation; but as the condition of the impenitent remains unchanged, the punishment will of necessity be eternal (Matt. x. 28; 2 Thess. i. 9; Rev. xv. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 18). It may be urged, "God is love," but *love is not God*. Did His wrath come on Jesus? Yes. Then dare you say that if a finite being suffers forever, he will suffer more than the infinite and eternal Son suffered while He was under divine wrath? A God of love caused the latter, why not the former, especially if you reject His Son? (1 Cor. xvi. 22; Heb. x. 28-31; xii. 25-29.)

ABIGAIL, THE WIFE OF NABAL THE CARMELITE.

(1 Sam. xxv.)—*Concluded.*

VERY often, beloved friends, the state in which we are would forbid our thus praising God. I mention this, not at all to discourage, but rather that we may be able to separate between what we are *in Christ* and our own *practical* condition as overcomers. Look again at David. He was in danger, not only of not overcoming, but of being overcome and falling into deep sin. How did he act? as the *servant of God*, bearing meekly Nabal's taunts and cutting reproach?—did he take it up *in the name of God*? No, it was in the spirit of *his own wounded pride*.

There was one, however, in the house of Nabal, and bound to him, too, by a tie which none but God could break, of altogether a different character to Nabal,—one who belonged to the Lord—a woman of faith. Abigail was able to discern in David (outcast and needy wanderer though he was,) the anointed one of the God of Israel,—him whom God was surely about to bring to greatness, as the chosen head of his people. “The Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house, because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord.” Abigail was able to follow the path of David with the eye of faith, and to put herself on to the hour of his glory. Now this shows that her soul was deeply taught of God. But then the very circumstance of her being thus taught of God must have made her situation in Nabal's house most painful, and her connection with him a yoke. Harassed every day,—finding hindrances from, but having no communion with, him to whom she was bound,—able to see the folly of Nabal's position, and to contrast it with that of the man of faith; she might have felt this to be a strange dealing of the Lord toward her. But her heart was being

prepared for a service which before she knew not. She might have said, "Why is it thus with me? Were I in other and different circumstances, what blessing—what happiness should I feel in serving the servants of God; but here I am hindered." Many a soul is thus brought (not by self-chosen paths) into a very trying and painful position, distinctly from the desire to serve God. *Now no real desire to serve God will ever be in vain.* God may make some way for its being answered, even now, and the time will come when this will be fully the case. Meanwhile, there is great profit and discipline of heart in having our neck bowed to the yoke—in being brought to submit to God. Moses was not bound to Pharaoh's house, and therefore in faithfulness he quitted it for the Lord's sake. So with Abraham and his father's house. But there may be circumstances, as those of Abigail, which must be endured, where the soul is called to bear the yoke and to wait upon God. Yet these will be full of abundant blessing. There is in them a secret breaking of the will and bruising of the flesh which will be found most profitable in after-service to God.

Abigail, in her place of quiet retirement, stood much more in the place of communion with the truth than David in the circumstances of this chapter did. She was able to check the wrong feeling of even the man of faith. Whilst David was lost, as it were, in the mist of his own thoughts, Abigail brought in the clear light of the truth to bear on his actions. And David owned and thanked God for her counsel. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me; and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand." (*vii.* 32, 33.) These were the words of David when alive to the sin in which his pride had set him.

Now, beloved friends, who would have thought that Abigail would ever have been the counselor of David,—one suffering so much for, so beloved of, God, so distinctly His servant, high in grace and in faith,—one far beyond Abigail, as she would have thought. And yet she was tried and kept where she was alone, until the time came for her to be the effectual monitor of David and intercessor for Nabal.

Observe the teaching of God. She took the blessed place of intercession. David, in his wrath, was just about to give the blow—to avenge himself with his own hand, instead of leaving the case in the hand of God. Now this would have taken away one of the most blessed features in the character of David—the leaving all things to God. In Abigail's words we see the strong power of faith. She said, "The soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall He sling out, as out of the middle of a sling. And it shall come to pass, *when the Lord shall have done to my lord according to all the good that He hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel*, that this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offense of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself; but *when the Lord shall have dealt well with my lord*, then remember thine handmaid." (vv. 29—31.)

If David had placed himself forward thus to the time of his glory, he would never have thought of raising his hand to give the blow, or of shedding causeless blood; whereas we know that his hands were nearly imbrued in that of the very young men who spoke so kindly of him to Abigail (vv. 14—17). Had he thought, How, in the hour of my glory, will this action appear to me? he would have been checked.

*The place of faith is, always to look beyond present circumstances—on to the time of the end; then we begin to see and judge of things according to God. Thus it was with Abigail. And when we realize our association with God, and the appointed end of glory, we shall act as she did. In the most trying things which happen to us, if we can by faith associate ourselves with God,—if we can see Him with us as our friend—the One who hath said, "Vengeance is Mine: I will repay, saith the Lord," we shall never feel disposed to avenge ourselves, or think of any thing save intercession as it regards those who may have grieved and wronged us. The present actings of God are in grace and mercy. We should rather seek to bring down and subdue and melt. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." There is nothing so suitable *now* as taking the place of grace, and desiring to bring under its power whatever meets us individually.*

How highly honored was this poor tried and solitary witness for God in Nabal's house!

The hour will come when the hand of God will give the final blow. Nabal was spared by David, but God was about to deal with him in His own way. He cared for none of these things that were transpiring around him. He understood them not. Intercession had been made for him, he was careless about it; the recipient of mercy, he passed that by. "He held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken." (*v.* 36.) But when that was over, his wife simply told him what had happened,—a tale of mercy and of grace. Yet though told in the simplicity of truth, it was as words of death to Nabal—it withered his heart, and "he became as a stone." (*vv.* 37, 38.) The hand of God was against him.

Now this is intended to throw a very solemn shade over the chapter. Such is the end of all that is not of

faith. The very things that are truly blessed turned into the power of withering. This will be felt to the full by and by, when persons are able to look back at mercies received, but see themselves entirely separated from all blessings and from God that gave them. This is remorse. There is nothing so painful as remorse—the sense of circumstances of mercy which have eternally passed away, and the person who has received them forever separated from God.

Nabal's way was "folly," and his end was that of "the fool." But thus will it be with every thing around that disowns communion with the ways and with the lowly place of David. He said, "Shall I take *my* bread, and *my* water, and *my* flesh that I have killed for *my* shearers, and give them unto men *whom I know not whence they be?*" (v. 2.) Abigail knew whence they were, and she thought lightly of all these things compared to the service of God. Now although we may not be like Nabal, yet we have each of us this Nabal propensity to watch against—the habit of soul which would incline us to say, "*my* bread," "*my* goods," "*my* reputation," "*my* standing," etc., wherever the word "MY" comes across the blessed privilege of being identified with Christ in the lowly place. No heart can be more miserable than one having the Spirit condemning its ways, and, if there be this seeking of our own things and not of the things which be Christ's, the Spirit of God must condemn and be against it. Very often you will find in saints who have sought to serve God, that when they come to die, they have not the same joy as those who have been just converted. Look at the thief, who believed in Christ after He hung upon the cross, and at one who has served God, it may be, for twenty years. Though both are equally accepted and made complete in Christ, yet the latter ought to be able to say, in addition to that which

the poor thief said, "I have kept the faith." It is a thing of deep importance even to the practical peace and joy of the saints to be in circumstances where the desires of the Spirit are met. This is not said to hinder or take away the joy of the feeblest saint. If there be need for humiliation, let it be ; but whether we be led to prayer or praise or humiliation, let it have the character of *truthfulness before God*.

We see, then, the end of Nabal. Nevertheless, awful as that end was, it freed Abigail from her painful situation, and she became associated with him upon whom she knew the blessing of God to rest (*vv.* 39-42). She gave up her house, her riches,—all, it would seem, to cast in her lot with him who was yet a wanderer, hunted for his life "as a partridge in the mountains."

But soon the scene is changed ;—Abigail is taken captive, and apparently about to be separated forever from David (*chap.* xxx.). How strange, after a little moment of blessing, to be placed in circumstances more terrible than before ! But this only opened a further occasion for *faith*. Supposing there had been any undue feeling of elation—any unsubdued thought in Abigail's mind, how must this trial have been felt by her as chastening from the hand of God. Otherwise, she may have acted in very distinct and holy faith, receiving the blessing as directly from God. Blessings must be received in one or other of these ways. If exalted, and walking in the flesh, she must have felt the blow as chastisement, and been taught by it to humble herself, to judge her ways, and consider the difference between resting in the creature and in God. But suppose she had received and sustained her situation in the power of faith, this trial would only strengthen her faith, and thus God would be glorified, whilst she was taught a lesson of the weakness of nature, and of the danger of resting in the creature

instead of in God. Sooner or later, the time must come when we are brought to feel the nakedness of the creature. When flesh and heart fail, none but God can be our strength.

It is for us to consider which of the places brought before us in this chapter is ours. We may not be able to take the forward place of David, but then there is that place of Abigail,—at least, we can look at that which is suffering for the sake of Jesus, and give it all, or a portion of that we have. It is not the measure or amount, the question is, whether there be the link between us and them. I trust, through the Lord's mercy, all are able to see distinctly what was the place of Nabal, and to turn from it, as Abigail did. We should be conscious of the trials and difficulties of others, and never think lightly of them, or of any evil in Satan's world.

I know of nothing that will so open the Scriptures, and guide our thoughts as to passing events, and as to those with whom we should seek to become identified, as acquaintance with these things. Seek, then, to have your souls deepened in the knowledge of them,—to judge of present circumstances as placing yourselves on, by faith, to *the time of the end*. David will then have to see standing before him Uriah; and Paul, Stephen, to whose death he was accessory. It is a marvelous thought,—but will Paul's or David's joy be less on this account? No: there will be a power of blessing, such as none but God can give, that will take away every such bitter sting. I say this, believe me, not to make light of sin, but *to associate your minds with that hour*. Past sins cannot be undone—seek not to have those things or persons about you now that you might not be able to think of with joy. If you bring in the thought of that day on your ways, you will soon be able to discern the nature of all around. There never is a soul that seeks to bring in God's judg-

ments on its ways, that does not glorify God. Faith, though feeble, must lead to the glory of God. There may be faith about trivial things,—about things that we could not speak of to another ; and here we find the nearness of God to us. So, whether you are threatened by coming danger, or tried by past or present circumstances, seek to bring in the power of *faith*—*let God be your counselor*. The character of the enemies of God is that of “children in whom is no faith.” May your refuge and strength be distinctly in God. This alone can sustain the soul. “If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have received the reconciliation.”

It is our privilege to know, not only that we have peace with God, but that He also watches over us, and leads us in the paths of service. May we be able to learn this as being under His hand. Would we desire to be brought into *practical* fellowship with Him in His ways, let us seek it by prayer and supplication.

Do you love Christ?—I ask not if you feel
 The warm excitement of that party zeal
 Which follows on while others lead the way,
 And makes His cause the fashion of the day ;
 But do you love Him when His garb is mean,
 Nor shrink to let your fellowship be seen ?
 Do you love Jesus 'midst blind, halt, and maimed ?
 In prison succor Him—nor feel ashamed
 To own Him,—though His injured name may be
 A mark for some dark slanderer's obloquy ?
 Say not, “When saw we Him ?”—each member dear,
 Poor and afflicted, wears His image here.

C. H. M.

CHRISTIAN DEVOTEDNESS.

AS to reward, *as motive* or merit, it is clear that any such thought destroys the whole truth of devotedness, because there is no love in it. It is self-looking, like "James and John," for a good place in the kingdom. Reward there is in Scripture, but it is used to encourage us in the difficulties and dangers which higher and truer motives bring us into. So Christ Himself, "who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame." Yet we well know that His motive was love. So Moses: "he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible, for he had respect to the recompense of reward." His *motive* was, caring for his brethren. So reward is ever used, and it is a great mercy in this way. And every man receives his reward according to his own labor.

The spring and source of all true devotedness is divine love filling and operating in our hearts: as Paul says, "The love of Christ constraineth us." Its form and character must be drawn from Christ's actings. Hence grace must first be known for one's self, for thus it is I know love. Thus it is that this love is shed abroad in the heart. We learn divine love in divine redemption. This redemption sets us too, remark, in divine righteousness before God. Thus all question of merit—of self-righteousness—is shut out, and self-seeking in our labor set aside. "Grace," we have learnt, "reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ." The infinite perfect love of God toward us has wrought,—has done so when we were mere sinners,—has thought of our need—given us eternal life in Christ when we were dead in sins—forgiveness and divine righteousness when we were guilty,—gives us now to enjoy divine love—to enjoy God by His Spirit dwelling in us, and boldness in

the day of judgment, because as Christ, the judge, is, so are we in this world. I speak of all this now in view of the love shown in it. True, that could not have been divinely without righteousness. That is gloriously made good through Christ, and the heart is free to enjoy God's unhindered love,—a love shown to men in man. For the very angels learn "the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." This knits the heart to Christ, bringing it to God in Him, God in Him to us. We say nothing separates us from this love.

The first effect is, to lead the heart up, thus sanctifying it : we bless God, adore God, thus knows ; our delight—adoring delight—is in Jesus.

But thus near to God, and in communion with Him,—thus not only united, but consciously united, to Christ by the Holy Ghost, divine love flows into and through our hearts. We become animated by it through our enjoyment of it. It is really "God dwelling in us," as John expresses it ; "His love shed abroad in our hearts," as Paul does. It flows thus forth as it did in Christ. Its objects and motives are as in Him, save that He Himself comes in as revealing it. It is the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord ; not the less God, but God revealed in Christ, for there we have learnt love. Thus, in all true devotedness, Christ is the first and governing object ; next, "His own which are in the world ;" and then our fellow-men. First their souls, then their bodies, and every want they are in. His life of good to man governs ours, but His death governs the heart. "Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us." "The love of Christ constraineth us ; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead : and that He died for all, that they which live should not live unto themselves, but to Him who died for them and rose again."

We must note, too, that as redemption and divine righteousness are that through which grace reigns, and and love is known, all idea of merit and self-righteousness is utterly excluded, so it is a new life in us which both enjoys God and to which His love is precious; which alone is capable of delighting, as a like nature, in the blessedness that is in Him, and in which His divine love operates toward others. It is not the benevolence of nature, but the activity of divine love in the new man. Its genuineness is thus tested, because Christ has necessarily the first place with this nature, and its working is in that estimate of right and wrong which the new man alone has, and of which Christ is the measure and motive. "Not as we hoped," says Paul (it was more than he hoped), speaking of active charity; "but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us by the will of God."

But it is more than a new nature. Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and God's love is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given to us. And as it springs up like a well in us unto eternal life, so also living waters flow out from us by the Holy Ghost which we have received. All true devotedness, then, is the action of divine love in the redeemed, through the Holy Ghost given to them.

There may be a zeal which compasses sea and land, but it is in the interest of a prejudice, or the work of Satan. There may be natural benevolence clothed with a fairer name, and irritated if it be not accepted for its own sake. There may be the sense of obligation and legal activity, which, through grace, may lead farther, though it be the pressure of conscience, not the activity of love. The activity of love does not destroy the sense of obligation in the saint, but alters the whole character of his work. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is

liberty." In God, love is active, but sovereign; in the saint, it is active, but a duty, because of grace. It must be free to have the divine character—to be love. Yet we owe it all, and more than all, to Him that loved us. The Spirit of God which dwells in us is a Spirit of adoption, and so of liberty with God, but it fixes the heart on God's love in a constraining way. Every right feeling in a creature must have an object, and, to be right, that object must be God, and God revealed in Christ as the Father; for in that way God possesses our souls.

Hence Paul, speaking of himself, says, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and 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." His life was a divine life. Christ lived in him, but it was a life of faith, a life living wholly by an object, and that object Christ; and known as the Son of God loving and giving Himself for him. Here we get the practical character and motive of Christian devotedness—living to Christ. We live on account of Christ: He is the object and reason of our life (all outside is the sphere of death); but this in the constraining power of the sense of His giving Himself for us. So, in a passage already referred to, "the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, if one died for all, then were all dead; and He died for all, that they which live should not live to themselves, but to Him who died for them and rose again." They live to and for that, and nothing else. It may be a motive for various duties, but it is the motive and end of life. "We are not our own, but bought with a price," and have to "glorify God in our bodies."

What is supposed here is not a law contending or arresting a will seeking its own pleasure, but the blessed and thankful sense of our owning ourselves to the love

of the blessed Son of God, and a heart entering into that love and its object by a life which flows from Christ and the power of the Holy Ghost. Hence it is a law of liberty. Hence, too, it can only have objects of service which that life can have, and the Holy Ghost can fix the heart on; and that service will be the free service of delight. Flesh may seek to hinder, but its objects cannot be those the new man and the Holy Ghost seek. The heart ranges in the sphere in which Christ does. It loves the brethren, for Christ does; and all the saints, for He does. It seeks the all for whom Christ died, yet knowing that only grace can bring any of them; and "endures all things for the elect's sake, that they may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." It seeks "to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus;" to see the saints grow up to Him who is the Head in all things, and walk worthy of the Lord. It seeks to see the Church presented as a chaste virgin unto Christ. It continues in its love, though the more abundantly it loves the less it be loved. It is ready to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

The governing motive characterizes all our walk: all is judged by it. A man of pleasure flings away money; so does an ambitious man. They judge of the value of things by pleasure and power. The covetous man thinks their path folly, judges of every thing by its tendency to enrich. The Christian judges of every thing by Christ. If it hinders His glory in one's self or another, it is cast away. It is judged of not as sacrifice, but cast away as a hindrance. All is dross and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. To cast away *dross* is no great sacrifice. How blessedly self is gone here! "*Gain to me*" has disappeared. What a deliverance that is! Unspeakably precious for ourselves, and morally elevating! Christ gave Himself. We have

the privilege of forgetting self and living to Christ. It will be rewarded, *our service* in grace ; but love has its own joys in serving in love. Self likes to be served Love delights to serve. So we see, in Christ on earth, now ; when we are in glory ; He girds Himself and serves us. And shall not we, if we have the privilege, imitate, serve, give ourselves to Him who so loves us ? Living to God inwardly is the only possible means of living to Him outwardly. All outward activity not moved and governed by this is fleshly, and even a danger to the soul—tends to make us do without Christ, and brings in self. It is not devotedness, for devotedness is devotedness to Christ, and this must be in looking to being with Him. I dread great activity without great communion ; but I believe that when the heart is with Christ it will live to Him.

The form of devotedness—of external activity—will be governed by God's will and the competency to serve ; for devotedness is a humble holy thing, doing its Master's will ; but the spirit of undivided service to Christ is the true part of every Christian. We want wisdom. God gives it liberally. Christ is our true wisdom. We want power : we learn it in dependence, through Him who strengthens us. Devotedness is a dependent, as it is a humble, spirit. So it was in Christ. It waits on its Lord. It has courage and confidence in the path of God's will, because it leans on divine strength in Christ. *He* can do all things. Hence it is patient, and does what it has to do according to His will and Word : for then He can work ; and He does all that is done which is good.

There is another side of this which we have to look at. The simple fact of undivided service in love is only joy and blessing. But we are in a world where it will be opposed and rejected, and the heart would naturally save self. This Peter presented to Christ, and Christ treated

it as Satan. We shall find the flesh shrink instinctively from the fact and from the effect of devotedness to Christ, because it is giving up self, and brings reproach, neglect, and opposition on us. We have to take up our cross to follow Christ, not to return to bid adieu to them that are at home in the house. It is our home still if we say so, and we shall at best be "John Marks" in the work. And it will be found it is ever then "suffer me *first!*" If there be any thing but Christ, it will be *before* Christ, not devotedness to Him with a single eye. But this is difficult to the heart, that there should be no self-seeking, no self-sparing, no self-indulgence! Yet none of these things are devotedness to Christ and to others, but the very opposite. Hence, if we are to live to Christ, we must hold ourselves dead, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.—(*Collected Writings of J. N. D.*)

OUR CENTRE, OUR MISSION, AND OUR DISCIPLINE.

IN the fourteenth chapter of Matthew, we have three wonderful scenes brought before us by the graphic pen of the inspired writer. A fitting sequence to the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven revealed in the thirteenth chapter is this fourteenth chapter; bringing before us as it does the pathway to be trodden by those who in reality belong to the kingdom. Notice these three scenes, we have,—

First, a palace and a dance, connected with a murder and a burial. (*vv. 1-12.*)

Second, a desert and a famine, followed by a feast. (*vv. 13-21.*)

Third, a mountain and a stormy sea, followed by a great calm. (*vv. 22-36.*)

In all, there is one central figure—Jesus.

We find in the first scene John the Baptist sealing his mission with his death. He was the forerunner of the blessed Lord, and now that Jesus had come, and fully taken His place, God must have Him as the centre. There could not be two centres, and John the Baptist passes off the scene by a martyr's death, to receive a martyr's crown. And who could have chosen better for that faithful witness of Christ? A faithful Enoch of the early days of the world's apostasy "walked with God" right into heaven. An Elijah, "man of God," a faithful witness in the days of Israel's apostasy, was rolled triumphantly into heaven in the chariot of fire. And for this rugged, stern, and uncompromising forerunner of Christ was reserved the signal honor of being the last martyr before the "Great Martyr" gave Himself "for the life of the world" that slew Him. John the Baptist, the last of the old; Stephen—that grand witness, the first of the new; between them, the Christ, the Son of God! Oh, what greater honor could servants of God have than this? And in these days of latitudinarianism, how these examples should stir our hearts, that we might be, at all costs, true and faithful witnesses for Christ!

But notice the result. The disciples of John bury his dead body, "and went and told Jesus." Their leader is taken away. His dead body they put out of sight, and for them henceforth there is one Leader, one Centre—the living Jesus.

Oh, brethren, is there not a voice in this for us? Has not God been saying to us, in a way that we cannot but understand, "No centre but Jesus"? "He will not give His glory to another." Let us therefore, each one, examine ourselves in the light of God's presence as to this. Brethren, is it a reality that Christ, and Christ alone, is the object of our hearts,—that His glory is the aim of our service,—that His coming is the hope of our souls,—

that He is the pole-star of our lives—our Centre—our “all in all”? May we be able truthfully to say and sing,—

“From various cares my heart retires,
 Though deep and boundless its desires,
I've now to please but One.
 Him before whom each knee shall bow,—
 With Him is all my business now,
 And those who are His own.”

But we must look a moment at the palace and the dance. In this we have a picture of the world in its *glory* and its *pleasure*, guilty of the blood of the servant of God: a true picture of this world under condemnation, being guilty of the murder of God's Son.

In the second scene (*vv.* 13–21) we have another picture of the world. A desert, and a multitude of famishing people, with Jesus and His little company of disciples ministering to them. If in the first scene we have our separation from the world, in this we get our service to the world. When we are brought to Christ, the world changes for us from a palace and a dance to a desert and multitudes of starving people.

The disciples come to the Lord with the wretched selfish cry of unbelief that is so common to the natural heart, “Send the multitude away;” and the Lord turns upon them with “They need not depart. *Give ye them to eat.*” He does not say, I will give them to eat. He puts the disciples in their place of responsibility and privilege—“Give ye.” But again the cry of unbelief comes out, “We have here *but* five loaves and two fishes;” and again grace triumphs over unbelief, and the way of service is shown: “Bring them hither to Me.” He takes what they have, blesses it, and then breaks it, having first made the multitude to sit down, so that they could be conveniently served. Then He hands the

broken bread to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. "And they did all eat, and were filled; and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full."

Is not the lesson plain? Have *we* not said, "Send the multitude away"? Have we not both thought and said, "We have so little, that it could be of no use"? and thus left Christ out. Brethren, let us take what we have, little though it be, and bring it to Christ. Notice the order: First, "He took." So let us yield ourselves to Him. His word to us to-day is, "They need not depart. Give ye them to eat." O brethren, let there be a whole-hearted surrender of ourselves and all we have to the Lord. Let Him "take" us.

Second, "He blessed." And that always follows if we yield ourselves to Him. He will consecrate, "fill our hands full,"—He will bless us and make us a blessing.

Third, "He brake." And now comes the old pathway of the cross. Euclid once said to the son of a king, "There is no royal road to learning," and there is no royal path to service for the sons of God. How slow we are to recognize that it is the broken vessel God uses for His glory! The old pathway is laid down in 2 Cor. iv. 6-12. If it is *life* for others, it must be death working in us. If we serve the Lord, let us follow Him. The corn of wheat must die to bring forth fruit (Jno. xii. 24-26). The measure of suffering is the measure of patience, and the measure of patience is the measure of power, and the measure of power is the measure of blessing. (See 2 Cor. vi. 4; Col. i. 2; 2 Cor. i. 4-6.)

This is the divine order. Oh what natural thoughts we have as to God's service often! Natural ability and intelligence are not to be despised. "He gave to each man according to his several ability," but they are not to be built on. When Paul became a fool in glorying, the

two things he mentions especially are his sufferings and his revelations. The more we are broken, the more we can be used to feed others ; and the more we are used to others, the more fragments are there to gather up. This is divine arithmetic, not human. May the Lord enable us to comprehend it, and live in the power of it for His glory and the blessing of others. Around us are the multitudes to-day. And the Lord is ever ready to command them to sit down. Brethren, are we ready to obey His word, "Give ye them to eat"? Are we ready to yield ourselves to Him, for Him "to take," "to bless," and "to break"? Thus only can we feed these multitudes of perishing souls. May we be aroused to our privileges and responsibilities.

The last scene gives us a picture of the Church in the world, and the necessary discipline we pass through. Doubtless the Lord sent His disciples on that dark and stormy sea that they might learn to have fellowship with Him in "His compassion." They were to learn compassion for others by being put in a place where they needed it for themselves. In it all we have a blessed picture of the Church sent through the stormy sea, with her blessed Saviour in the glory interceding and caring for her, and coming, in the time of trouble and sorrow, to end forever her weeping. And have we not in Peter a little remnant, knowing His coming, going to Him on the troubled waters in obedience to His word? And have we not seen the waves, and our faith almost failed us? and is not our cry even now going up, "Lord save! or we perish"? But let us be of good comfort. His hand is stretched forth to hold us, and in "a little while"—oh, how short!—we shall "come with Him into the land whither we journey." And we can say,—

‘ My bark is wafted from the strand
By breath divine,

And on the helm there rests a hand
Other than mine.

"One who was known in storms to sail
I have on board :
Amid the roaring of the gale
I have my Lord.

"He holds me when the billows smite :
I shall not fall
If sharp, 'tis short ; if long, 'tis light :
He tempers all.

"Safe to the land ! safe to the land !
The end is this ;
And then with Him go hand in hand
Far into bliss."

J. J. Sims.

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART II.—THE TRUMPETS.—Continued.

The Sixth Trumpet. (Chap. ix. 12-21.)

IN these trumpet-judgments we are, as has been already seen, traversing some of the most difficult parts of the book of New-Testament prophecy. This is owing largely to the fact that the link with the Old Testament seems very much to fail us, and thus the great rule for interpretation which Peter gives us can be acted on only with proportionate difficulty. Moreover, in the case of symbols such as we have before us, the application is of the greatest importance to the interpretation, and the application is just the fitting of the individual prophecy into the prophetic whole. We have need, therefore, to look carefully, and to speak with a caution corresponding to the difficulty.

A certain connection of the trumpets among themselves, however, we have been able to trace, and this we should expect still to discover, every fresh step in this confirming the past and gaining for itself thus greater assurance. Moreover, the general teaching of prophecy will assist and control our thoughts, although we may be unable to show the relation to each other of single predictions, such as we find, for instance, in comparing the fourth beast of Daniel with the first of Revelation.

A voice from the horns of the golden altar brings on the second woe. It is natural at first sight to connect this with the opening of the eighth chapter, and to see in it an answer to the prayers of the saints with which the incense of the altar is offered up. But this view becomes less satisfactory as we consider it, if only for the reason that the *whole* of the seven trumpets are in answer to the prayers of the saints, as we have seen, and to make the sixth trumpet specifically this would seem in contradiction. Besides, a voice from the horns of the altar, or even from the altar, would scarcely convey the thought of an answer to the prayers that came up from the altar. The horns too were not in any special relation to the offering of incense, but were for the blood of atonement, which was put upon them either to make atonement for the altar itself, or for the sin of the high-priest or of the congregation of Israel. A voice of judgment from these horns,—still more emphatic if we read, as it seems we should do, "one voice from the four horns,"—so different from the usual pleading in behalf of the sinner, speaks of profanation of the altar, or of guilt for which no atonement could be found; and, one would say, of such guilt resting upon the professed people of God, whether this were Israel or that Christendom which Israel often pictures.

If with this thought in our mind we look back to what

has taken place under the last trumpet, there seems at once a very distinct connection. If the rise of Antichrist be indeed what is represented there, then we can see how the horns of the altar, from which he has caused sacrifice and oblation to cease (Dan. ix. 27), should call for judgment upon himself and those who have followed him, whether Jews or Gentiles. In the passage just quoted from Daniel it is added, "And because of the wing of abominations there shall be a desolator." In the sixth trumpet we have just such a desolator.

The Euphrates was the boundary of the old Roman empire, and there the four angels are "bound"—"restrained," it may be, by the power of the empire itself, until, having risen up against God, their own hands have thrown down the barrier, and the hordes from without enter upon their mission to "slay the third part of men," a term which we have seen as probably indicating the revived Roman empire. Here, too, is the seat of the beast's supremacy and of the power of Antichrist. Thus there seems real accordance in these several particulars; and in this way the trumpet-judgments give us a glance over the prophetic field, if brief, yet complete, as otherwise they would not appear to be. Moreover, when we turn to the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of Ezekiel to find the desolator of the last days (chap. xxxviii. 17), we find in fact the full array of nations from the other side of the Euphrates pouring in upon the land of Israel, while the connection of that land with Antichrist and with the Roman empire is plainly shown us in Daniel and in Revelation alike. If the Euphrates be the boundary of the empire, it is also Israel's as declared by God, and the two are already thus far identified: their connection spiritually and politically we shall have fully before us in the more detailed prophecy to come.

But why *four* angels? and what do they symbolize?

The restraint under which they were marks them sufficiently as opposing powers, and would exclude the thought of *holy* angels; nor is it probable that they are literal angels at all. They would seem representative powers, and in the historical application have been taken to refer to the fourfold division of the old Turkish empire into four kingdoms prior to the attack upon the empire of the East. If such an interpretation is to be made in reference to the final fulfillment, then it is noteworthy that "Gog, of the land of Magog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal,"—as the *R.V.*, with most commentators, reads it now,—gives (under one head, indeed,) *four* separate powers as principal associates in this latter-day irruption. Others there are, but coming behind and apart, as in their train. I mention this for what it may be worth. It is at least a possible application, and therefore not unworthy of serious consideration, while it does not exclude a deeper and more penetrative meaning.

The angels are prepared for *the* hour and day and month and year, that they might slay the third part of men. The immense hosts, two hundred millions in number, are perfectly in the hand of a Master,—time, work, and limit carefully apportioned by eternal Wisdom, the evil in its fullest development servant to the good. The horses seem to be of chief importance, and are most dwelt upon, though their riders are first described, but only as to their "breast-plates of fire and hyacinth and brimstone." These answer to the "fire and *smoke* and brimstone" out of the horses' mouths: divine judgment of which they are the instruments making them thus invincible while their work is being done. The horses have heads like lions; destruction comes with an open front—the judgment of God: so that the human hands that direct it are of the less consequence,—divine wrath is sure to find its executioners.

God's judgment is foremost in this infliction, but there is also Satan's power in it: the horses' tails are like serpents, and have heads, and with these they do hurt. Poisonous falsehood characterizes this time when men are given up to believe a lie. Death, physical and spiritual, are in league together, and the destruction is terrible; but those that escape are not delivered from their sins, which, as we see, are, in the main, idolatrous worship, with things that naturally issue out of this. The genealogy of evil is as recorded in the first of Romans: the forsaking of God leads to all other wickedness; but here it is where His full truth has been rejected, and the consequences are so much the more terrible and disastrous.

(To be continued.)

THE DAY OF JOHN'S THIRD EPISTLE.

(Continued from p. 234.)

THERE was a free and devoted activity in the ministry of the truth—those who had gone forth for the name of Christ taking nothing of the world, to which they offered the better riches. The apostle's commendation is given decisively to such a course. Gaius had received and helped them, and those who do so he assures that they are fellow-workers with the truth. This, as a principle, is readily accepted now,—our David's rule by which, "as his share is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his share be that tarrieth by the stuff" (1 Sam. xxx. 24); but it needs, for spiritual application, to remember that the "stuff" by which we "tarry" must be, not our own merely, but the *common* stuff. It is thus in the case of those engaged in war, who if they care for the baggage are as much soldiers as the rest, and devoted to the service of all. Let none

claim this with whom it is not true. It is one thing to give a dole to the Lord's work, as to a beggar at the door, and quite another to be a helper in a cause that is *one's own*. Giving is as much a ministry as is preaching, but only as the heart and soul are put into it is either the one or the other acceptable with God.

Gaius was one who did this, his fellowship with the truth expressing itself in practical reality, a hearty linking himself with those who for Christ's sake had gone forth, "whom," says the apostle, "if thou shalt bring forward on their journey after a godly sort,"—"in a manner worthy of God," as it should rather be,—“thou shalt do well.” But how much is involved in this—"a manner worthy of God"! In how great a cause are we permitted to be engaged! and how little do stint and parsimony become those who act for Him who spared not His Son!

It was in behalf of this free evangelization, as is evident by the context, that the apostle had written to the assembly, only to prove how helplessly it had fallen under the control of one who loved the pre-eminence in it he had attained. We are not told upon what ground he based his opposition. This was of no matter, because his reasons were not his motives, but the state of a heart that sought its own, not the things of Jesus Christ. How terribly may we be deceived in this way! what adepts are we often times in self-deception! a Diotrophes may be thus his own victim, and in the eyes of others the bold and earnest defender of truth. It is no doubt purposely that we are told so little of what he said or against what he opposed himself. Prate though he might with malicious words against the apostle, we may be sure he did not lack arguments that seemed forcible enough and carried many: had not Paul rebuked Peter to the face? and had he not been really to be blamed?

On the other hand the truth really was that the work of the Spirit of God aroused the opposition of that in which as man's will and self-love Satan had found his opportunity. And this has been largely the history of the Church ever since: fallen under the power of the enemy, and dominated by ambition, the Spirit of God in the free working of His grace toward men and for the glory of Christ, opposed and quenched, His instruments cast out, with the approbation of those often who are really Christ's, but who lack the energy and decision for God that alone enable to discern His mind. And in every fresh movement of God this history seems to be repeated. How willingly would one prophesy of something else, if only the Word of God would justify the prediction! If it does not, what can come of such an imagination except the sure entanglement at last in some such snare as the beloved apostle here points out to us? Philadelphia itself, with its sweet name, "brotherly love," has also its warning to hold fast, and its overcoming remnant; and thus it seems directly in line with what we have had before us. The warning is not needless, and those who swim against the stream will not fail to find the tug and strain of the stream upon them. But the encouragement, how great! and the Lord Himself, how near! "I come quickly! hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown!"

EXTRACT FROM WILLIAM REID.

JESUS, when here, showed His estimate of man's doings. His withering denunciations of hypocrisy and pretense in religion are well known among us. When the church of Laodicea congratulated herself on

her position and attainments, her character was exposed as mere slop-work, for Jesus said, "*Thou knowest not,*" etc. They were sincere enough, and there was no doctrinal heresy in her bosom; but her crying heresy in practice was, having a religion that kept Jesus outside her door. "Ye do err, *not knowing* the Scripture, nor the power of God." That is the source of all heresy in creed and practice. When the Laodicean church appears again on the scene, it is as "Babylon the Great, the *mother of harlots,*" in Rev. xviii., full of worldliness, and yet professing, with consummate impudence, to be the bride of Christ. She is seen as the mart of the commerce of the nations, and the consumer of the merchandise of the whole world; and at the top of her list, as has been pointed out, is "*gold,*" and at the bottom, "*the souls of men,*" as if they were hardly worth a thought, coming in, as they do, after "wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots." But judgment is the end of it, "for strong is the Lord God that judgeth her." Religious profession in our day is fast hastening toward this condition of things; and surely it is a peculiar privilege to stand, in this the crisis of our age, in the place of faithful confessors of Christ, and to be bold for Him as a Noah, a Paul, a Luther, a Knox, in their day was bold. It is a high honor to be living in a day like this, that we may witness for God and His Christ, against the world—not only in its worldliness, but its religion—and have that *faith* to which he commits *Himself*. Things are rapidly tending to the condition they were in before the flood. This world is still Cain's world, and its *religion* is still *Cain's worship*.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 20.—“Is not the Jordan the eastern boundary of the promised land?”

“I quote a few passages as to this:—(Gen xii. 5.) ‘Into the land of Canaan they came.’—‘And the Lord . . . said, Unto thy seed will I give *this land*.’ The tribes of Reuben and Gad said, ‘Bring us not over Jordan.’ (Num. xxxii. 5.) And Moses rebukes them for objecting to going over into ‘the land which the Lord had given them.’ All this shows the Jordan to be the eastern boundary.

“But in Josh. i. 2, the word is, ‘Moses my servant is dead; now, therefore, arise: go over this Jordan,—thou, and all this people, unto the land which I give to them, even to the children of Israel, . . . from the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates—all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun.’ Again, in Ex. xxiii. 31: ‘And I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river.’—the river Euphrates, no doubt.

“Does not ‘from the desert unto the river’ mean a north and south measurement? If so, what is meant by (Josh. i. 2) ‘From the wilderness and this Lebanon,’ since the wilderness was south and Lebanon north of the land? Does the land widen out north of the Jordan to the head waters of the Euphrates, the Jordan being the eastern boundary along its course?”

Ans.—In all the references to Israel’s inheritance in the land, we have to distinguish between God’s original (and unrepenting) thought for them, which is yet to be fulfilled, and the partial way in which they realized it under the legal covenant. When they are finally settled there in full blessing, Jordan will not be the boundary at all, but the portion of each tribe will cross it from east to west, so as practically to obliterate it. On the other hand, in Numbers, it is clearly failure in the two tribes and a half taking their inheritance on the east side.

These things are, as all else, types for us. God has called us with a heavenly calling, and to take up with earth is to renew the failure of Reuben and Gad. Yet, as co-heirs with Christ, we are to reign over the earth also in the day when God’s full thought as to us shall be shown out,—the river of death completely obliterated.

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART II.—THE TRUMPETS.—Continued.

The Little Open Book. (Chap. x.)

WE have already seen that in the trumpets, as in the seals, there is a gap, filled up with a vision, between the sixth and seventh, so as to make the seventh structurally an eighth section. This corresponds, moreover, to the meaning; for the seventh trumpet introduces the kingdom of Christ on earth, which, although the third and final woe upon the dwellers on the earth, is on the other hand the beginning of a new condition, and an eternal one. With this octave a chord is struck which vibrates through the universe.

The interposed vision is in both series, therefore, a *seventh*, with a meaning corresponding to the number of perfection. At least, so it is in the series of the seals, and we may be sure we shall find no failure in this case: failure in the book of God, even in the minutest point,—our Lord's "jot or tittle,"—is an impossibility. Nothing is more beautiful of its kind than the way in which all this prophetic history yields itself to the hand that works in all and controls all: thank God, we know *whose* hand.

But the vision of the trumpet-series is very unlike that of the seals, and its burden of sorrow different indeed from that sweet inlet into beatific rest. We shall find, however, that it vindicates its position none the less. As in the work, so in the word of God, with a substantial unity, there is yet a wonderful variety, never a mere repetition, which would imply that God had exhausted Himself. As you cannot find two leaves in a forest just alike, so you cannot find two passages of Scripture that are just alike, when they are carefully and intelligently

considered. The right use of parallel passages must take in the consideration of the diversity and unity alike.

In the vision before us there is first of all seen the descent of a strong angel from heaven. As yet, no descent of this kind has been seen. In the corresponding vision in the seal-series, an angel ascends from the east, but here he descends, and from heaven. A more positive direct action of heaven upon the earth is implied, power acting, though not yet the *great* power under the seventh trumpet when the kingdom of Christ is come. This being, apparently angelic, is "clothed with a cloud,"—a vail about him, which would seem to indicate a mystery either as to his person or his ways. It does not say "*the* cloud,"—what Israel saw as the sign of the presence of the Lord,—otherwise there could be no doubt as to who was here: yet in His actions presently He is revealed to faith as truly what the cloud intimates. It is Christ acting as Jehovah, though yet personally hidden, and in behalf of Israel, among whom the angel of Jehovah walked thus appareled. It is only the cloud; the brightness which is yet there has not shone forth: faith has to penetrate the cloud to enter the Presence-chamber: yet is He there, and in a form that intimates His remembrance of the covenant of old, and on His own part some correspondent action.

So also the rainbow (which we last saw round the throne of God) encircles His head. Joy is coming after sorrow, refreshing after storm, the display of God's blessed attributes at last, though in that which passes, a glory that endureth. And this is coming nearer now, in Him who descends to earth. But His face is as the sun: there indeed we see Him; who else has such a face? In our sky there are not two *suns*: our orbit is a circle, not an ellipse.

His face is above the cloud with which He is encircled:

heaven knows Him for what He is; the earth not yet; though on the earth may be those who are in heaven's secret. But His feet are like pillars of fire, and these are what are first in contact with the earth, the indication of ways which are in divine holiness, necessarily, therefore, in judgment, while the earth mutters and grows dark with rebellion.

Now we have what reveals to us whereto we have arrived: "And he had in his hand a little book opened." The seventh seal opens a book which had been seen in heaven; the seventh section here shows us another book now open, but a *little* book. It had not the scope and fullness of the other; we hear nothing of how the writing fills up and overflows the page. It is a little book which has been till now shut up, but is no longer shut up,—a book too whose contents, evidently connected with the action of the angel here, has to do with the earth simply, not with heaven also, as the seven-sealed book has. We have in this what should lead us to what the book is; for the characteristic of Old-Testament prophecy is just this, that it opens to us the earthly, not the heavenly things. Its promises are *Israel's*, the earthly people (Rom. ix. 4), and it deals fully with the millennial kingdom, and the convulsions which are its birth-throes. Beyond the millennium, except in that brief reference to the new heavens and earth to which Peter refers, it does not go; and the "new heavens" are not our blessed portion, but the *earth*-heavens, as Peter very distinctly shows. There is no heavenly city there in prospect; there is no rule over the earth on the part of Christ's co-heirs, such as we have already found in the song of Revelation. All this the Christian revelation adds to the Old Testament; while in Revelation the millennium is passed over with the briefest notice. Here for the first time indeed we get its limits set, and see how

short it is, while the main thing dwelt upon as to it is with whom shall be filled those thrones which Daniel sees "placed," but sees not the occupants (chap. vii. 9, *R.V.*). Thus it is plain how the book of Old-Testament prophecy is, comparatively with the New, "a *little* book."

It is fully owned and maintained that when we look, with the aid of the New Testament, beyond the letter, we can find more than this. Types there are and shadows, and that every where, in prophecy as well as history, of greater things. Earth itself and earthly things may be and are symbols of heaven and the heavenly. The summer reviving out of winter speaks of resurrection; the very food we feed on preaches life through death. And so more evidently the Old Testament: for Revelation, completing the cycle of the divine testimony, brings us back to paradise, as type of a better one; and the latest unfolding of what had been for ages hidden, shows us in Adam and his Eve Christ and the Church.

But this manifestly leaves untouched the sense in which Old-Testament prophecy may be styled "a little book." The application here is also easy. For in fact the Old-Testament prophecy as to the earth has been for long a thing waiting for that fulfillment which shall manifest and illumine it. Israel outcast from her land, upon whom the blessing of the earth waits, all connected with this waits. We may see now, indeed, as in some measure we see their faces set once more toward their land, that other things also are arranging themselves preparatory to the final accomplishment. But yet the proper fulfillment of them is not really begun.

In the meanwhile, though the Lord is fulfilling His purposes of grace, and taking out from among the Gentiles a people for His name, as to the earth, it is "man's day." (1 Cor. iv. 3, *marg.*) When He shall have completed this, and having gathered the heavenly saints to

heaven, shall put to His hand in order to bring in the blessing for the earth, then the day of *the Lord* will begin in necessary judgment, that the inhabitants of the world may learn righteousness. (Is. xxvi. 9.) This *day* of the Lord begins, therefore, before the *appearing* of the Lord, for which it prepares the way: the dawn of day is before the sunrise.

The apostle, in warning the Thessalonians against the error of supposing that the day of the Lord was come (2 Thess. ii. 2, *R.V.*), gives them what would be a sign immediately preceding it: "For that day," he says, "shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." The manifestation of the man of sin is therefore the bell that tolls in solemnly the day of the Lord.

This would seem to be the opening, then, of the "little book." Thenceforth the prophecies of the latter day become clear and intelligible. Now the apostasy has been shown, as it would seem, in its beginning under the fifth trumpet, and the man of sin may well be the one spoken of there: thus the little book may be fittingly now seen as opened, and in the continuation of the vision here we find for the first time the "beast," the "*wild* beast" of Daniel, in full activity (chap. xi. 7). All, therefore, seems connected and harmonious; and we are emerging out of the obscure border-land of prophecy into the place where the concentrated rays of its lamp are found.

We see too how rapidly the end draws near: "And he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth; and he cried with a great voice, as when a lion roareth." It is the preparatory voice of Judah's Lion, as "suddenly his anger kindles;" and the seven thunders,

—the full divine voice,—the whole government of God in action,—answers it; but what they utter has to find its interpretation at a later time.

Meanwhile, the attitude of the angel is explained: "and the angel which I saw standing upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his right hand to heaven, and swore by Him that liveth forever and ever, who created the heavens, and the things that are therein, and the earth, and the things that are therein, and the sea, and the things that are therein, that there should be delay no longer; but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound"—when he shall sound, as he is about to do,—“then is finished the mystery of God, according to the good tidings which He hath declared to His servants the prophets.”

All is of a piece: the prophetic testimony, (the testimony of the little open book,) is now to be suddenly consummated, which ends only with the glories of Christ's reign over the earth. Amid all the confusion and evil of days so full of tribulation, that except they were mercifully shortened, no flesh should be saved (Matt. xxiv. 22), yet faith will be allowed to reckon the very days of its continuance, which in both Daniel and Revelation are exactly numbered. How great the relief in that day of distress! and how sweet the compassion of God that has provided it after this manner! “He that endureth to the end shall be saved,”—shall find deliverance speedy and effectual, and find it in the coming of that Son of Man whose very title is a gospel of peace, and whose hand will accomplish the deliverance.

There has been an apparent long delay: “There shall be delay* no longer.” Man's day has run to its end, and,

* There is no doubt at all as to this being legitimate, and being so, although the *R. V.* still puts it into the margin, there should be no doubt as to its being the true rendering.

though in cloud and tempest, the day of the Lord at last is dawning. Then the mystery of God is finished: the mystery of the first prophecy of the woman's Seed, and in which the whole conflict between good and evil is summarized and foretold. What a mystery it has been! and how unbelief, even in believers, has stumbled over the delay! The heel of the Deliverer bruised: a victory of patient suffering to precede and insure the final victory of power! Meantime, the persistence and apparent triumph of evil, by which are disciplined the heirs of glory! Now, all is indeed at last cleared up; the mystery of God (needful to be a mystery while patience wrought its perfect work,) is forever finished: the glory of God shines like the sun; faith is now completely justified! the murmur of doubt forever silenced.

Thus the sea and the land already, even while the days of trouble last, know the step of the divine angel, claiming earth and sea for Christ. And now faith (as in the prophet) is to devour the book of these wondrous communications, sweet in the mouth, yet at present bitter in digestion, for the last throes of the earth's travail are upon her. By and by this trouble will be no more remembered for the joy that the birth of a new day is come,—a day prophesied of by so many voices without God, but a day which can only come when *God* shall wipe away the tears from off all faces. And it comes; it comes quickly now: the voice heard by the true Philadelphian is, "I come quickly." Come, Lord, and "destroy the face of the covering that is cast over all peoples, and the vail that is spread over all nations;" come, and swallow up death in victory, and take away the reproach of Thy people from off all the earth; come, that faith may say in triumph, "Lo, this is our God: we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord;

we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

(To be continued.)

"THY GOOD THINGS."

(Luke xvi.)

THIS chapter is a consistent whole, and it is very easy to trace the unity of purpose in it. The parable of the unjust steward at the beginning is illustrated by the story of the rich man and Lazarus at the end : itself not a parable, as people often say, but plain solemn truth, although the language is necessarily not exactly literal, but drawn from the present life, as constantly that which is unseen is conveyed to us in terms of what is seen. As to these things, "we see through a glass darkly," or, as the word is, "in a riddle,"—things which it is not possible in plain words to utter.

The unjust steward is the picture of man intrusted by God with the "good things" of this life, but by sin having lost his stewardship, death being plainly the limit of his possession, when he goes out naked, able to carry nothing with him. These are the "goods" of the previous chapter, which the Father of all distributes to His children, the witnesses of a love to which men are yet blind, whether they wander, as does the younger son, into the far-off country, openly away from God, or, with the correct elder son, only nurse the *spirit* of the far-off country in their hearts.

The steward of the parable is unjust, and so declared to be, acts in this character all through, is not commended for his justice, but for his "wisdom,"—a wisdom which is employed, as with the "children of this world" to whom it is ascribed, entirely for himself. Nor is it God commends him, but his *lord*. He is shrewd and careful of the future, judges truly of that future before him, that he

must depend then upon other resources than his own, spends what he might have appropriated and laid up to secure himself against that day. In all this there is that which can be pointed out to us for imitation, while the unrighteousness, of course, cannot. When the Lord comes to the application, He makes careful distinction as to all this, and there is not the slightest room left for mistake.

Riches, says the Lord, are the "mammon of unrighteousness"—the god that the men of this world worship. All earthly gain to one's self is included here: plainly all that can be included among the good things of earth. Good they are, not in themselves evil at all, the gifts of One who is good and gives what is good. This is the misery of sin, that man perverts what is good to evil, and makes a curse out of a blessing.

Not only are the good things "good" as regards the present life: we may make to ourselves "friends" with them of that future which men dread, but which so little influences them. This is not the gospel, and is not designed to be. It is, and must be, consistent with the gospel; or the Saviour of men could never have uttered it. Certain it is our lives here witness for or against us,—are thus friends or enemies. As the apostle says, and says to professing Christians, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. viii. 13.) This also is not the gospel, but it would be a woeful mistake to suppose it inconsistent with the gospel. It is how, as he tells us, the children of God are manifested: "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (v. 14.) Such texts, therefore, have their use in searching the conscience, and testing how far the gospel has done its work with us. "The gospel is preached . . . that men might live according to God in the Spirit."

(1 Pet. iv. 6.) If the bent of the life is not changed, the gospel cannot have been received aright. It is an infallible remedy for a diseased life, so that if the life be not healed, we have a right to argue that the remedy has not been taken.

"Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," says the Lord, "that when ye fail"—or, as the critics read now, "when *it* fails, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." And this is faithfulness, not, as with the unjust steward, unrighteousness. "He that is *faithful* in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." How true is that! and how deeply important! Little and much make an immense difference in our eyes. How many there are who make conscience only of great things, and think of it as mere scrupulous nicety to regard the small! Yet these little things have tongues, like our children, to betray the disorder where all is outwardly correct. A child's chatter may reveal us to a stranger, sometimes to ourselves: and just so our inconsistencies of conduct reveal what is deeper than the surface, and as rottenness under what seemed living and true.

"If, therefore, ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches; and if ye have not been faithful in that which is Another's"—not "another man's"—"who will give you that which is your own?"

Thus righteousness is insisted on, the unrighteous element in the parable completely antidoted, faithfulness as stewards made to be that which is profitable in the future, with how sweet and tender an appeal to us on behalf of Him who has turned the very lapse of earthly stewardship into fullest gain for us, giving us in the things that are heavenly and eternal "that which is *our own*!"

Thus indeed now the grace of God speaks to bankrupt and beggared man. His dispossession from what is earthly becomes the voice of God calling him to "come up higher." And that same grace will reward with eternal riches the devotion to God of that which is after all His! How good is He!

Let us make no mistake: this is not yet the gospel. But it is truth, self-consistent of course, and consistent with all other truth. Moreover, it has its solemn side, intense in its solemnity. "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

How clear, definite, positive, is this, as the word of a Master! The perfect Master, Teacher of truth alone, is He who speaks. He does not, let us mark well, say, "Ye *ought* not to serve God and mammon." Man's will can get through any number of "*oughts*." No, he is not speaking of duty here, but of impossibility: "Ye *cannot* serve;" "*no* man can serve two masters." Thus the question is immediately raised, which in this shape ought to be readily answered, "Who is my master? God, or the world? where are my interests? in this life, or the life to come?" To have the face in one direction is to have one's back upon the other: with one's face toward God, there is no alternative but to have one's back upon the world.

This is not the gospel; we have not come to the gospel: but it is plain, pointed truth of the most personal kind. And the Lord often insisted on such truth as this: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake, shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his

own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. xvi. 24-26.) Here He enjoins the most solemn counting of cost, and the alternative is put in the same decisive way: the present life, or the life to come—which will you have? for both you cannot have: will you choose here, or there?—in time, or in eternity?

The story at the end of the chapter, of Lazarus and the rich man, illustrates this choice on both sides. The covetous Pharisees, legal to the heart's core, but who never have penetrated the inner meaning of the law, are made to realize that the man upon whom the law seemed to have heaped its blessings might on the other side of the vail be found lifting up his eyes in hades, being in torment, and crying for but a drop of water from the tip of the finger to cool his tongue, while on the other hand the beggar, with his rags pleading against him—for who ever "saw the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging their bread?"—is taken to Abraham's bosom,—for a Jew, the chief place of honor,—carried there by angels' hands!

How solemn is that condemnation, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and . . . now . . . thou art tormented!" What crime is alleged against him here? Not even his having left Lazarus at his gate without showing mercy. Perhaps he did get the crumbs from the rich man's table, a dole for his need, never missed from his abundance,—just what practically many give, and count it liberality. But there is nothing but this,—nothing charged but this: "Thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things." How intensely solemn is this! May its voice be heard in the hearts and consciences of many!

The vail of Christianity thrown over such a life could have done nothing for it. It would have been only worse,—more self-condemned. No white robe of a Saviour's merits could avail to cover the wretchedness of a

life like this. True, God's grace can come in wherever, whenever, the heart is turned to Him. But it needs to be maintained that where it comes in it comes in to reign, and sin and it cannot reign together. The life is saved where the soul is saved. "The grace of God which bringeth salvation teaches us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." (Tit. ii. 11, 12.)

On the other hand, there is a lesson in the fact that it is a *beggar* whom the Lord places in Abraham's bosom. True it was that as a beggar he had no legal righteousness. It is evident that to the rich man with his life wasted upon himself the beggar is not after all the contrast one might have expected. Had it been one who had sold all that he had to give to the poor, it would have been that. Is it not plain that the Lord has designedly given us something else than what the parable of the unjust steward might seem to have foretokened. He did not mean, then, to teach us that eternal happiness can be gained by human merit. Striking contrast indeed in this respect with him whose doom is gained by a life of self-indulgence, the beggar goes to bliss as every way a beggar! Such surely are they who are justified through faith, and not by the works of the law.

At best, we are unjust stewards, and claim we have not. The grace of God stoops to us as sinners: when we have nothing to pay, we are freely forgiven. The cross of Christ was not needed for our righteousness: it was that on which He bare our sins in His own body, but that henceforth we, being dead unto sins, should live unto righteousness. Thus a new life begins for us, and with our faces turned Godward, our backs are upon the world. That world is as we were—godless: the cross which has brought us nigh is the full breach between God and it, and by the cross we are crucified to the world. Thus the

gospel puts us upon a new path, qualifies us for the new life, conforms us to the divine conditions; and all the joy, blessing and power of our life as Christians depends upon the steadfastness with which we maintain our course, our faces heavenward, our backs upon the world.

THE CHRISTIAN'S TEMPTATION.

I LOOKED around upon the world,
 And saw men prosp'ring here and there,—
 The flag "excelsior" wide unfurled,
 And proudly waving through the air:
 I looked,—but "What is that to thee?"
 My Saviour said, "Come, follow Me;
 There's far above earth's greatest height
 A glorious home for thee."

I gazed upon the warlike throng,
 Hasting to glory and renown;
 Heard the triumphant conqueror's song,
 And half desired to share his crown,
 Till Jesus said, "What's that to thee?"
 If thou wouldst conquer, follow Me;
 There yet awaits a happier song,
 A brighter crown for thee."

I listened to the statesman's voice,
 And heard the wisdom of the wise,
 And thought this heart would much rejoice
 If to their height I could but rise;
 But Jesus said, "What's that to thee?"
 If thou wouldst rise, come, follow Me;
 Man's wisdom ne'er can reach the height
 Of bliss designed for thee."

Still I desired the world's applause,
 And shrank before its threat'ning frown,—
 Well-nigh forgot my Saviour's cause,—
 The cross, the glory, and the crown.

"The world's applause! what's that to thee?"
He said, "'tis thine to follow Me;
Tread in My steps, and there's My own
Approving smile for thee."

I mused upon the days of old,
And thought of times long since gone by,—
Of friendships warm, but now grown cold;
My heart was full,—tears dimmed my eyes;
"Why weep?" said Jesus; "what to thee
Are things behind? come, follow Me;
Right onward press, the joy's before
Of endless love for thee."

I sought no more this world so vain,
In which my Saviour's blood was shed,
But looked upon the cross again,
Where He was numbered with the dead,
And thought, "What is this world to me?
My peace, my joy's to follow Thee:
There is throughout the narrow path
Rest in Thyself for me."

I looked upon the Church of God,
Scattered, divided, rent, and torn;
My heart was grieved, I felt the load,
And did the desolation mourn.
But Jesus said, "One thing's for thee:
Be faithful thou, and follow Me
On to the end, and I will give
A crown of life to thee."

I've often heard the bitter taunt,
And seen the smile of earthly scorn;
The mem'ry still my soul would haunt,
But He, once mocked and crowned with thorn,
Whispered, "I've borne much more for thee;
Canst thou not thus far follow Me?
Bear now the cross; thou soon shalt wear
The crown laid up for thee."

I waited for my Lord to come,
And oft desired to know the day

When He would take me to His home;
 But still the voice was heard to say,
 "The day! the hour! what's that to thee?
 Watch, mark My path, and follow Me;
 The time's at hand when I will come,
 Will come again for thee."

Lord, let me not, with vain desire,
 Seek what is unrevealed to know,
 Nor let this foolish heart aspire
 To wealth or honor here below;
 But let my aim, my object be,
 My one desire, to follow Thee;
 Whate'er the path, the end will bring
 Rest with Thyself for me.

THE LAW OF VOWS.

(Lev. xxvii.)

OUR Lord's words in the Sermon on the Mount are illustrative and illuminative of the law of vows given in the final chapter of Leviticus—a chapter of the greatest importance to the book it closes, in which the great lesson is that of sanctification. The special or "singular" vow of this chapter is just the "sanctification," whether of person or thing, to Jehovah; but a sanctification which goes beyond what is demanded by the law—a voluntary undertaking, though it may be the result of the pressure of circumstances, as for instance in the case of Jephtha.

The words of the Sermon on the Mount seem at first sight rather to prohibit explanation than to explain. They do, in fact, for Christians, set aside any law of vows by the prohibition of vows: "Again, ye have heard it said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, *Swear not at all*; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool;

neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King ; neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black." Thus, plainly, what the law had permitted was now revoked : yet not as if the law had failed,—let not that be imagined. Jesus was Himself the Giver of that law ; and He has but a little before declared of it that "not one jot or tittle should pass from the law till all be fulfilled." Far from failing, it had done its work well ; and it is because of this that the new commandment is now issued. For the law was intended to convince men of that moral weakness, and it is because of this weakness, which has been demonstrated by the law that the vow is now prohibited.

But the legal covenant itself, as Israel entered into it, was itself such a "singular vow." They therein dedicated themselves to Jehovah with the affirmation, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do, and be obedient." It may be asked, indeed, Was this a voluntary undertaking ? had not the Lord invited them to make such an engagement ? It is true He had said, "If ye will obey My voice, and keep My covenant, ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all nations." It was of Him that they should be tested, just because man, in his self-confidence, alas ! welcomes the test. Nothing but the experiment will convince him of his impotence. But it was open for them to deprecate a conditional footing of this kind, and to cast themselves upon divine mercy as their only hope. On the contrary, they readily and voluntarily accepted it, and thus dedicated themselves to the Lord by a "singular vow."

The first eight verses of the chapter speaks of this dedication of persons ; and in this case, the Lord Himself, by the priest, estimates the value of the service to be rendered to Him. No one could be allowed to do this for himself ; it must be done for him ; and here

every one was valued according to his age, strange valuation as it might seem, — disregarding the manifest inequality between man and man, every man at the same age valued at exactly the same rate, which, physical absurdity as it might seem, only shows that we have here typically a *moral* standard, which is necessarily the same for every one, though admitting a certain difference in *duties* also, as for man, woman, child, etc. The ten commandments were thus the perfect appraisal on God's part of man's self-dedication. Yet if he were poorer than this estimation, as man is confessedly unable to pay full value according to the perfect standard, then the priest was permitted to value him according to his *ability*, so that he could no longer, in that sense, plead his poverty. And just so we find that while the law in the ten commandments was a perfect rule, in practice, something had to be abated. Thus, of the law of divorce the Lord had to say, "Moses for the hardness of your hearts gave you this precept." And in a similar way He revealed Himself as "forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin" at the second giving of the law, after the sin of the golden calf had shown Israel's deep poverty.

Yet law, however modified, is still a ministration of death and of condemnation; and this is, in fact, said of the law as given the second time—not the first (2 Cor. iii.). Thus the "singular vow" fails utterly. Only grace could say of any, "She hath done what she could." The Lord therefore, in mercy and justice—both, prohibits it. Man must own himself lost if it be a question of responsibility. He needs not any modification of the law, but grace and salvation.

How blessed, then, to find, in the very next place to the law of the personal vow, the law of the vowed "beast, whereof men bring an offering unto the Lord"! If man has failed, and at his best, when he has vowed and at-

tempted to devote himself, thank God, there is a life that can be devoted for him, though in death, and which the Lord accepts ! Here, let us note, there is no valuation, and no possibility of exchange or release. Who can value the inestimable, or change places with this precious Substitute for sinners ? An *unclean* beast may be redeemed, though, as we are made to know here, by what is *of more value than itself* ; a fifth part more must be added in this case to the priest's valuation. But the beast clean for an offering,—and there is but One whom this could represent,—for it there is no ransom. No, “the Son of Man *must* be lifted up.” There was no other way, or would it not have been taken ? could the Son of God suffer needlessly ? Impossible. “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” No saved soul but is the fruit of that precious death.

He indeed could be the subject of a singular vow. He alone could say, without a shadow of misgiving, “I will pay my vows before them that fear Him.” (Ps. xxii.) Power was with Him, though in weakness ; and on the awful tree where He bare our sins God Himself could turn away His face, and let Him bear the undiminished burden. Yes, the singular vow was His ; and that which mercy prohibits to others it appointed to Him. Here alone in all man's history the law of the vow becomes a law of salvation and blessing.

And next, therefore, we come in this chapter to the sanctification of the house. “And when a man shall sanctify his house to be holy unto the Lord, then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad ; as the priest shall estimate it, so it shall stand. And if he that sanctified it will redeem his house, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be his.”

This is in regular and beautiful order. Not until He has a redeemed people does God speak of having a house among men. Israel had such a house, a "holy and beautiful house," devoted to Him, yet theirs: for to devote what is ours to God does not make it the less but more our own; and what house was there in Israel that was so truly theirs as God's house was? "And let them make Me a sanctuary," He says, "that I may dwell among them." This is the object of His heart which in Immanuel has been revealed to us, to bring His people near to Himself, and to abide among them. But for Israel's house to be theirs, it must be redeemed, and so the first house passed away from them because redemption had not given it perpetuity. They knew not, know not yet, bring not, as it were, to God the ransom-price. Hence the house is gone from them, and will not return until the glorious sixty-eighth psalm becomes the language of their hearts: "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive; Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them."

This truth in a still more blessed way is ours to-day, and after a twofold manner. For to us as redeemed, not a typical house, made with hands, but the heavenly sanctuary itself, is opened; the vail rent, as Israel never knew it, and we are encouraged with the wondrous words, "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 vail, 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, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb. x. 19-22.)

This is what God's heart yearns that we may know,

and this is what the person of Christ (God and man in one) implies for us, and this is what His work has made fully ours. O to know it better, refuge and rest and sanctuary as it is, the place where God dwells! This is our one escape from the world, from the burden of care, from the sin that assails us. Nowhere else is there a clean spot, nowhere else a place of security: "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of man: Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues." (Ps. xxxi. 20.) Yes, here man's pride is rebuked, his haughtiness is brought down, distraction ceases, the mind is cleared, the heart rests. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe."

But we can add more: for His "house are we" (Heb. iii. 6). The words are fulfilled to us "I will dwell in them and walk in them." (2 Cor. vi. 16.) The Spirit of God already dwells in us in virtue of redemption, and our "bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. vi. 19.) An amazing thought, which we realize how little! And the Church also is His temple. How God presses upon us this nearness that we have to Him, the nearness in which He is to us! Simplicity of faith in this, what would it not do for us!

But we must go on to the sanctification of the field; and here, if we think of Israel and her land, we have what is of the greatest interest. In Israel, the year of jubilee (which began on the day of atonement, after their sins had been taken away by the scape-goat into a land of forgetfulness,) restored to every one whatever he had lost of his original inheritance. If a man had devoted a field to the Lord, this became his own again in the year of jubilee. But there was an exception: "If he will not redeem the field"—before the jubilee—"or if he has sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed any more; but the

field, when it goeth out in the jubilee, shall be holy unto the Lord as a field devoted; the possession thereof shall be the priest's." Now Israel's land had been thus devoted to the Lord, and has not been redeemed; that is, the value of it has not been paid to Him, but it has, alas! been sold to the stranger, as we are all to-day witnesses. Consequently, when the time of blessing for the earth comes at the appearing of the Lord, divine grace will take out of their keeping what they have shown themselves to have so little power to keep. It shall be the priest's, Immanuel's land, forever secure from alienation, and Israel shall inherit with Him who says, "The land shall not be sold forever; for the land is Mine: for ye are strangers and sojourners with *Me*."

And we too, in a higher and wider sphere, heirs of God, are joint-heirs with Christ. Our inheritance is secured also by the same strong hand. Grace has omitted nothing that is needful to eternal security; and in the Father's house the first-born children of the Father shall be at home to go no more out forever.

Thus ends really the law of vows; but the chapter is not yet closed: we have had four divisions of a septenary series, and as in perhaps all such, we have in the last three a change of subject, though of course connected also with the preceding ones. They give us, in fact, distinctly specified as such, what cannot be the subject of vows, and that because they already belong to the Lord. What He claims as His depends not on man's feeble will or effort to make good as His. The vow as to these is necessarily therefore set aside.

And here as the first class of these we have the first-born of beasts. Spared in Israel at the time when those of the Egyptians fell under the divine hand, God claimed them as His own. It was not left therefore to man's option whether they were to be His. Man's vow was here

needless, and nothing left to his will in the matter. *He* claimed who had title and power to make good His claim.

And is not this too, in view of our own responsibility, and in the consciousness of the weakness of our human wills to yield themselves to Him, that which gives us rest, and animates us in the inevitable conflict, that our sanctification to God is secured by redemption and by birth? Formed for His service as the beast for man's, claimed by Him who will not suffer aught to defraud Him of His claim, we are His, then, not in the weakness of our poor human wills, but in the might of His will for us. And therefore we are exhorted to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, because it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. ii. 12, 13), "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. ii. 10.)

But there is a second class of things or of persons that is equally His, and holy to Him in a strange and solemn way. These are the subjects of the ban, devoted to death as evil, and sanctified to God in the only way in which that which resists sanctification can be—by its destruction. Here ransom could not be, nor was it to be left to man's will what should be done in the matter. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." (2 Pet. ii. 9.) They are His too by title, as are the righteous, and "God will be sanctified in judgment," demonstrated as against the evil and Master of it in the day of manifestation that is drawing nigh.

One thing alone remains to complete this picture. The tithe in Israel was the recognition of the sovereign rights of God over all their possessions. For God to

have His own means fullness of blessing for all by whom it is yielded. If God has His place with us, every thing else has its place. When this shall be at last, then will have come the full eternal blessing: "God shall be all in all,"—the definition of the eternal state in the last book of Scripture.

And this, blessed be God, depends not upon man's feeble will for its accomplishment. The whole lesson of the ages from the first sin in Eden to the apostasy after the thousand years itself is but the reiteration of that word, "Cease ye from man." But God will only in this the more be glorified, when the creature being proved to derive all its stability from Him shall rest at last in Himself alone. The first man's vow ended in ruin, and his forfeiture is made up and more than this by the substitution of the Second; in Him all the glory of God is fully and finally displayed; in Him too God and man at one forever, and united in His person, united by His precious work, now at last full satisfaction of heart is come, and this rest shall be eternal.

POWER IN THE MIDST OF EVIL.

THERE is a danger of being disheartened and "vexed" through the prevalence of evil, "Because of the abounding of iniquity, the love of many shall wax cold." How perfect the blessed Lord was in this! All was iniquity around Him, yet, in perfect communion with God, His spirit walked in peace, so that He could notice and recognize even all that was naturally lovely—the lily of the field—God's care of ravens—all that was of God here. But this is because He was perfectly near God (I speak of His mind as man); but, for the same reason, He judges perfectly man and all his thoughts and intents of heart.

But marriage is owned from the beginning—a child, in which simplicity, confidence, and undistrusting readiness of heart to believe, guilelessness, as not having learnt the world nor its vanity—beauty of character, when He looked on the young man who had displayed that character, He loved him; this is lovely, but the presence of God must try man—where was his heart? He went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. With the best dispositions and readiness to be taught, and plenty to make good use of, the state of the heart is found; “who then can be saved.” With man it is impossible, but then with God all things are possible. At the very outset, the Lord had shown him he was all on the wrong tack, seeking goodness in man—God only was good; the heart was detected—the cross alone would do, those who follow Him must take it up—death to what man was, the only path. But then there was a blessed starting-point for this, “He came to give His life a ransom for many.” (Mark x.)

The cross was first redemption, then the death of the flesh; and we are, for ourselves, to take up the cross, and, for others, to serve as Christ did. He had in this character, as now calling souls, only the cup to give—His baptism and His cup, though there was large, ample reward for those for whom it was prepared.

Then comes the reference of this question to the disciples' path. Where the flesh is not crucified, the world and Satan have power—they follow trembling, when He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem. There can be sincerity and blessing—Christ, the Son, revealed and holding fast by Him, but the flesh not subdued to the measure of that which we really believe, then there is fear and weakness, and it goes even to the point of being called Satan by the Lord. See the difference of Paul by the Holy Ghost—his righteousness, which was a gain to

him, was loss to him, he needed it not; had he any thing of this world? It was dung and dross, and followed—this one thing I do. If he had forty stripes save one, or despaired of life, he had the sentence of death in himself; he looked to a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory—a bright example of the power of grace and the Spirit, so as to have an undivided and so undistracted heart, and power with him as in Christ, a perfect example of the good which Paul had to imitate—a heart perfectly free in its own self; tested, indeed, but perfect, and so perfect with God that it could, as above all the evil around it, deeply as it was felt, see and recognize all that was of God.

It is wondrously full of instruction to see man's heart sifted, yet all good of God owned; that edge of the divine word, of the word of Christ, which can run its edge through all that to us is so mixed up;—nature and fallen nature—nature from God, and nature from man—and in perfect goodness in the midst of all, yet tell us plainly of the needed cross, and the grace of a needed redemption.

J. N. D.

A PILGRIM SONG.*

COME, children, on and forward!
 With us the Father goes;
 He leads us, and He guards us
 Through thousands of our foes:
 The sweetness and the glory,
 The sunlight of His eyes,
 Make all the desert places
 To glow as paradise.

Lo! through the pathless midnight
 The fiery pillar leads,

* From Mrs. Bevan's new book, "Sketches of the Quiet in the Land," now publishing.

And onward goes the Shepherd
Before the flock He feeds.
Unquestioning, unfearing,
The lambs may follow on,
In quietness and confidence,
Their eyes on Him alone.

Come, children, on and forward!
We journey hand in hand,
And each shall cheer his brother
All through the stranger-land.
And hosts of God's high angels
Beside us walk in white:
What wonder if our singing
Make music through the night?

Come, children, on and forward,
Each hour nearer home!
The pilgrim-days speed onward,
And soon the last will come.
All hail! O golden city!
How near the shining towers!
Fair gleams our Father's palace:
That radiant home is ours.

On! Dare and suffer all things!
Yet but a stretch of road,
Then wondrous words of welcome,
And then the Face of God.
The world, how small and empty!
Our eyes have looked on Him;
The mighty Sun has risen,
The taper burneth dim.

Far through the depths of heaven
Our Jesus leads His own—
The Mightiest and the Fairest,
Christ ever, Christ alone.
Led captive by His sweetness,
And dowered with His bliss,
Forever He is ours,
Forever we are His.

WHAT HAS THE BLOOD OF CHRIST DONE FOR US?

NO pen can write, no tongue can tell, what the bloodshedding of Jesus has accomplished. The wondrous fruits of that one sacrifice, both Godward and manward, are infinite in their variety. The intrinsic value of that blood has fully and fairly met all the claims of God—every demand of the law—and the whole need of man. It has laid a foundation, or rather, in itself forms *the* foundation for the full display, throughout eternity, for the glory of God and the complete blessedness of His people. Its virtue is felt throughout the highest heights of heaven, and appreciated there in a way that we can have no conception of here. But in due time its power shall be manifested throughout the whole universe. The vernal bloom of every leaf, and flower, and blade of grass—the playful lambkin, and the harmless lion—the reign of peace and plenty throughout the whole creation—in the day of His millennial glory, shall alike proclaim the redemption-power of the blood of the cross. And on the other hand, the awful consequences of sinners despising that precious blood shall be endured forever in the deepest depths of unutterable woe. Its power must be felt every where.

But to the *believer*, the *truster* in that precious blood, it has opened the pearly gates of heaven, and shut forever the gloomy gates of hell. It has quenched the flames of the burning lake, and opened up the everlasting springs of God's redeeming love. It has plucked him as a brand out of the fire, cleansed him from every stain of sin, and planted him in robes of unsullied brightness in the immediate presence of God.—*An Extract.*

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART II.—THE TRUMPETS.—Concluded.

The Witnesses. (Chap. xi. 1-14.)

THE last words of the preceding chapter receive their explanation from what we have seen to be the character of the little open book. If this be Old-Testament prophecy that is now "open," then we can see how John has at this point to "prophesy *again*," not "*before*," but "*over*,"—that is, "*concerning* many peoples and nations and tongues and kings." He is to take up the strain of the old prophets, not, of course, merely to echo their predictions, but to add to them a complementary and final testimony.

Accordingly we find now what carries us back to those prophecies of Daniel which were briefly reviewed in our introductory chapter. The mention of the "beast," and of the precise period of "forty-two months," or "twelve hundred and sixty days,"—that is, the half-week of his last or seventieth week, previous to the coming in of blessing for Israel and the earth, is by itself conclusive. This week we have seen to be, in fact, divided in this way by the taking away of the daily sacrifice in the midst of it (Dan. ix. 27). It is by this direct opposition to God also that the man of sin is revealed. Hence it would seem clear that it is with the last half of the week that we have here to do.

A reed like a staff is now given to the prophet that he may measure with it the temple of God. If a reed might suggest weakness, as in fact all that is of God lies at the time contemplated under such a reproach, the words, "like a staff" suggest the opposite thought.

God's care for his people implied in this measurement is to unbelief indeed a mystery, for they seem exposed to the vicissitudes of other men, yet is it a staff upon which one may lean with fullest confidence. *His* measurement of things abides, perfect righteousness and absolute truth, abiding necessarily as such.

The temple of God is, of course, the Jewish temple, and though not to be taken literally, still, as all its connections here assure us, stands for Jewish worship, and not Christian, though a certain application, as in the historical interpretation, need not be denied. The altar, as distinct from the temple proper, is, I believe, the altar of burnt-offering, upon which, indeed, for Israel, all depended. It was there God met with the people (Ex. xxix. 43), although, as we contemplate things here, the mass of the nation was in rejection, the court given up to the Gentiles,* the holy city to be trodden under foot by them, only a remnant of true worshipers acknowledged. It may be said that the altar of burnt-offering stood in the court; but the idea connected with each is different. The court, however, being given up, the worshipers recognized must have the sanctuary opened for them: in the rejection of the mass, God brings the faithful few nearer to Himself. This is His constant grace.

"And the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." The "holy city" can speak but of one city on earth; nor can there be justifiable doubts as to the place in prophecy of this half-week of desolation. The mixture of literal and figurative language will be no cause of stumbling to any one who has carefully considered the style of all these apocalyptic visions, which are evidently not intended to carry their significance upon their face. All must be fully weighed, must be self-con-

* Which shows, I think, that it is not the court of the Gentiles, which belonged to them of right.

sistent, and fitting into its place in connection with the whole prophetic plan. Thus alone can we have clearness and certainty as to interpretation.

As a man, then, who has been sunk in a long dream of sorrow, but to whom is now brought inspiring news of a joy in which he is called to have an active part,—as an Elijah at another Horeb after the wind and the earthquake and the fire have passed and He whom he had sought—the Lord—is not in these, but who is aroused at once by the utterance of the "still, small voice,"—so the prophet here is bidden to rise and measure the temple of God. Not so unlike, either, to the measure given to the elder prophet, of seven thousand men that had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. How speedy and thorough a relief when God is brought into the scene! and from what scene is He really absent? How animating, how courageous a thing, then, is faith that recognizes Him!

And where He is there must be a testimony to Him. We find it, therefore, immediately in this case: "And I will give power unto My two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand, two hundred, and threescore days clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks which stand before the Lord of the earth."

The reference is plain to Zechariah (chap. iv.), but there are also differences which are plain. There it is the thing itself accomplished, to which here there is but testimony, and in humiliation, though there is power to maintain it, spite of all opposition, till the time appointed. The witnesses are identified with their testimony—that to which they bear witness. Hence the resemblance. They stand before the Lord of the earth,—the One to whom the earth belongs, to maintain His claim upon it; in sackcloth, because their claim is resisted; a sufficient

testimony in the power of the Spirit, a spiritual light amidst the darkness, but which does not banish darkness.

"And if any man desireth to hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies; and if any man shall desire to hurt them, in this manner must he be killed. These have power to shut the heaven that it rain not during the days of their prophecy; and they have power over the waters, to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague as often as they shall desire."

Here is not the grace of Christianity, but the ministry of power after the manner of Elijah and of Moses: judgment which must come because grace has been ineffectual, and of which the issue shall be in blessing, for "when Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness." (Isa. xxvi. 9.)

The association of Elijah with Moses, which is evident here, of necessity reminds us of their association also on the mount of transfiguration, wherein, as a picture, was presented "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. i. 16-18.) They are here in the same place of attendance upon their coming Lord. It does not follow, however, that they are personally present, as some have thought, and that the one has had preserved to him, the other will have restored to him, his *mortal* body for that purpose.

The preservation to Elijah of a *mortal* body in heaven seems a thought weird and unscriptural enough, with all its necessary suggestions also. But the closing prophecy of the Old Testament does announce the sending of Elijah the prophet before the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Is not this proof that so he must come?

Naturally, one would say so; but our Lord's words as to John the Baptist, on the other hand,—“If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come,”—raise

question. It has been answered that his own words deny that he was really Elias, and that Israel did not receive him, and so John could not be Elias to them. Both things are true, and yet do not seem satisfactory as argument. That he was not Elias literally, only shows, or seems to show, that one who was not Elias *could*, under certain conditions, have fulfilled the prediction. While other words of the Lord—"I say unto you that Elias is come already, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed"—show even more strongly that for that day and generation he was Elias. Why, then, could not another, coming in his spirit and power, fulfill the prophecy in the future day?

This Revelation seems to confirm, inasmuch as it speaks of *two* witnesses who are both marked as possessing the spirit and power of Elias, and who stand on an equal footing as witnesses for God. Had it been one figure before the eyes here, it would have been more natural to say it is Elias himself; but here are two doing his work, nor can we think of a possible third behind and unnoticed and yet the real instrument of God in this crisis. The *two* form this Elias ministry, which is to recall the hearts of the fathers to the children, and of the children to the fathers, and who both lay down their lives as the seal of their testimony. Put all this together, and does it not seem as if Elias appeared in others raised up of God and indued with His Spirit, to complete the work for which he was raised up in Israel?

Much more would all this hinder the reception of the thought of any personal appearance of Moses, while there is no prediction at all of any such thing. Jude's words (which have been adduced) as to the contention of Michael with Satan about the body of the lawgiver may well refer to the fact that the Lord had buried

him, and no man knew of his sepulchre. Satan may well, for his own purposes, have desired to make known his grave, just as God in His wisdom chose to hide it.

Yet the appearance of Moses and Elias in connection with the appearing of the Lord, as seen on the mount of transfiguration, seems none the less to connect itself with these two witnesses and their work,—both caught away in like manner into *the* "cloud," as the twelfth verse ought to read. And Malachi, just before the declaration of the mission of Elias, bids them, on God's part, "remember the law of Moses My servant." Moses must do his work as well as Elias; for it is upon their turning in heart to the law of Moses that their blessing in the last days depends; and thus we find the power of God acting in their behalf in the likeness of what He wrought upon Egypt: the witnesses "have power over waters, to turn them to blood." It is not that Moses is personally among them, but that Moses is in this way witnessing for them; and so the vials after this emphatically declare.

God thus, during the whole time of trouble and apostasy, preserves a testimony for Himself, until at the close the final outrage is permitted which brings down speedy judgment. For "when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that cometh up out of the abyss shall make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called 'Sodom' and 'Egypt,' where also their Lord was crucified. And from among the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations do men look upon their dead bodies three days and a half, and suffer not their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. And they that dwell upon the earth rejoice over them and make merry; and they shall send gifts to one another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth. And after the three days and a half, the breath

of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which beheld them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, 'Come up hither.' And they went up into heaven in the cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell; and there were killed in the earthquake seven thousand persons: and the rest were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven."

If the twelve hundred and sixty days of the prophetic testimony agree with the last half of the closing week of Daniel, they coincide with the time of the beast's permitted power, and the death of the witnesses is his last political act. That a certain interval of time should follow before his judgment, which takes place under the *third* and not the second woe, does not seem to conflict with chap. xiii. 5, where it should read, "power was given unto him to *practice*"—not "continue,"—"forty and two months." The last act of tyranny may have been perpetrated in the slaying of the witnesses; and indeed it seems a thing fitted to be the close of power of this kind permitted him. With this the storm-cloud of judgment arises, which smites him down shortly after.

If, however, the duration of the testimony be for the *first* half of the week, then the power of the beast begins with the slaughter of the witnesses, and the three and a half years' tribulation *follows*, which does not seem to consist with the judgment and its effects three and a half days afterward. Then, too, "the second woe is past" (v. 14), and the third announces the kingdom of Christ as having *come*. But we shall yet consider this more closely when we come, if the Lord will, to the interpretation of the vials.

Here, then, for the first time, the beast out of the abyss comes plainly into the scene. In Daniel, and in Rev. xiii,

he does not come out of the abyss, but out of the sea; but in the seventeenth chapter he is spoken of as "about to come up out of the abyss," showing undeniably that it is the same "beast" as Daniel's fourth one,—the Roman empire. In the first case, as coming out of the sea, it has a common origin with the other three empires—the Babylonian, Persian, and Grecian—out of the heaving deep of Gentile nations. Then we find in Revelation what from Daniel we should never have expected, but what in fact has certainly taken place,—that the empire which is to meet its judgment at the coming of the Lord does not continue uninterruptedly in power till then. There is a time in which it ceases to be,—and we can measure this time of non-existence already by centuries,—and then it comes back again in a peculiar form, as from the dead: "the beast that was and is not, and shall be present." (Chap. xvii. 8.) This rising again into existence we would naturally take as its coming up out of the abyss,—out of the death state,—and think that we were at the bottom of the whole matter. The truth seems to be not quite so simple, but here is not the place to go into it further.

For the present, it is enough to say that the coming up out of the abyss is in fact a revival out of the death state, but, as a comparison with the fifth trumpet may suggest, revival by the dark and demon-influences which are there represented as in attendance upon the angel of the abyss. It is the one in whom is vested the power of the revived empire who concentrates the energy of his hatred against God in the slaying of the witnesses.

The place of their death is clearly Jerusalem: "Their dead bodies lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called 'Sodom' and 'Egypt,' *where also their Lord was crucified.*" Certainly no other place could be so defined: and thus defined and characterized for its lusts as Sodom, for its cruelty to the people of God as

Egypt, it is not now called the “holy,” but the “great” city,—great even in its crimes. In its street their bodies lie, exposed by the malice of their foes which denies them burial, but allowed by God as the open indictment of those who have thus definitively rejected His righteous rule. The race of the prophets is at an end, which has tormented them with their claim of the world for God; and the men of the earth rejoice, and send gifts to one another. Little do they understand that when His testimony is at an end, there is nothing left but for God Himself to come in and to manifest a power before which man’s power shall be extinguished as flax before the flame.

And the presage of this quickly follows. “And after the three days and a half, the breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which beheld them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, ‘Come up hither.’ And they went up into heaven in the cloud; and their enemies beheld them.”

If this is the time of the addition of the saints martyred under the beast’s persecution to the first resurrection, of which the vision in the twentieth chapter speaks, then it is plain that we are arrived at the end of the beast’s power against the saints, and of the last week of Daniel. “Two” is the number of valid testimony (Jno. viii. 17), and these two witnesses may, in a vision like that before us, stand for many more,—nay, for this whole martyred remnant in Israel. We cannot say it *is* so, but we can as little say it is *not* so; and even the suggestion has its interest: for thus this appendix to the sixth trumpet seems designed to put in place the various features of Daniel’s last week, the details of which are opened out to us in the seven chapters following, with many additions. And this we might expect in a connected chain of

prophecy which stretches on to the end; for under the seventh trumpet the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of His Christ, and the "time of the dead to be judged" is at least contemplated.

The resurrection of the witnesses is not all: a great earthquake follows, "and the tenth part of the city fell; and there were killed in the earthquake seven thousand persons; and the rest were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven."

Thus the sixth trumpet ends in a convulsion in which judgment takes, as it were, the refused tithe from a rebellious people. There is a marked similarity here between the trumpets and the vials, which end also in an earthquake and judgment of the great city: as to which we may see further in its place. The rest that are not slain give glory to the God of heaven. It is the unacceptable product of mere human fear, which has no practical result; for God is claiming the *earth*, not simply heaven, and for the affirmation of this claim His witnesses have died. They can allow Him heaven who deny Him earth. And judgment takes its course.

The second woe ends with this, and the third comes quickly after it.

The Kingdom. (Chap. xi. 15-18.)

The third woe is the coming of the kingdom!

Yes; that to greet which the earth breaks out in gladness, the morning without clouds, the day which has no night, and the fulfillment of the first promise which fell upon man's ears when he stood a naked sinner before God to hear his doom, the constant theme of prophecy now swelling into song and now sighed out in prayer, that kingdom is yet, to the "dwellers upon earth," the last and deepest woe.

The rod of iron is now to smite, and omnipotence it is

that wields it. "And the seventh angel sounded, and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, 'The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever.'"

Few words and concise, but how pregnant with blessed meaning! The earth that has rolled from its orbit is reclaimed; judgment has returned to righteousness; He who has learned for Himself the path of obedience in a suffering which was the fruit of tender interest in man has now Himself the sceptre; nor is there any power that can take it out of His hand.

There are no details yet: simply the announcement, which the elders in heaven answer with adoration, prostrate upon their faces, saying, "We give Thee thanks, O Lord God the Almighty, who art and who wast, that Thou hast taken Thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were' angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead to be judged, and to give their reward to Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear Thy name, small and great; and to destroy them that destroy the earth."

There is nothing difficult here in the way of interpretation, except that the "time of the dead to be judged" seems to come with the period of the earthly judgments which introduce millennial blessing. We find in the twentieth chapter full assurance that this is not to be. The explanation is that we have here the setting up of the kingdom in its full results, and that the *order* is one of thought and not of time. The judgments of the quick (or living) and of the dead are both implied in the reign of our Lord and of His Christ, though they are not executed together. God's wrath is mentioned first, because it is for the earth the pre-requisite of blessing, and because judgment is not what He rests in, but in His

love. It is therefore put first, that the realization of the blessing may come after, and not give place to it. But this wrath of God which meets and quells the nations' wrath goes on and necessitates the judgment of the dead also. Death is no escape from it: the coming One has the keys of death and hades.

With this the holiness of God is satisfied, and the love in which He rests is free to show itself in the reward of prophets and saints, and those who fear His name, little as well as great. This seems as general in its aspect as the judgment of the dead on the other side unquestionably is. The foremost mention of the prophets, as those who have stood for God in testimony upon the earth, is in perfect keeping with the character of the whole book before us. And the destruction of those who destroy the earth is not noticed here apparently as judgment so much as to assure us of the reparation of the injury to that which came out of His hands at first, and in which He has never ceased to have tender interest, despite the permitted evil of "man's day."

(To be continued.)

GOD'S LOVE, GRATUITOUS AND MOTIVE.

"If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." (Can. viii. 7.)

THE pride of man's foolish heart is ever carrying him away from the grace sent to him in Jesus, which must meet him as a beggar—helpless and undone, to some requirement that he may satisfy, which will, as he thinks, enable him to meet God on better terms; or, he does away with the richness of the grace, and makes it inefficient to meet his real necessities, and then strives to make up the inefficiency by his own change of con-

duct. On the other hand, the soul taught of God is taught its entire helplessness, (not merely to avow it with the lips, but to know it in the experienced weakness and wickedness of the heart,) but it is taught also to turn away from this to the brightness of grace, that has reached it in its wickedness, and met it in the truth of its condition, evil as it was, with the full consolation, the desperate necessity of that condition sought—Jesus made unto it of God, “wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.”

That man is ever attempting to make God as ungenerous as himself—to limit the greatness of His gifts by his own unbelief, and thus to dim the glory of His abounding grace, is not only the necessary result, but the proof, of the unchangeable evil of his heart. It is this, simply this, which has driven the Church into the world, lowering the standard of obedience to the habits of its new associates. Vain would be the search of that man who might try, in the pride of his heart, to bring evidence from the word of truth that any one other motive but love was reckoned on there to bring back to God and guide in His ways the heart of a self-willed and wayward sinner.

There can be no union with God, in thought or act, save in love; “He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love.” (1 Jno. iv. 7, 8.) A service of constraint is no service to God. Any thing that would impede the flow of the living waters—the fresh streams of love, peace, and joy into the weary heart of a God-fearing sinner, is just that which would hinder fruitfulness, and leave it a sterile and thorn-bearing thing still.

Now the scriptural word “sanctification” is a fair title assumed by error, and one so apparently authoritative in its claim, that many are led captive by it, who, while they feel and know their slavery, are unable to account for it.

"If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed" is the happy assurance of our Lord; and any thing that would limit the love He came to prove is but keeping fast the fetters that bind to earth, and holding us back from the happy, and therefore free, obedience of children. What is "sanctification" (as now used,) but uniting that which God has so graciously, so carefully, separated—salvation and its holy consequences?

If there is one statement of truth more clear than another in Scripture, and more uncompromising in the language in which it is put, it is this, *that redemption is exclusively the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, not that of the Holy Ghost.* That faith is the work of the Holy Spirit is another question. As a Saviour, and a perfect Saviour, putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, Jesus says, Look unto ME, and be ye saved. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (Jno. iii. 14, 15.) If what is so extensively termed "sanctification" (*i. e.* progressive advancement in holiness) is necessary to salvation, it might well be asked, How much would do? He who knows God, will know also that he must be as perfect as He is perfect, or neither God nor himself could be satisfied. But not only is this robbing the cross of Jesus of its power, and making His blood inefficient, but, as its result, (how completely, in this as in every thing, is wisdom justified of her children!) we have nothing but an unhappy and an unfruitful Church, hardly knowing whether it is saved or not, knowing enough of itself to understand that it comes short of God's glory; and therefore, to get itself into peace, (as looking to sanctification and not to Christ,) it must reduce the standard of obedience, bringing down God's character, that it may, somehow, come up to it, and so be satisfied with itself. Thus

the ingenuity of unbelief will torture the simplicity of God's Word into something that will impose a burden, when God's love has sought to remove it; and those who are thus self-tasked, or taught by another gospel than that of full and unconditional love, have to run in fetters, with the brightness of the prize for which they contend obscured by intervening clouds of fear and doubt as to God's willingness to bestow it on them. But *thus saith the Lord*. "Whosoever believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (Jno. iii. 36.)* The whole Word, in its testimony to the Lord Jesus, speaks of Him as manifesting God as a Saviour; and it is in the face of this that the troubled spirit gets peace, not to be found elsewhere. It sees the God it feared, becoming, in His love to the sinner, the sinner's Saviour, and therefore it has confidence toward God: for who can doubt, if God becomes a Saviour, the perfectness of the salvation? Its completeness is the soul's security; and faith in it, as perfect and complete, gives peace, *and instant peace* too. It was thus the gospel (which is "glad tidings"—the expression of God's love to sinners as sinners,) was received when it was first believed on in the world. "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*" was the Spirit's reply to the trembling jailer (Acts xvi.), and he rejoiced in God. Philip "preached unto him Jesus" and the believing Ethiopian "went on his way rejoicing."

That salvation, then, is utterly irrespective of what we have been, or of what we are, or of the measure of sanctity we may attain, is, and must be, the conclusion of the heart that trembles at God's word. The simple fact that "*God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us,*" is the proof that

* See also 1 Jno. v. 11, 12; Jno. v. 24; xx. 31; Mark xvi. 15, 16; Acts xvi. 1; xlii. 38, 39; Rom. iii. 20, 28; iv. 8-8, 21-26; v. 8-11, 18-20; x. 4-13; 2 Cor. 19-21; Heb. x. 5-18.

nothing but unbelief can hinder any sinner's participation in all the rich blessings God has to bestow. What is sin but estrangement of heart from and disobedience to the authority of Him who proved, by the gift of His Son to those who were so estranged and in open rebellion against Him, that though sin was reigning unto death, His grace could reign triumphantly above all sin?

In the death of the Lord Jesus Christ we learn what God is to sinners as sinners. "Without shedding of blood is no remission" *of sin*. (Heb. ix. 22.) Death is the wages of sin: death was the portion of Jesus, therefore, as made sin for us.

It is the blood of Jesus *alone* that cleanseth from all sin (1 Jno. i. 7): it is by the blood of Jesus *alone* we have boldness of access into the holiest (Heb. x. 19): it is by the blood of Jesus *alone*, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot unto God, that our consciences are purged from dead works to serve the living God (Heb. ix.).

Here, then, is our secure, our only, resting-place: the blood of the holy Lamb. If the Spirit beareth witness to the sinner, it is to show the cross as his salvation; to the saved sinner, indeed, He reveals glory, far deeper glory, in the face of the crucified One, as well as the glory of the inheritance (Jno. xvi.); but in imparting peace to the conscience,—in delivering from the dread of death and of God's anger, the testimony is one and unvaried—*Jesus delivered* for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. He who believes this is saved. Let him come ever so exalted in the evident favor of God, to that must he recur for his peace and salvation,—"*Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*"

Nor is this merely a pardon given in dependence on future obedience. Alas! to those who know how their

service is hindered by the heavy bondage of a sinful body—how the flesh ever “lusteth against the Spirit,”—who know that all their obedience, while so hindered, is, in God's estimate, “unprofitableness,” (surely, unprofitableness can be no claim to heaven,) where would be the joy? Oh how would man pervert God's liberal and most wondrous grace! how does he ever try to escape the full blessing of being saved altogether by grace, in his ignorance of that God who, having not spared His Son, but delivered Him up for us all, will with Him freely give us all things! (Rom. viii. 32.) What saith the Lord? “There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus,” etc. (Rom. viii. 1.) One with Him who hath died unto sin once, and over whom death hath no more dominion, the believer is called on to reckon himself dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God; as knowing that his old man is crucified with him; baptized unto His death, and raised with Him again to walk in newness of life; dead, and therefore freed from sin. (Rom. vi. 1-7.) It is in the knowledge of the true position of freedom into which he is put before God, as one with Christ, where He is at the right hand of God, that he is enabled to overcome sin in his daily and hourly conflict. Faith in the perfect victory of Jesus over all that was man's enemy is the alone power by which we can become victors too.

It is the freedom of the happy spirit abiding in a Father's love which alone can give power to serve Him who is love; and upon this rests all the instruction of our Lord, delivering, by the power of that name—“Father,” from every bondage, freeing from every other master—man, the world, the flesh, the devil, and all the anxious cares of our fearful and doubting hearts—into the energy of spirit by which alone we can serve in newness of life; being careful for nothing, taking no thought

for the morrow, with the eye single in its object, the heart single in its subjection and service, having no master but Christ, no object but His glory, having present fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, led by the Spirit of God, abiding in Christ, and having, as so abiding, His peace and joy. (Jno. xvi. 27.)

Jesus came to declare the Father. He spake not from Himself; He was the Father's Servant. So the Holy Ghost is the Servant of the risen Jesus. He takes the things of Christ and shows them to us. Whether it be the first entering into the sheepfold by that Spirit's quickening, or subsequent increasing power over the world, the flesh, and the devil, the witness is the same—*"the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."* (2 Cor. iv. 4.) Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory. (2 Cor. iii. 18.) However mighty the work, the object of faith is the same as to the weakest believer—Jesus, and not what He (the Spirit) is doing in the believer's heart.

Oh, yes! the heart must love ere it will serve Him readily,—it must know His mind and will ere it can serve Him faithfully; but it can only love Him as knowing where His love is seen—in Jesus; it can only serve Him *truly* as knowing Him who did serve Him faultlessly and faithfully in this same world. All is the witness of the Spirit; but Jesus, the exhibiter of the love which wins the heart—Jesus, the faithful Servant—is that to which He testifies.

It is a wonderful thing that God should bring the heart of a poor, proud, self-seeking man into delight with that which is utterly opposite to every feeling of flesh. And how tenderly and graciously He does it! He does not say, "Give up the world—deny thyself—crucify the flesh—become abased" (that would be hard indeed, though it

would be righteous; and we all know those who have fancied He has so said, and they have tried every self-inflicted penance and monkish austerity, but the world was loved still, self was the only object of exaltation through it all). He speaks in gentleness, and tells us of the greatness of His love in the midst of our alienation and rebellion,—tells us He loves us, though our hearts are worldly and proud, and our practices selfish and base, and wins us by this love. The testimony of Jesus is the story of this love—the proof of God's love to the sinning man, the ungodly, the proud, the worldly man; the proof that sin was not a sufficient barrier to shut out love,—that it has broken that down, and can now flow unchecked into the sinful heart. The heart where this is credited, and therefore received, must return an answer of love, and will know, surely know, that God asks nothing from us to prove our love but what will secure to us increased and increasing peace and joy. It is grace the sinner wants, for that alone can be the connecting link between him and God; and where is the grace but in Jesus humbled, broken-hearted, and crucified? This is where God has come down to the sinner, and the sinner's stepping-place to get back to God; the hand of God stretched out to us in our wretchedness, lifting us up again to Himself, and clasping us to His heart. In truth, there can be no service to God except by the sweet constraint of love. The obedience of heaven is the obedience of love, for there can be nothing but love there; there is only one will there—obedience to that will is the unity and harmony of heaven. The results of self-will are clear enough around us in the full tide of misery which is flowing over this rebellious world. It is the same power which rules in heaven, reaching, by the Spirit's presence, the heart of a self-willed sinner, that brings it to subjection, and gives (when it has the mastery there,) the

joy of heaven, freeing it from its many turbulent and unrighteous masters, and giving it but One, and that One—Love, for God is love.

The more, then, this love is known, and shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us, the more constrained will the heart be to this happy service, because it will thus judge, that "if one died for all, then were all dead, and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again."

And oh! where is it that we get daily strength but in tracing the love and the glory that can be only seen in the Father's righteous Servant, whose service was both to the Father and to us? Every step so traced will unravel the depths of that grace which has given the heart its peace, and assured it of everlasting glory. And it is this, it is this, that the Holy Ghost does engrave day by day, deeper and deeper, on the willing heart of the believer, showing him his Lord—Him who was in the beginning, with God, and was God, but "who was made flesh, and dwelt among us;"—marking the circumstances of evil which surrounded Him from His birth onward, and so the untiring love which could not be overcome by those circumstances, but which shone the brighter, and showed its depths the more, as it was scorned and trampled on, while pressing on in its might through them all, to finish that work which alone could meet the necessities of the sinner. It is not the cross only, but the character of the evil, which in its power overwhelmed the Lamb of God, and the unconquered compassion which ever shone forth from Him on the darkness which surrounded and would have quenched it,—the every day's pitying endurance of the "contradiction of sinners against Himself," even to the moment when the readiness of His heart to bless was seen in the prompt reply of forgiveness to him who had

reviled Him during His bitterest agony on the cross. (Comp. Matt. xxvii. 44 with Luke xxiii. 43.) It is this that shows the depth of the love,—a love that existed ever, a love that ordained the Victim, that gave the Victim (and that Victim His only Son) to and for those who hated and disregarded both the Giver and the Gift.*

He who delights to trace the steps of Jesus in this grief-stricken world will see in every step the holiness, the moral glory, and the love of the unseen God made manifest to him in a form that he can apprehend.

Oh, yes! it is knowing God in Jesus—in all the exquisite detail of His most dignified yet condescending love—a love that could and that did descend to the depths of degradation and shame, to minister its sweet consolation to the wretchedness of its object,—that came into a world of sin and sorrow, not to be ministered unto, but to minister; to be the lowest and the poorest, to be associated with the most needy and despised of men—the leper, the publican, and the Samaritan; giving His back to the smiters, His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; “learning obedience by the things that He suffered;” taking part in our sufferings, that, when perfected in His lesson of love, He might be a sympathizing Intercessor for those whose companion in sorrow He had become. It is this—the weakness of Jesus, the poverty of Jesus, the depths of poverty both of spirit and of circumstances—that shows us how far His love can reach,

* It is not, as some suppose, that the necessity of the sacrifice of Jesus is lessened by the assertion here made that God loved us as sinners, and the sacrifice was but the proof of that love. No, but while nothing but the complete erasure of every charge, the cleansing from all sin, could bring the sinner back to God, with boldness into the holiest of all, yet it was a previous, exhaustless, and self-existing love, which expressed itself to the sinner it loved in the very way the sinner needed it,—by giving him that which would answer his necessities to the full. God loved the sinner and *therefore* found him the sacrifice he needed. And oh! God so loved the sinner that He spared not His well-beloved Son to be the sacrifice.

and what that love would do to bless its object,—that shows us God.

Upon the ground of the soul's present and perfect salvation by the blood of Jesus the believer stands to meet the practical question of following Him, as made even now, by His gratuitous grace, free and ready to serve Him in love, as having but *one* object—that of showing forth His praises in the world that rejected and still rejects Him. There will be no singularity in the confession of the name of Jesus in heaven; none will be ashamed of Him or of His words there; He will be fully glorified and admired there. But it is here, in "this present evil world," in the midst of a crooked and perverse people, that the sinner separated by the blood of the Lamb to all blessing is called on to stand forth and declare how Jesus "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

THE WELL ON THE WAY.

"And from thence they went to Beer: that is the well whereof the Lord spake unto Moses, 'Gather the people together, and I will give them water.' Then Israel sang this song: 'Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it. The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the lawgiver, with their staves.'" (Num. xxi. 16, 18.)

SPRING up! spring up, O well!
 Hard-digged (divinely given),
 With staff in hand, out the dry sand,
 By journeyings on to Canaan's land;
 Foretaste of heaven,
 Spring up! spring up, O well!

Amid those distant hills
 The water-brooks run down;
 River and rill the valleys fill,
 And the glad land the Lord doth till,
 With plenty crown.
 Spring up! spring up, O well!

Saviour from thralldom past,
 God of the promised land,
 Thy desert love, here, here, we prove !
 Boasting in Thee, we'd onward move,
 Till there we stand.
 Spring up ! spring up, O well !

GLORIES.

THERE will be a scene of glories when the kingdom comes. We commonly speak of "glory" as if it stood in that connection only. But this is wrong. Glory then will be displayed, it is true ; glory will then be in the circumstances of the scene. But a much more wonderful form of glory is known already—and that is, in the gospel. There God Himself is displayed ; a more wondrous object than all circumstances. The glory of the gospel is *moral*, I grant, not material or circumstantial. But it is glory of the profoundest character. There, again I say, God Himself is displayed. The just God and yet the Saviour is seen there. Righteousness and peace shine there in each other's company—a result which none but God Himself, and in the way of the cross, could ever have reached.

The gospel calls on sinners to breathe the atmosphere, as I may say, of salvation, to have communion with God in love, and to maintain it in liberty and assurance—and there is a glory in such thoughts and truths as these which indeed excelleth.

Satan interfered or meddled with the work of God, and ruined it in its creature-condition. God at once interfered or meddled with Satan's work, and eternally overthrew it, bringing meat out of the eater, and sweetness out of the strong.

The three earliest receivers of God's gospel—Adam, Eve, and Abel—strikingly illustrate souls that apprehend the glory of the gospel in different features of it.

Adam was blessedly, wondrously emboldened by it, so that at the bidding of it, he came forth at once from his guilty covert and entered the presence of God again,

naked as he was. And his boldness was warranted, for he was welcomed there. Eve exulted in it. She sang over it. "I have gotten a man from the Lord," said she—in the joy of the promise that had been made her touching her Seed.

Abel offered the "fat" with the victim. He entered with happiest, brightest intelligence into the promise, and saw that the Giver of it would find His own blessed delight in it,—that the gospel, while it saved the sinner, was the joy as well as the glory of God. The fat on the altar expressed this.

And such apprehensions of Christ as these—the faith that gives boldness—the faith that inspires with joy—the faith that penetrates the cross—are full of power in the soul,—(*From "Short Meditations," by J. G. Bellett.*)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 21.—"Can you give any light upon 1 Cor. i. 18—'But unto us who *are being* saved, it is the power of God'? (*R.V.*) King James's version gives "are saved." My Greek New Testament confirms the rendering of the Revised Version. Will you please give what you consider authority? Does not the rendering of the Revised Version clash with the truth of a known present salvation?"

Ans.—There is no doubt about the reading: all manuscripts agree. It is the present participle passive, and may well be rendered as the Revised Version, though the American revisers put it in the margin, and restore the old translation in the text. There is really no question of doctrine, however, as, being in the plural, it simply speaks of the *successive* salvation of the individuals of this class,—“To us who are being saved [one after another].” This, of course, in no wise denies the completeness of the salvation to one who has received it, but only affirms that the salvation of men at large is not complete. Grace is adding to their number day by day.

At the same time, it is true also that, as to the individual, his salvation is not in *every* sense complete. From guilt and condemnation it is, but there is a salvation which we work out day by day (Phil. ii. 12, 13), as well as one we shall receive when the Lord comes (1 Pet. i. 5).