

# HELP AND FOOD

FOR THE

Household of Faith.

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Vol. XXII.

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# KING SAUL : THE MAN AFTER THE FLESH.

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## PART II. THE KING OF MAN'S CHOICE.

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### Chapter x. SAUL'S FOOLISH OATH.

(1 Sam. xiv. 23-46.)

SAUL, having taken charge, soon turns a glorious victory into a very limited one, and, instead of the joy of conflict in God's cause, gives the people heavy hearts. He occupies them with himself rather than God, and pronounces a curse upon any who may taste food until *his* enemies are overthrown. He does not see God and His honor, and accordingly all takes color from this. He makes the hearts of the people sad at the very moment when they should be experiencing "the joy of the Lord."

Poor Saul! Even his religion is a gloomy, selfish thing. Like the elder brother in the parable, his service to his Father is unaccompanied even by the joy of a kid, and his friends are confessedly not his Father's. All legality is like this; self is the centre and not God; and where this is the case, what can there be but depression? And its misery and discomfort is all that such a soul has to share with others. What a libel upon God's love! what a misrepresentation of Him in whose presence there is fulness of joy!

But let us again remember that Saul stands not merely for individuals, but for that principle of the flesh which is present even in the true children of God. The flesh is legal and selfish. When it intrudes into the things of God, it can only mar them.

It turns the grace of God into legal claims, and even in hours of spiritual triumph would occupy the soul with itself. It has no discrimination, and would put into one common class things essentially evil and those harmless or helpful. But a little while before Saul had been glaringly disobedient to God; he now goes to the other extreme, and would command "to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."

Fasting has its place in the realm of grace as in law, but not the place given to it by legalism. Where abstinence from food is the unstudied, undemanded act of a soul absorbed with the things of God, it has a place. One might abstain from food to avoid distraction, or, in fact, because his mind is controlled by other things. But to make fasting a merit, or even to regard it as a means of grace, is to put it in somewhat the position in which Saul put it here.

See the disaster that results from this legalism. The people are passing through a wood loaded with honey. It is at their hands, just lying in their path. Jonathan, without taking his eye off the enemy, dips his staff in the honey, tastes, and is refreshed. With renewed vigor he can speed after the flying foe. When told of his father's oath, Jonathan truly characterizes the folly of it: "My father hath troubled the land." For nothing is so distracting as the legalism of the flesh.

Let us remember, too, that under plea of conscience, a morbid self-righteousness may impose its claims upon oneself and others till liberty and joy give place to groans and bondage. As we have al-

they have been bound by mere human fetters, and have lost heart. The fear of God has left them, and they fall upon the prey and violate the first principle of sacrificial law—that all blood belonged to God. This brings in genuine defilement. The pouring out of blood (Deut. xii. 23, 24) was ever a sort of fore-shadow of that Sacrifice of "richer blood" one day to be shed. To ignore all this is defilement indeed; and this is what carnal asceticism will, by reaction, produce.

Saul here, at least outwardly, would preserve divine order, and recalls the people to the sacredness of blood. In this connection too he builds his first altar.

But the end of self-righteousness has not been reached. God has yet to put His finger upon the folly of this oath of Saul. The king proposes, and the people agree, to go down by night and spoil their enemies. But the priest suggests turning to God and seeking His mind. "Let us draw near hither to God"—a good word surely for us at all times.

And now God speaks—first, indeed, by silence, showing that it is of more importance to Him that His people should be right in their hearts than that they should pursue their enemies. This silence meant, as they knew, that some offense had been committed, and Saul rightly connects it with the oath he had imposed upon the people. But he did not yet know who the guilty person was, nor how. Like Jephthah of old, he is ready to sacrifice his child, and persuade himself he is pleasing God.

God permits all to be brought about as though Jonathan were the guilty one. The machinery, if we may so say, of the lot works out for Saul, and

points at his son. And in the madness of his folly the poor king would go to the last extreme, and cut off the only man of independent faith among them.

How beautifully Jonathan shows here! He does not accuse his father, nor speak of the harshness of the oath. He frankly acknowledges his act, though he does not confess a sin. Indeed, his words imply the reverse: "I did but taste a little honey and I must die!" How manifestly at variance with God's thoughts was such an ending to this bright life! And yet Saul is still blind. With another oath he declares Jonathan has spoken his own doom: "God do so, and more also; for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan." What can be done for a man who brings in God to carry out his own self-will, and thinks the deliverer of Israel is a malefactor? Is it not like the fatuity of the Jews at a later day, and that other Saul, of Tarsus, who invoked God's approval upon the murder of His Son, and of His people?

Saul is beyond reach, and God must interpose in another way. The people, who had so lately been demanding a king, must now withstand him. Poor Saul's authority vanishes before the hot words of a justly outraged sentiment: "Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground, for he hath wrought with God this day." Saul is incorrigible. We do not even hear of acquiescence, nor of resistance. In sullen silence all conflict with the Philistines is abandoned, and they are permitted to return to their own territory. It has only been Jonathan's victory, and Saul has done all he could to spoil it.

We need hardly draw the evident lessons as to

the flesh here. It has neither discernment of God's will, nor mercy upon those manifestly with Him. It will turn victory into defeat, put divinely given authority to public shame by its extravagance, and turn joy into mourning and indignation. We need not go back to Israel's history for examples of this ; our own hearts will furnish us with these. Oh, in how many homes has this harsh legalism broken divinely given authority ! and in how many cases has the very name of discipline become a stench because of this fleshly pretension ! Need we be surprised if in such cases "the people" rise and speak ?

*(To be continued.)*

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## OUR WARRIORSHIP IN A DAY OF DECLINE AND APOSTASY.

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### A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

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**I**T is the ripening condition of final apostasy that Jude clearly sets before us, and shows, indeed, the depth even in his day to which the "mystery of iniquity" was already working in the midst of the Church. We find therefore that ensuing conflict characterizes the way ; and at the opening of his epistle he gives us the warrior character. We are "to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints" (ver. 3). The application of this to the present day hardly needs to be stated ; it is self-evident. The growing departure from God and His Word presses upon us the necessity of being earnest contenders for the precious testimony committed into our hands.

First of all, our position is set before us. We are

the "called ones" (J. N. D.) of God. This clearly gives us our standing before Him. It brings us the thought of His *foreknowledge*, and that if He foreknew us (Rom. viii. 29), He accordingly called us, having before Him a *predestination* marked out for us which is given in several aspects in Scripture (Rom. viii. 30; Eph. i. 5, 10-12; 1 Peter i. 2). This is all implied for us in being called ones; for it is those concerning whom God has counseled all this blessing that He has called. "Beloved in God the Father" is relationship. It is what marks our position as called by Him; in Him we are beloved. Preservation in Christ Jesus, which follows, gives us the eternal security of all this. If it is in Him we stand for preservation, there is no fear of coming short. It is the perfection of His finished work that is the basis of this, as we well know.

But now, if this be our position, we are also in identification with the truth so that it is a "common salvation;" that is, common to all those who are in real connection with the truth, identified with it through the communication of the life which permeates its whole structure.

And this being so, he gives us the warrior character. We are to be the defenders of the faith common to us, and *once* delivered to the saints. The word "once" is important. It stamps with its true character anything that might come after as mere pretension of being that faith. The faith we are to contend for has been once delivered, and no addition can be made, and from it nothing must be taken.

Anything that comes after, pretending to be in the least degree any addition, must be false—in fact, a wedge the enemy is seeking to introduce. This

same can be said as to anything that in any way detracts from it. And this once-for-all delivery of the faith we have, of course, in the completed word of God, so that we can truly say with the prophet of old, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. viii. 20).

The pregnant reason for the contention to which we are called, is that the enemy has come in, and his intention is to fight to destroy the faith. Their character is that of Antichrist, marked at once by the denial of "our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ" (ver. 4). With John we can say, "Even now are there many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time" (1 John ii. 18). The history of the Church of God is not wanting in the evidence of this as truth; and in the present day it is incontestable that such have crept in amongst the people of God. The continual spectacle in professing christendom of all classes of men seeking to lower the standard of the truth, once held with the strongest tenacity, has become a familiar sight. Against such our attitude is that of warriors who fight in defense of the faith they seek to overthrow. We *must* fight if we are to hold fast what we have and allow no man to take our crown. Evil is always an *offensive* power, which if defeated in one attack will surely take up operations against another point.

But before entering upon our warfare, the character of the enemy is laid bare, and we are given those unmistakable evidences which will awaken us to the fact of his presence in our midst.

First of all, they are put in the place of identity with those who have come under the wrath of God

(vers. 5-10). We see by the first example given in connection with Israel that they consist of those who are in the place of profession and privilege, but whose true character is sooner or later manifested in declared unbelief and rebellion, as illustrated in the case of those in Israel who fell under God's judgment. So too with these that Jude is speaking about; as Peter expresses it, "if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (parallel with the thought of those saved out of Egypt, yet unbelievers), they are entangled again and overcome (as these were desiring again the things of Egypt), the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."

This is further enforced in the case of the fallen angels, who, not keeping their first estate, are reserved for judgment, but with the added thought that the judgment is an eternal one which awaits them. In the case of Israel the thought seems to be more the temporal judgment which would befall them than of delusion and apostasy which resulted in what would correspond in type to that eternal judgment, banishment from the land through death. So, too, the apostates to whom Jude refers will fall under God's wrath in a form of temporal judgment in that terrible delusion that He will cause to come upon them, and which will irresistibly lead them on to the eternal judgment of which the case of the angels speaks.

In the case of Sodom and Gomorrha we go deeper; the root of the matter is given. Here we find the deep moral corruption that accompanies apostasy; and of course with it must go the evil enmity and



hatred of heart to all that is of God, as we find it expressed in the case of the men of Sodom and the plain against Lot's two visitors. Consequent upon this, we have the judgment visited upon them, as it also will be with those whom the apostle compares to them when the fulness of their evil hearts is told out in seeking to cast out all that is of God in the earth, and claim the whole scene for the powers of evil.

Now with such we have identified those against whom we are to contend: "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." He is referring to those who, he has said, turn God's grace into dissoluteness, and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. To show the power by which these are controlled, and the utter opposition of all to the mind of God, the case of Michael in contention with the devil is given. Here we have one of the chief of God's servants, who is possessed of the mind of God and the knowledge of His ways, who will not bring against an adversary a railing accusation. The Lord must rebuke him. But these of whom Jude speaks have an opposite spirit; they speak evil of dignities. It shows whose power they are under. Michael's conduct is according to God; and Satan's is the opposite of this. In the end of the epistle we find those who, like Satan here, dispute: these we are to correct, not accuse or rail against. Their identity with the power of evil is fully established, and their way is now shown us (ver. 11-13). Three things are mentioned: "The way of Cain," who was of that evil one (1 John iii. 12), therefore a way that is controlled and ordered by him whose only power is for evil.

The "error of Balaam" was perverseness of way from God's commandment—disobedience (Num. xxii. 32), and that because of the love of the wages of unrighteousness, which was to be his reward (2 Peter ii. 15). In like manner, these here spoken of have given themselves up to Balaam's error of disobedience and rebellion to God for the reward it brings with it from a world ruled by the power of evil.

The gainsaying of Core was the rebellion against God's appointed prophet and priest for His people. And the meaning here is certainly governed by the typical meaning of the history. Moses and Aaron are a double type of Christ—"the Apostle and High Priest of our profession." The rebellion of Core was with evident intent to remove from their place of supremacy these two heads whom God had set up over Israel.

This clearly is the great effort of those we are considering: the great aim of the power which energizes them, of Satan himself, is that Christ be dethroned. Jude commenced by describing them as those who deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. It is plainly the spirit of Antichrist. We shall always find that all teaching which is in the least contrary to the truth will, if not at first, in the progress of events, affect the person of Christ.

And notice that the apostle declares that in the gainsaying of Core they have perished. He puts it as a past thing, their doom already sealed. The very first effort to lower the glory, or in any way destroy the supremacy of Christ, brings with it its own condemnation, as in the case of Core.

J. B., JR.

*(To be continued.)*

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## THOU ONLY.

"Thou whom my soul loveth."

G Lord, Thy heart and Thine alone  
 Is worthy of my fullest trust:  
 Naught else, Lord, have I ever found  
 Not subject to earth's moth and rust;  
 The best give way to death's wide sway,  
 And leave me but to weep and pray.  
 The faithful sleep, and pass from sight—  
 Perchance the ocean wide  
 May separate relentlessly,  
 And wrest them from our side;  
 And bitter tears, and weary years,  
 Our daily portion oft abide.  
 How often, too, the heart hath bled,  
 When hearts so trusted turned away;  
 And we must walk still more alone  
 And be less loved than yesterday;  
 And ponder o'er, with memory sore,  
 The hopes once bright, but now no more.  
 Earth's cup hath bitter dregs, I know,  
 At most but for a few short years;  
 It sparkles often for the young  
 A little while, then ends in tears;  
 For earth doth groan, and makes its moan,  
 O'er sin, and death, and mortal fears.  
 The cup Thou givest, Lord, is sweet—  
 No bitter drop finds lodgment there;  
 The bitter was Thy portion once,  
 The sweetness now is all my share;  
 Thy cross, O Lord, hath drawn above  
 My heart and soul to meet Thy love.  
 No loneliness need e'er be mine,  
 Since Thou art ever at my side;  
 Death hath no power to separate,  
 Nor aught of earth, nor ocean wide;  
 Death's power is quelled for Thee, and me,  
 Love links us for eternity.

Oh what a refuge, Jesus' heart!

From every storm and earthly tide;  
Oh what a balm for every wound

Is found in Jesus' wounded side!  
There is no rest, but on Thy breast:  
Lord, I would ever there abide.

Each sorrow earth hath meted me,  
Each crossing of my wayward will,  
Each time Thy hand correcteth me,  
By these, Lord, draw me closer still  
To where the tide flows deep and wide,  
That only can my longing fill.

What count the petty strifes of earth?  
What worth the hunger, and the loss?  
What mean the disappointments here  
In view of Thine atoning cross?  
The all things, yea, which in Thy way  
Together work for good to us.

To trust in such a heart as Thine—  
To lean on arms so true, and tried,  
As infant on its mother's breast,  
At once at rest and satisfied!  
Oh nameless bliss, what gift is this  
In such a presence to abide!

What charm hath earth for thee, my heart?  
What sweetness in its short-lived joys?  
Its passing scenes but shift and change—  
Then, gone, its perishable toys.  
Lord, fix my heart where all is fair,  
On what alone Thy heart enjoys.

Soon, what by faith is mine indeed,  
I'll share with Thee and all Thine own;  
In sweet communion, full and deep,  
Unbroken by earth's fretful moan.  
Then we shall be eternally,  
Lord, satisfied with Thee alone.

H. McD.

## THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

Matthew v.-vii.

*(From the French.)*

WITHOUT doubt, the Lord speaks here in His character as Messiah, the Prophet—King of the Jews. And you will find that from end to end His speech supposes the rejection of the King. This is not yet formally announced, but it is understood. It is why the Lord's words reflect a gentle tinge of sadness. The King has premonitions of the state of the people, who were without heart for Him. That tinge of sadness invariably characterizes true piety, seeing the world as it is: it was a strange thing for Israel; more strange still when it reflected itself in the words of the King, and that one King possessed of such power, that His own resources, if it were only a question of resources, enabled Him to change all in a moment. The miracles which accompanied His words proved conclusively that nothing was beyond His power, if only Himself were concerned.

We shall see, however, that in all the ways of God, whilst He assures always the execution of His counsels (for it is not possible that He should renounce one single thought which proceeds from His heart) when He undertakes, for example, to establish a kingdom, He first presents His thought to man, to Israel, because Israel is the chosen race among men for that purpose. Man thus becomes responsible to receive or to reject what is the thought of God, before, through grace, by His power He executes the thought. As a matter of fact, man invariably shows himself in fault, whatever be the purpose which God

announces. The purpose is good, holy, and true; it exalts God; but because it abases the sinner, it is enough for the sinner to refuse it. He cannot brook humiliation, and consequently he rejects all that fails to flatter his vanity—hence his constant opposition to the thoughts of God, to God Himself, as also the labor and affliction which fill the world.

Now, one of the most marvelous things which the history of this world presents is that God bears to be rejected and insulted; God permitting that man, who is weakness itself, a worm, should repulse His advances, despise His goodness, and make to contribute to his own glory and pride, as well as to the lowering of God's character, all that God gives and promises. This being true of man, you will find that in every part of His precious discourse the Lord has it in mind. And now that He brings out (for this is His object in the first part of the chapter) the features of those qualified for the kingdom of heaven, He shows that the character of those persons was to be formed by His own. If men showed aversion and scorn for all that was of God, those who belonged to Jesus were to walk in a spirit and in ways which would flow from the knowledge they had of Him, by which there would be sympathy between them and Him. I say sympathy only, because you will notice that, in this discourse, the communication of divine life is never spoken of. The subject of redemption is not touched. If therefore any one asks how to be saved, it is not here the answer is to be found. It could not be found here for the simple reason that the Lord is describing the kingdom of heaven, and those who are the subjects of that kingdom.

It is evident that the Lord is speaking of those who are already His own, and, because of that very thing, does not speak of the means by which they who are strangers to Him may be delivered out of that condition. He speaks of those who are saints, not of those who are still in their sins. He shows what is according to His own heart, not what a soul, conscious of being away from God, needs to be brought to Him. The Sermon on the Mount treats, not of the question of salvation, but of the character and conduct of those who belong to Christ, the true, though rejected, King. But as we go on examining these beatitudes, we shall find in them an astonishing depth, as well as an order full of beauty.

The first is fundamental, inseparable from any soul that has been brought to God, and that knows God: "Blessed are the poor in spirit." The strong in spirit is a man after the character of Cain; one whose mind is made up not to be imposed upon; a man ready to wrestle, even with God. He is inflexible, proud; he stands in contrast with "the poor in spirit." The man who is "poor in spirit" is he who, recognizing his littleness, his nothingness, comes forth with a broken heart. And every soul who knows God has gone through this in a greater or less measure. We are not always there, though it is our true place before God. It is only too easy, alas, to lift up the head again; and especially in danger of not remaining humble are they who have been brought into "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." As long as there is exercise of soul we are inclined to keep low, especially if all is not absolutely clear between the soul and God. But once the soul is at large, is conscious of the fulness and

certainty of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, may turn the eye from Jesus, and seek to figure among men; it is the old spirit that is waking up—the spirit of man in the worst of its forms: it is not with impunity that we lose contact with God to mingle with men.

We have said that the first of the beatitudes is a sort of foundation, and that it is inseparable from any soul that has been brought to God; for in such a soul, even if not yet free, the Holy Spirit works and identifies it with “the poor in spirit.” That character may be altered, it may be by the influence of false doctrine, or by worldly thoughts and practices; but it will be found, spite of all, underneath the rubbish; and if the believer leaves the place which belongs to him, God will know how to bring him back in abasing him. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” The Lord speaks of the kingdom, then at once He says, These are the ones to whom it belongs. By “the kingdom of heaven” one must not think that it means heaven. The expression never means heaven. Many confound these things. They imagine that when it said, “For theirs is the kingdom of heaven” it means, “For theirs is heaven.” Now the Lord does not speak here of heaven itself, but of the rule which governs heaven, applied to an earthly scene. It is an allusion to the scene in which the Messiah will exercise the government, and the poor in spirit belong to the system at the head of which the Messiah will be placed. The Lord does not speak here of the Church. The kingdom of heaven could be established apart from all question of the Church. It is only in chap. xvi. of this Gospel that the Church



is mentioned, and even then only a thing promised and expressly distinct from the kingdom of heaven.

There is not, in the whole Scripture, one single passage where the kingdom of heaven is confounded with the Church, or *vice versa*. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This is the primordial foundation, the grand characteristic trait of all them who belong to Jesus.

P. C.

(*To be continued.*)

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"Jesus Christ the same, yesterday, and to-day, and forever." We do not begin a new year with a new Person. Blessed be God, He is known to us, as our Saviour who has redeemed us by His blood, as our Friend who has led us hitherto, and as our Lord whom we would bow to and obey. Let it be ours then to know more of Him; to say with Paul, "that I may know Him."

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WE know not what the present year may have for us; we know not even what a day may bring forth. We are specially warned against borrowing trouble, and are told, "take no (anxious) thought for the morrow." Let us learn to live *this day* with Christ. When the morrow comes we will find needed grace for that, and when our journey's end is reached, in answer to the Master's question, "Lacked ye anything?" our wondering reply will be, "Nothing."

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AND what perfect provision we have for gaining this knowledge of the Son of God! The Scriptures are full of Him, and are open, inviting us to feed in their green pastures. We hear a voice as we open the pages saying to us, "Eat, yea drink abundantly O beloved." The Holy Spirit is with us to open up the Word and to reveal Christ to us. Oh, let us see to it that we do not in any measure grieve Him.

## THE LANGUAGE OF NATURE.

## THE PIGEON.

"But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowl of the air, and they shall tell thee."—Job xii. 7.

WHILE all birds' wings speak in some way of heaven, the remarkable power of flight of the dove or pigeon specially marks it out as a bird of heaven. Its short legs, and slow running on the ground, show it is not fitted for that, and thus emphasizes its power of flight—just as the awkward gait of the eagle does.

Its toes are weak and often turn under, and it cannot perch. If it alights on a tree it is always on a large limb, never on a small branch; perches for pigeons, therefore, are made flat. Its weak feet, then, locate it on the ground. Scientists recognize this and call them rock doves.

The wings suggest that it is a heavenly bird; the weak feet, that it is come down to earth, the place of the curse; and the short legs that it does not naturally belong on earth—in other words that it is here as a stranger. These features of the dove are in a spiritual way true of the Holy Spirit.

## THE IRIDESCENT FEATHERS.

"Though ye lie between the hurdles, the wings of a dove [are there] covered with silver and her feathers with green tinted gold" (Psa. lxxvii 13—*Numerical Bible*.)

This scripture gives us the key to the shining wings and iridescent neck feathers. The question in the psalm might be stated: How shall Israel be blessed in their hopeless condition? "The answer is plain,—wings that brought a Saviour down... wings covered with silver, reminding us of the redemption-money;

and that presented first; then, as the light strikes differently, the glory of the 'green-tinted gold'—divine glory, with the hue of reviving nature in it, as in the 'rainbow like an emerald, round about the throne'' (*Numerical Bible, Notes.*) So the silver is put upon the wings—the place of refuge and shelter; and the gold about the neck—the part we ornament. The Holy Spirit is the one who presents Christ as redemption—makes it effective to the sinner.

#### ITS NOTE.

It is the bird of love and sorrow. No other bird shows such marked affection. To its mate the cooing conveys no thought of mourning or sorrow as it does to us; it is to them only a love-song. Since, then, the bird has a message from God, it must be He who is mourning, and we have only to look around us to realize abundant cause for it—a world full of sinners on the broad road to destruction. It was this that made the Lord when on earth "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." The mourning of the Spirit was expressed through His lips:

"We know the love that brought Thee down,  
Down from Thy throne on high,  
To meet our ruined souls in need,  
On Calvary's cross to die."

~ If the dove expresses God's attitude toward the sinner now, who need fear or hesitate to go to Him at once in confession? for who was ever afraid of a dove?

The same characteristics should belong to all who are born of the Spirit. We are indeed to rejoice in the Lord; but only a purely thoughtless or selfish Christian can indulge in levity. Who that realizes what he has been saved from can do so.

"While millions and millions of deathless souls to the horrible pit are hurled!" While children, relatives, friends, may in a moment be called into eternity unprepared! When they are thus taken away, it sober us—why not before? Every time we hear a dove mourn it should sober us, when we remember what the message is, and from whom it is.

#### THE HOMING INSTINCT.

If it is taken away from home even hundreds of miles, and kept a prisoner for months, when let loose it immediately circles three or four times in the air, and then with unerring instinct makes a straight line for its home, never stopping on the way, unless the distance is very great. In this it is similar to the bee.

The home from eternity of the Only-begotten Son and the Spirit was in heaven. When God *sent* His Son into the world the Holy Spirit *followed* Him, *descended* at His baptism (not *sent*) in the form of a dove and abode upon Him. In Him the Spirit found His native and congenial home all through His life down here. At Pentecost He was *sent* (not came) back to form and abide with His Church in our Lord's absence. And here He is at present a captive away from His home—a captive of the love of God to men, (for it is that alone which keeps Him here,) with the Lord's people in a foreign land, till the day for which we wait. Then the Spirit and every one born of the Spirit will go back home to meet the Lord in the air, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Every one born of the Spirit has this homing instinct, in a greater or less degree.

Thus the dove is a double type of the Spirit and those born of the Spirit. This accounts easily for

the hundreds of varieties of pigeons and doves;—puffer pigeons (proud); tumbler pigeons (always faltering and stumbling) etc. If we could read them all, how many of these varieties may be faithful, though humiliating, pictures of those born of the Spirit; for we would not think of them as being in all things types of the Holy Spirit. God has foreseen and thus described, in nature, the failures of His people.

The strongest instinct of the captive dove is the longing for HOME. “We are but strangers here.”

“How blest a home—the Father’s house!

There love divine doth rest;

What else could satisfy the hearts

Of those with Jesus blest?

His home made ours—His Father’s love,

Our heart’s full portion given,

The portion of the first-born Son,

The full delight of heaven.”

#### ITS FOOD.

The dove is distinctly a grain feeder. It eats the corn or wheat and then drinks water freely. When it has partly digested this in its crop, it feeds it to the young pigeons in the form of “pigeon-milk”—the milk period lasts five or six days. This is easily read: the dove answers to the Holy Spirit; the “corn of wheat” to Christ in His death (John xii. 24); the water to the word of God which the Spirit uses, and without which He cannot work in the soul; the digested food—the pigeon-milk—to the “sincere milk of the Word” by which we grow (1 Pet. ii. 2); and the young doves to those who are born of the Spirit. The water of the Word must be mixed with faith in order to profit us (Heb. iv. 2), and even this faith is the gift of God. We cannot feed ourselves any more

than young doves. How this is emphasized in 1 Cor. ii. 1. Of ourselves we could not understand nor appreciate the person nor the work of Christ. The Holy Spirit alone can receive (Himself received first) of the things of Christ and show them unto us. All these precious and important truths are clearly illustrated when the dove eats the corn itself, digests it and then feeds it in "convenient" form to its children. Their weak stomachs would not be able to digest it otherwise. So, neither poverty, nor riches, nor anything else in this world can satisfy the soul of those born of the Spirit—nothing but heavenly food ministered by the Spirit.

As the young birds get older the parents digest it less, give them stronger food as they are able to bear it, till, soon, they eat the corn, drink the water, and immediately feed it to the young birds.

Just so the Spirit by Paul could give the Ephesian saints the strongest food, the highest truth, while to the carnal Corinthians and Hebrews, mere babes, he could minister but the simplest diet, the "first principles," "nothing but Christ and Him crucified." What sorrowful reproof—though we often hear Christians glory in it instead of being ashamed of it! How few to-day care for or get the strong meat there is for them, and how slow is their growth in the knowledge of Christ!

We find a somewhat similar truth in the mammalia, who all feed their young on milk; but none of them, that I know of, are types of the Spirit. In the dove God has, so to speak, gone out of His way to teach this most important and blessed truth,—that we are entirely dependent upon the Holy Spirit for our spiritual food.

## PORTION FOR THE MONTH.

### THE BOOK OF EXODUS.

**H**AVING already, in some measure, given outlines of the books suggested for daily reading, we purpose this year, the Lord enabling, to indicate rather topics for study, and suggest helpful books to be read in connection with the Scriptures.

First of all, as to the reading. Would it not be an easy thing to read this book of Exodus in the family? Time is precious, opportunities few: let the children be gathered at least once daily, and a chapter be read, "verse about."

For those who can do so, it will be found helpful to read some other version along with the authorized text. The Revised Version is useful. More so is that of J. N. D., and the text of the Numerical Bible. If these last agree in any correction of translation in the authorized version, it may safely be marked on the margin of the book in regular use.

Of helpful books on Exodus there are a number. C. H. M.'s "Notes" are excellent, especially for the younger student, and most valuable in gospel and fundamental truth. "Typical Teachings of Exodus," by E. Dennett, is most helpful, particularly in unfolding the beauties of the Tabernacle. The Synopsis of the Books of the Bible gives briefly and most strikingly the salient features and current of thought in this book; while the Notes of the Numerical Bible are a complete and orderly exposition, with many precious unfoldings, both new and old.

It will be found very helpful to mark the divisions of the text as indicated in the Numerical Bible, as well as alterations in the text of the authorized version. It is also very desirable to keep a note-book at hand, in which

to put down thoughts as to the passage read, and notes of various kinds. These note-books will gradually accumulate, and form a valuable library of reference; but their great value is in our having made them, having expressed clearly what might otherwise have been vague.

There are many most profitable topics for special study in the book of Exodus. The following might be named as the chief:

(1) **The ten plagues**—their order, nature, and effect; their typical significance; similar inflictions mentioned in other scriptures, particularly in the book of Revelation. In this connection, the prophetic nature of these plagues, both in relation to the deliverance of the people and the judgment upon their enemies, will be profitable.

(2) **Redemption**, by blood and by power. Compare the blood of the passover lamb with the cleansing blood mentioned in 1 John, and with the way of access into the presence of God in Heb. ix. 10. Find correspondences between the Red Sea deliverance and that unfolded in Rom. vi., vii.

(3) **The Law**. Compare the first giving of the law with the second, mingled with mercy. Study the question of law as that which condemns, in Romans, and of it as a rule of life, as seen in Galatians. Get with entire clearness the fact that the believer is absolutely free from the law. Take up each of the ten commandments, and show from Scripture how Israel violated them; also, how men in general have done the same. Show how Christ has borne the curse of the broken law in each case; and lastly, find scriptures which show that "the righteousness of the law" is fulfilled in those who walk after the Spirit. This will be found a most profitable line of study.

(4) **The Tabernacle** is most rich and full. Note the difference between the directions for making it and the actual accomplishment of the work. Make a list of all the materials used, and find from Scripture the signifi-



cance of each. In the same way, learn from Scripture the significance of each article of furniture. Learn the great truths of approach to God and of the display of His glory in Christ.

We have given the merest hints, sufficient to occupy the leisure time for more than a month. But even a partial study along the lines indicated, and others, will, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, produce rich and lasting results.

Let us never forget that nothing is of value apart from the Holy Spirit, and that we need to be low before God, walking in dependence, obedience, and faith.

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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**QUES. 1.**—Will the new heaven and earth of Rev. xxi. 1 be an entire new creation, or formed from the ashes or remains of the former ones? Give scriptures.

**ANS.**—Reasoning from analogy, we would say that this earth and its heavens (in immediate connection with it) will be renewed and prepared for the eternal abode of the earthly redeemed, including Israel. There was apparently a destruction recorded in Gen. i. 2, and from the formless void God in the six days prepared the earth for man's abode. At the Flood, Gen. vi., we again see the earth destroyed by water; but again the same earth was restored. Fire is a more thorough and effective agent than water, but it does not annihilate. Does not the analogy of the dissolution of the body, its turning to ashes as it were, and subsequent resurrection in glory, suggest and imply a similar change in the case of the earth? God never wastes; and would it not be a triumph for the very earth in which sin brought such ruin, to partake of His redeeming power?

**QUES. 2.**—To whom does Matt. xii. 20, "a bruised reed shall He not break," etc., refer? To the individual, the remnant, or the nation at large?

**ANS.**—The connection in Matthew would seem to show that it primarily refers to the remnant; and the same may be said of the

portion in Isaiah from which the quotation is taken. Israel as a nation has turned from God, but a remnant, in weakness and brokenness, is waiting upon Him. The nation should have been God's faithful servant, but was not; then His own Servant, Christ, came, perfectly fulfilling His will. But He does not despise the lowly; so in Matthew we see Him healing the helpless, while the leaders of the nation look on with contempt. He, blessed be His name, does not despise the afflicted, nor quench the feeblest flame of faith, yea, though it be but a smoke. Of course there is a sweet and precious application to the individual also.

QUES. 3.—Is there a scripture to show where the Jews and earth's inhabitants are, at the time of the white throne judgment?

ANS.—The white throne is in eternity, and the (first) heaven and earth flee away from the face of Him who sits upon it. There would seem to be a necessity for some change like that of the saints caught up at the coming of the Lord to take place with Israel and the saved nations, who would thus be prepared for their eternal earthly abode at the very time when it was being prepared for them. Scripture does not give us details, but encourages a prayerful attention to its minutest word, and to the analogy of God's ways throughout its pages.

QUES. 4.—Is there not a Godward aspect of reconciliation (necessitated by His holiness), or is it limited to the sinner's heart being turned to God?

ANS.—We are not aware of any scripture which speaks of God being reconciled. Of course, Scripture does speak of His being propitiated by a sacrifice, of His anger being turned away. And unquestionably His holiness and righteousness demanded the fullest satisfaction, which has been made by Christ's death. But reconciliation seems to suggest the removal of enmity, and *that* was only on man's side. "God so loved the world."

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## THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST THE BASIS OF THE MINISTRY OF GRACE.

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**T**HAT the death and resurrection of Christ is the basis of the ministry of grace, is very strikingly illustrated in 2 Kings ii. Elijah's ministry may be understood from the signification of his name. It means, "My God is Jehovah." He was raised up in the midst of Israel to witness to and maintain that truth. Elijah's voice, then, was a call for Israel to return to Him who had entered into covenant relationship with them, but whose covenant they had violated. Jezebel—practically a usurper, her name means, "Without habitation"—was the controlling force in Israel at this time. She will not tolerate the ministry of Elijah. The prophet, fleeing from the wrath of Jezebel, confesses the failure of his mission—how ineffectual had been his voice in calling the people back to the truth of which he was God's witness. He evidently does this as thinking that judgment is the only thing possible. He is quite willing that the wind, earthquake, and fire should summarily do their work, but he has to learn that God has other resources—that while Israel is guilty and deserves unsparing judgment, He can, notwithstanding, show mercy—mercy even to guilty Israel. He is told to anoint Elisha to be prophet in his room. Now Elisha means, "My God is salvation." Elisha's mission, then, is to have a decidedly different character from his own. He is to witness to the truth of divine grace. He is to proclaim the sovereign right of God to act in grace even towards a people who deserve unmeasured judgment at His hands.

But here a very important question is raised. How can Elisha righteously succeed Elijah? If judgment is justly deserved, how can it be set aside and grace exercised instead? This question is answered in 2 Ki. ii. The Lord is going to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind. He is at Gilgal and Elisha is with him there. Elijah says to him, "Tarry here." The implication is that Elisha is to remain there and take up his work. But Gilgal does not witness to the ground on which grace can be shown. It witnesses to failure and sin. It speaks of the violation of holiness. As so witnessing it called loudly for judgment. How in place is Elisha's answer, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." The meaning plainly is this: Elisha refuses to disconnect his mission from Elijah's rapture to heaven. Divine grace is in the hands of the risen and exalted Christ. No doubt it was in the hands of Christ on earth, but how was He straightened until He had by His blessed sacrifice acquired the full rights and title of Redeemer! How plain it is the Spirit of God could not possibly connect His mission and work with Christ on earth! He could not take up and continue Christ's earthly testimony. He would not, therefore, "tarry here" while Christ was going away. He must go with Him so as to come back from Him—from the place where He is gone.

But it must be fully demonstrated, that there is no possible ground on which the mission and work of the Spirit can be connected with Christ's earthly testimony. Hence, Elijah says to Elisha at Bethel and Jericho, "Tarry here." Bethel speaks, and how loudly, of neglected and forgotten vows, of covenants solemnly entered upon, but shamelessly violated, and

of idols substituted for Jehovah, the true God of Israel. What a peremptory demand for judgment! Bethel thus calls for it. How it witnesses to the guilt of the nation! But it does not tell how that guilt can be removed. It does not declare any ground on which their sins can be forgiven. Elisha can no more abide at Bethel than at Gilgal. Jericho also has its voice, but like Gilgal and Bethel, it speaks of sin. What a witness to disobedience! How plainly it declares Israel's insubjection to the word of God! Here, then, we have "a threefold cord" which it is manifest is not to be "quickly broken." Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho unite in their testimony against Israel—in their witness to Israel's guilt. But there is no hint as to how that guilt can be removed.

Yet Elisha is to succeed Elijah. The earthly testimony of Christ is to be followed by the heavenly testimony of the Spirit. It is plain a righteous ground for this must be found. If Israel has sinned—if man everywhere is a sinner under the judgment of God, exposed to His wrath, and forgiveness and salvation are freely offered, there must be a righteous basis for such an offer, else it would be a violation of holiness. The first intimation of this righteous basis for the full and free exercise of grace that we find in our chapter is given by Elijah at Jericho. When he bids Elisha to tarry there he adds, "For the Lord hath sent me to Jordan." Christ says, speaking of His authority to lay down His life and take it up again, "This commandment have I received of my Father." He had explicit instruction to accomplish the will of God with respect to sin. He was under authority to go to Jordan—to offer Himself substitutionally as a sacrifice for sin. When Elisha says, "As the Lord

liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee" (ver. 6), he is not merely repeating what he has twice before voiced—the impossibility of connecting the Spirit's mission with Christ's earthly testimony, as if it were a mere continuation of the latter—but he is also expressing the Spirit's deliberate acceptance of the revealed basis on which His work is to be done.

Elijah and Elisha then, in figure, pass through judgment and death. By the eternal Spirit who dwelt in Him, Christ "offered Himself without spot to God," accomplishing the will of God with respect to sin. The absolute perfection of this work, and God's complete satisfaction and delight in it, have been demonstrated and proclaimed by divine intervention in raising Christ from among the dead and exalting Him above the heavens.

But Elisha has Elijah's mantle and a double portion of his spirit. The Spirit of God is here during the time of Christ's absence in all the power with which Christ passed through death, and with a double portion of His Spirit indeed! He brings Christ's earthly testimony to our remembrance, and He teaches us the heavenly things. Blessed, precious ministry, this ministry of the Spirit!

But let us look at the picture of it in our chapter. Elisha, coming back from an ascended Elijah, tarries at Jericho. The Spirit of God come down from Christ in heaven is in a world that is under the judgment of God. He will in no wise abandon the truth maintained and witnessed to by Christ on earth. However beautiful this world is as the work of its Creator, sin has entered it. Its sources of life and refreshment have all been poisoned. The first man brought in sin, and death through sin. The water

is bad and the ground barren whether we look at the world at large or at the individual. There is no preservative principle anywhere. *All* have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is not one who has found the path of life except the man Christ Jesus. He died, but He rose again and went on high. He is the new cruse in which there is salt. Life—eternal life—is in Him. Grace—free, sovereign grace—exercised on the basis of the sacrificial work of Christ, the fragrance of which perfumes the presence of God, bestows a life in which not only there is no taint of sin, but no susceptibility to it; and he on whom it is bestowed has not only full forgiveness, but cleansing at the very fountain of his being. It is thus a salvation that delivers from wrath and the dominion of sin, teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and to live soberly, righteously and godly, and implies and involves finally the redemption of the body. How complete is our salvation in our new cruse, the risen and exalted Christ!

But what must be the portion of those who mock at such a salvation? The forty-two children torn by the bears pictures the awful fate of the scoffer. Unsparing judgment must inevitably befall the despiser of grace—that grace that the Cross gives God the title according to which He is showing it. There He has provided Himself a righteous basis on which to act in fullest grace. How well, then, we may glory in the Cross!

C. CRAIN.

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## THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

Matthew v.-vii.

*(From the French.)**(Continued from page 18.)*

**W**E have now the second feature of those whom our Lord pronounces blest: "Blessed are they that mourn." This implies more activity of life, a heart more in touch with the things by which we are surrounded. One might be "poor in spirit" even if alone in the world, because of the consciousness of what he is in himself—it is ever the case when we have to do with God. But to "mourn" is not simply because of our own condition; it is that holy affliction arising from the condition of the world in which we are, and in the midst of which we have, alas, so little strength to glorify God. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." There is not a sigh which rises from our hearts to God, but that He will surely meet and satisfy. "Ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves. Here, then, is the affliction which marks every godly soul.

In the third case we come to what is much deeper still: to a state of soul produced by a more perfect knowledge of God. It is, in a special manner, what has characterized our blessed Lord. "I am meek and lowly in heart" He says, after sighing in His spirit over the condition of men who rejected the God whose witness He was among them. This was to Him a great source of affliction. He could only say, "Woe" to those cities in which the greater part of His miracles had been done; and when He comes to Capernaum He has to declare that her condemnation would be the greater, because *there* His greatest



miracles had been wrought in vain. And what could He do but groan in spirit in the presence of such despisal of God, and of such indifference to His own love? Yet, "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father." What manifests the meekness of Jesus—a meekness that has no equal—is that at the same moment is manifest, His deep sorrow as regards men, and His perfect submission to God—a submission which involved the yielding of all that which was His right to claim for Himself.

"Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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. Well, this meekness, which in absolute perfection is seen in Jesus, is what is produced in the saints through a deepening knowledge of the ways of God, as also of the evil which abounds in the world, and the failures of what bears the name of Christ. For, midst what surrounds them, they see the hidden purpose of God being fulfilled, spite of all which seems to stand in its way. Thus the heart finds in God endless resources, which enables it to be free from all envy at the prosperity of the wicked, and not to be discouraged at the sight of the evil which he is powerless to undo. "Lord of heaven and earth" is a most blessed expression, because it tells the absolute control which God has over all things.

Jesus is, in excellence, the meek One, and those who belong to Jesus are formed at this school of meekness. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." "The *earth*!"—why not heaven? Because the earth is the scene of this evil which has begotten so much affliction and mourning. Now

that they have understood God's ways, however, they can commit themselves entirely to Him. Meekness does not consist simply in a sense of our nothingness, nor of the spirit of mourning which is rightly experienced in a world opposed to God; it is more the calm which knows how to leave to God the care of all things; which bows with thanksgivings before the will of God, even when, from the stand-point of nature, it seems difficult to accept it.

The fourth beatitude has, in a much greater degree than the preceding, the active element. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Perfect satisfaction of soul, that is what they will get. Whatever be the form of the soul's experience, God will always give it a perfect answer. Is it mourning? they shall be comforted. Is it the meek? they shall inherit the earth—the very earth where they have known trial. Now it is the question of the activity of our spiritual senses which is in view; of seeking that which is according to God, suited to maintain the will of God as, specially speaking, it had been revealed to the Jew in the Old Testament: hence the definition, "They which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." There are in the New Testament principles deeper yet, which were to come to light only when the disciples would be able to bear them.

Here ends what we may call the first section of the beatitudes. As it occurs often in the series found in Scripture, they divide in four and three. We have just seen four classes of "Blesseds." All the features by which they are known are to be found in each individual, though some more prominent in one than in the other. For instance, we can see great

activity in one, and remarkable meekness in another, but all these virtues abide, in principle, in every soul which is born of God. In ver. 7 we come to a class somewhat different; yet it will be easily seen that the three last beatitudes, analogous to the first four in this respect, have a common character.

(*To be continued.*)

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## IN THE PLAINS OF JORDAN.

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**W**E thank thee, Lord, for weary days,  
 When desert streams were dry,  
 And first we knew what depth of need  
 Thy love could satisfy.

Days when, beneath the desert sun,  
 Along the toilsome road,  
 O'er roughest ways we walked with One—  
 That One the Son of God.

We thank Thee for that rest in Him  
 The weary only know;  
 The perfect, wondrous sympathy  
 We needs must learn below;

The sweet companionship of One  
 Who once the desert trod;  
 The glorious fellowship with One  
 Upon the throne of God;

The joy no desolations here  
 Can reach, or cloud, or dim;  
 The present Lord, the living God,  
 And we *alone* with Him.

We know Him as we could not know  
 Through heaven's golden years;  
 We there shall see His glorious face;  
 But many saw His tears.

The touch that heals the broken heart  
 Is never felt above;  
 His angels know His blessedness,  
 His wayworn saints His love.

When, in the glory and the rest,  
 We joyfully adore,  
 Remembering the desert way,  
 We yet shall praise Him more,

Remembering how, amidst our toil,  
 Our conflict and our sin,  
 He brought the water, for our thirst,  
 It cost His blood to win.

And now in perfect peace we go  
 Along the way He trod,  
 Still learning from all need below  
 Depths of the heart of God.

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## OUR WARRIORSHIP IN A DAY OF DECLINE AND APOSTASY.

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### A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

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*(Continued from page 11.)*

**W**E have now what is more the outward expression of these inner workings of apostasy. "These are spots in your love-feasts." Here the meaning is much strengthened by knowing the exact force of the Greek word translated "spots." It has the force, in ordinary use, of a sunken rock covered by the sea. One sees at once the thought of secret and lurking danger. What mariner does not know the fear of a sunken rock hidden by the sea, which may be the means of shattering his vessel? And such are these avowed wreckers of the truth,

yet hidden under the garb of profession. What care, what vigilance, it bespeaks the necessity of on our part since such danger exists! How forcible under such circumstances John's exhortation, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John iv. 1).

"Clouds without water, carried along by the winds," speaks of the instability of their ways, of how every fresh invention of the enemy carries them away. They are instruments subject to his subtle devices. It is interesting to note the figure used. The clouds are the "bottles of heaven," filled with water, which is poured forth for the fertilization of the earth—a beautiful illustration of the place the child of God should fill as an agency for the refreshing and blessing and making beautiful for God the scene he is in. These enemies of the truth are clouds *without* water; they are in the place of profession, but empty, and without that which gives them competence to fill the place.

And this further shows their character. The water is doubtless typical of the word of God, as that which is the means of refreshment and blessing; but this these enemies have not, and they are therefore carried about by every "wind of doctrine" that Satan in his cunning craftiness may bring in.

Here we have, first, the position these enemies occupy—a position which, if those who are faithful are not watchful of, will cause ruin. Secondly, we have their character, clouds without water. And now their condition is spoken of under the figure of a tree. Clearly the point pressed is their readiness for judgment. "Without fruit;" therefore without an evi-

of the truth are going on. The prophecy of Enoch clearly relates to the coming of the Lord in power,—the day of the Lord,—connected with which is the judgment of the ungodly.

The apostle applies this to those in question. It is “prophesied of these. Plainly, then, they are to continue in the course he has outlined until the Lord’s appearing in power, when He will judge them. This places them under the ban of apostate Christendom and the headship of Antichrist.

This coming in of the apostasy Jude has been forcibly bringing before us, and we cannot fail to see the marked signs of it on every hand in this day. The growing departure from the truth of those who were but a short while ago the most earnest contenders for it; the advancement of every principle that in any way conflicts with the truths of Christianity; the widespread acceptance of so-called “higher criticism,” which is higher only in the sense that those who teach it formerly interpreted Scripture according to theology studied and accepted by a fleshly mind, but are now interpreting it as guided and under the power of Satan’s agencies of spiritual wickedness; and, what is still more in ascendancy among the masses, the many false and satanic religious beliefs which have their hundreds of thousands of supporters,—all these things point to the character of the times we are living in, and how near the end is. Paul shows us that it is to go on, and culminate in the rising up of the man of sin, whose coming is according to the working of Satan, in all power and signs and wonders of falsehood, and in all deceit of unrighteousness, to them that perish, because they have not received the love of the truth, that they

might be saved. This is the condition of those Jude has been speaking of, and which is to go on to the manifestation of the Lord in power and great glory, when they will receive their judgment, as Paul also testifies.

The apostle has thus fully classified (vers. 5-10), characterized (vers. 11-13) and shown us the ultimate end (vers. 14-16) of these enemies of the truth, who are in the ranks of Christian profession, but utterly set against every principle of truth. He has also enjoined upon us, in view of all this, to earnestly contend for the faith—take the place of warriors in defense of what God has given us.

He now takes up our walk in this character. First of all, he turns us back to the whole teaching of the word of God. "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (ver. 17). We know how Paul, Peter, James and John all gave the same faithful warnings. And now Jude shows us more particularly just where we are to expect this to rise from. They are those "who set themselves apart, natural men, not having the Spirit."

We see at once at the root of what tree this lays the ax. Indeed, the whole system of professing Christianity is here shown to be the root from which this condition of apostasy springs—the setting apart of natural men to take the place of the Spirit of God in the midst of His people. And not only do we see this all around us, but we must guard against such as these arising from our own midst. What else could it be productive of but the worst error? If He who in God's mind is the only One who can search the deep things of God, and make known

"in the Holy Ghost." We will get in this way our true power for building up, and at the same time marshal our real strength for the battle.

It speaks also of dependence. In proportion as we feel our own nothingness, and therefore our entire dependence, we shall be found seeking the face of God in prayer. May it be more so with us! We, as warriors, can surely speak of it as our only base of supply.

J. B., JR.

*(To be continued.)*

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## THE SUNDAY EVENING MEETING

AND THE MEETING OF 1ST COR. XIV.

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SUNDAY evening affords the opportunity of the week for a gospel-meeting in the ordinary circumstances of an assembly. Naturally God's people desire to have the gospel preached then, and to have it sustained, and that it may be known that every Sunday evening at least the gospel is declared among us. But are there not cases when the assembly may be found bearing, to its own loss, a self-imposed burden in this connection? that is, there may be no one fitted, no one led of the Lord, to preach, and yet the supposed necessity of sustaining preaching may lead to the undertaking of what is not really done by the power of God, and apparently not for blessing. There certainly should be faith and hope and prayer that the Lord will help. There should be searching of heart that there may not be pride or lack of devotedness to the Lord in the assembly, to hinder blessing. There should be that spirituality that will discern even a very little apparent blessing



in the word preached; and this the Lord will surely note, and He will help and give blessing. But while this side of things should be carefully considered, and no doubt has been often acted on with precious result in much patience, still, are there not conditions when the attempt to continue the preaching is a manifest failure, and a grievous burden to all? In this case ought not the assembly to come together to wait upon the Lord, counting upon His mercy and upon His help, according to His sure word? The Lord in the midst is assurance of victory and blessing to faith. Apparent weakness will test us, but only unbelief will fail under that test; but if failure and lack of blessing is manifest, still God is working in this very thing to bring us to exercise of soul and confession and prayer, that He may in the end lift us up, and restore and bless. The result of such an exercise would be great joy in place of dreary formality and deadness. But there may not be this extent of failure. The meeting may result in outpouring of heart in prayer; in a chapter read in the power of the Spirit, warming the hearts of those present: a hymn of real praise and worship may follow, and a few words, if not more, may be spoken with freshness and liberty, because there is no forcing oneself to fill out a certain time. And if there are unbelievers present, there would be naturally a few words added for the unsaved. In this way, with simplicity of heart and faith in God, all hearts might be refreshed and encouraged, instead of being burdened and disheartened, and the Lord's name would be glorified and His love and His presence would be enjoyed. And who knows but that the Lord is thus directing us to value the neglected assembly meeting of *1 Cor.*

*xiv.*, when two or three may speak for edification, exhortation, and comfort (see verses 3 and 29), and when, also, the unbeliever coming in may be made to feel and confess the power of God present in the meeting? May not the lack of gift among us serve for this very end—that our confidence may be in the Lord, and not in man? for He alone can bless, and faith alone can wait upon Him for blessing.

And that this kind of meeting is sadly lacking among us is well known, and deplored also in general; and yet in Scripture it has a most prominent place, as we see by 1 Cor. *xiv.* At this point a word of warning and appeal may be called for. It is this: when an open assembly-meeting such as we speak of is proposed, frequently it is objected to. There are plenty of objections. "We are liable to have a dull meeting; some one may speak who does not edify." But the appeal one would make is this: Is not such a meeting a Scriptural one, and one that ought to have its place among us? Do we really desire with a whole heart to see it promoted among us? and if not, does not our own unbelief and coldness of heart tend to the very failures that are thus naturally manifest in the meeting when we come together? The subject before us now is, of course, not an occasional Sunday evening meeting, when there is no one to preach, but the need and value of this kind of meeting in general as a prominent church-meeting for the edification of the Lord's people and for the development of gift. It ought to afford food for serious thought, that the objections made to this meeting are the same that are made to meeting at all on a Scriptural basis, apart from human systems. It is not overlooked in this line of

remark that we may be too weak to profit by such a meeting; but what is pleaded for is, that it should be recognized among us as a Scriptural meeting, and one that should have a prominent place, and one that is divinely adapted to the upbuilding of the Church. Nor is it overlooked that "the breaking of bread" and the prayer-meeting among us are of this character; but the full truth of Scripture calls for this mutual edification meeting, by mutual ministry as well as by prayer.

Let our hearts grow warm about it, and let us ask the Lord to help us in this matter. And if, to sustain such a meeting (or to be used of the Lord in it), we need to be whole-hearted Christians, this in turn will be for our blessing. Are we able to "keep rank" (1 Chron. xii. 38)? There is a serious responsibility upon us which, as Christians, as fellow-members of the Body of Christ, we are not permitted to slight. We cannot sleep without injuriously affecting others, our fellow-members. The Lord deliver us from that self-occupation which would lead us to refuse to use what little gift one may have because it is not greater! We know this to be pride and coldness of heart. May the Saviour's love warm our hearts and deliver us from every snare Satan may lay for our feet. If we need to be a united and happy company to be able to minister to one another, let us seek God's face for ourselves first, and then for our brethren. May we be delivered from the love of the world, and sloth, and from every defilement, that the Lord may use us for blessing. May we say in our hearts, "Come, Lord Jesus. May we everywhere pray for more devotedness to Christ in all the assemblies. May brotherly love prevail. E. S. L.

## A DRY WAY THROUGH JORDAN:

OR, WHAT DEATH IS TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.

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GOD has revealed Himself as "the God of all grace;" and this not only in word, but in deed.

He came where we were; that is, in all our sin and ruin—came to us in the person of His Son,—

"Came from Godhead's fullest glory  
Down to Calvary's depth of woe."

Thus He put away sin, the sting of death, by the sacrifice of Himself; thus, through the grace of God, all is changed for those who believe in Jehovah-Jesus; even death is changed. It is death still, but its dress, its aspect, its character, is new. It comes in grace—comes in service. In no other capacity can it enter the household of faith. Hence, for the believer, "to die is gain;" it is "to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better" (Phil. i. 21, 23).

It should be clear that Christ bore the whole penalty of sin on the cross; and believers, according to the inspired Word, are seen as having died with Him—as being "dead with Him." If so, they must be beyond death looked at as a penalty, and therefore it must, as we have already stated, come in grace—just to take off the fetter which keeps them in absence from the Lord. "Whilst we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord." "We are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 6-8).

The passing of the Israelites over Jordan on dry ground may be used, as it has often been, as a picture of the blessedness of saints in departing out of the body to be with the Lord till He come again,

when the body will be redeemed by power—the same divine power which divided the Jordan; and thus, in glorified bodies, they will be with Him and like Him, who laid down His life to have it so.

The passing over Jordan is thus given in the sacred records:

“And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, the priests that bare the ark of the covenant being before the people; and when they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (for Jordan overfloweth all its banks all the time of harvest), that the waters which came down from above stood, and rose up in one heap, a great way off, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan; and those that went down toward the sea of the Arabah, even the Salt Sea, were wholly cut off; and the people passed over, right against Jericho. And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all Israel passed over on dry ground, until all the nation were passed clean over Jordan.”

Such was the crowning intervention of Jehovah in bringing His earthly people into Canaan. Though Jordan was overflowing all its banks, yet the waters that came down from above stood, and rose up in one heap, a great way off, at a city called Adam: that is a great way from where Israel had to pass over, They passed over right against, or opposite, Jericho. According to a map of Canaan as divided among the tribes, the city of Adam was about fifteen miles above Jericho. The waters coming from above stood, and rose up in one heap at Adam—not allowed to flow further. Thus the bed of the river would soon be empty, not only to Jericho, but to the sea of the Arabah, now known as the Dead Sea, about six miles below Jericho.

So when the thousands of Israel passed over Jor-

dan, there was no stream in sight. If they saw the waters at all, they saw them as they "rose up in one heap"—they saw them as a crystal mountain far in the distance—a witness that Jehovah was for them—that His hand was holding these waters till all was accomplished for which they were stayed. The nation could pass over on "dry ground" in all confidence, and without fear.

Those who thus passed over were in after days to say to their children, inquiring the meaning of the twelve stones set up in Gilgal, "Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you until you were passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up from before us until we were gone over" (Josh. iv. 21, 22).

The following beautiful little psalm also puts together what Jehovah did for His people at the Red Sea and Jordan; telling, too, of marvelous things in the wilderness; ascribing all to His "presence":

"When Israel went out of Egypt,—  
the house of Jacob from a people of strange language,  
Judah was His sanctuary,  
Israel His dominion.  
The sea saw and fled:  
Jordan was turned back.  
The mountains skipped like rams,—  
the hills like lambs.

"What ailed thee, thou sea, that thou fleddest?  
thou Jordan, that thou wast turned back?  
Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams?  
ye hills, like lambs?  
Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord,—  
at the presence of the God of Jacob:  
Who turned the rock into a pool of water,—  
the flint into a fountain of waters." (*Numerical Bible.*)

It is important to remark, that before the people could be led one step towards the promised inheritance, they had to be redeemed to Jehovah by blood. He could only be the Leader of redeemed ones. See Ex. xii. and xv. 13-18.

All this, gone over or hinted at, may be viewed as a type, or shadow, of the great salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. Though this salvation is one great whole, yet in its application it may be looked at in parts. When souls learn their deep need, and first trust in Jesus, they are cleared from their sins by His blood, have peace with God, are born again; yea, they are seen as having died with Christ, risen with Him, and seated in the heavenly places in Him (Eph. ii. 6). Thus their calling is heavenly; yet in the wisdom of God they are detained a while in this scene of sin and sorrow. In this sense the wilderness has a place in His ways with His heavenly people, as it had with His earthly people. Hence the Lord, in praying to the Father, said, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." The same intercession is continued above in the Father's presence, in response to which they are kept in this wilderness—"kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Though as to their souls believers are saved, yet as to their circumstances they need to be saved all the way through to glory. And "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. vii. 25). Should believers die before the coming of the Lord, they depart to be with Him, yet they wait for the day of full redemption.

But our subject is, the death of such—what death is to them. To them, in dying, there is no “Jordan’s *stream*”—no “death’s *cold flood*.” There is Jordan—there is death; but “the stream”—“the flood”—the dark waters of death, rolled over the blessed Holy One when on the cross, enduring sin’s judgment, thus rolling these waters back out of sight for those who trust in Him. So they “never *see* death”—they “never *taste* death” (John viii. 51, 52). Jesus, “by the grace of God, *tasted* death.” Thus the bitterness of death is past for those who avail themselves of this gracious provision. The bed of death’s river is dry for them. In this sense grace, through the death of Christ, has “abolished death.” The apostle uses this expression in his second epistle to Timothy—likely his last. He was then near martyrdom. His trial before Nero had been going on. He says, “At my first answer no man stood with me.” Things were so dark in that great pagan court that even his friends fled. He knew what was coming. He says, “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.” But though a violent death was before him, yet he could say, “Our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death” (2 Tim. i. 10). Death, to him, though coming in that way, was only his “departure”—simply his dismissal from the body to be with his much loving and his much loved Lord. It was all grace, victory and brightness to him; and this not because he was an apostle, but because he knew Jesus as His Saviour. He says in the same epistle, “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.”

R. H.

(To be continued.)



THE AGED CHRISTIAN.

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**I**F nearness to home is calculated to cheer the heart and revive the soul, the aged believer ought to be a very happy man; for he has, through the merits of his Redeemer, a very happy home before him, the transcendent delights of which no mortal tongue can describe—a home where sin and sorrow shall never enter, and where joy and happiness shall be unsullied forevermore.

To such a home the child of God is journeying. What a comforting thought this for the evening of life—going home—going to brighter scenes, and purer enjoyments, and holier companions—going to be with the Lord! Such a prospect as this lightens the burden of years, and makes old age a happy period in the Christian's life.

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“**T**RUST, O thou sorrowing heart!  
Hope on, be not afraid!  
God sees thee where thou art,  
In darkness and in dread.  
And He will lead thee on;  
Trust God to lead thee right:  
Thou yet shalt see the Sun  
Arise in glorious light.

“He will not always chide,  
But when the hope seems least,  
If still thy faith abide,  
Then shalt thou be released.  
When once thy trust is proved,  
The grief that harmed thee not  
Shall wholly be removed,  
Thy *full* deliverance wrought.”

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A PRESENT possession and a living hope are both ours in Christ risen. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who *hath* blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Here we have a present possession—of all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. We are not waiting for these, they are ours now, and by the Holy Spirit and the Word we can enjoy them.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Here we have not yet entered upon the possession of what is ours, but it is "reserved in heaven" for us, and we have a living hope, a hope which is linked with resurrection and which therefore shall endure, "when all that seems shall suffer shock." How blessed is our portion both present and future, and all in Christ!

"Do not let a day pass without reading some master piece of poetry, looking at some beautiful painting, or hearing some classical piece of music," was the advice given to one who desired to be "cultivated. And we too desire to be cultivated, not after the manner of the world, but in "the beauty of holiness," in the nurture of the Lord. Let us then apply this advice to ourselves. What poetry is like that of the word of God? What picture so lovely as the "Man Christ Jesus" depicted by the Holy Ghost upon the page of Scripture, and what melody so entrancing as that of the Spirit, as the earnest of heavenly songs fill the heart?

## PORTION FOR THE MONTH.

### ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

**A**S salient points in this book, we would call the attention of our readers to

**The position occupied** by our Lord Jesus Christ at the very outset: Having been raised from the dead, He is taken away from the earth and carried into heaven.

This wholly changes the character of His ministry. On earth He ministered earthly things to an earthly people—the house of Israel. In heaven He ministers heavenly things to a heavenly people. Hence

**The descent of the Holy Spirit** as sent by Him to carry on that ministry here.

The Lord on the cross had prayed for Israel, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” The gospel therefore begins with Jerusalem. A new opportunity must be given Israel to repent. The first seven chapters of the book are devoted to the work among them. Instead of repenting, they stone Stephen, persecute the gospel, and seal their doom. The Spirit therefore turns to the Samaritans and to the Gentiles.

It will be instructive to mark the prominence given to baptism in those chapters of ministry to the Jews. Why does this prominence decrease as Christianity becomes more and more fully revealed, and all that is Jewish is passing away? The body of the book shows the gospel going out to the Gentiles. The glory of the knowledge of God, which had been given to Israel, is now leaving them and passing to a people taken out of the Gentiles. But mark how, as in Ezekiel, the glory moves reluctantly away; so here, how slow God is in taking His testimony out of their hands! God ever puts off judgment as far as He can. It is His “strange work.”

**Romans xi.** shows that God’s testimony will be given

back to Israel when His patience can no longer endure the evils and apostasy of Christendom, and He spews it out of His mouth. See, also, for this, the Lord's address to Laodicea (Rev. iii. 16).

Mark the work of the Spirit. They in whom He took His abode were of one heart and of one mind.

**He is the Great Uniter** of the children of God, Jews and Gentiles being by Him formed into one body, of which Christ in heaven is the Head.

Acts is the new wine (grace) put into new bottles (men born of God). Judaism was the old wine, and the Jews the old bottles. Not only they would not drink the new wine, but they ever persecuted the new. This we get in object lessons in Acts, but in plain statements in Rom. iii.-viii., and especially in Galatians.

Judaizers are ever the persecutors of true Christianity. Law can but teach man his deep need. Christianity meets it. Law therefore must give way to Christ. If it refuses to give way, it persecutes.

After his conversion, Paul soon becomes the leading man among the servants of Christ. Why? Do not his epistles show that to him is entrusted the dispensation of Christianity in its essential character—the dispensation of Christ in heaven, of the Spirit on earth, and of the Church gathered and formed during that time?

Does not his being caught up to the third heaven point us to the hope of the Church, whilst his experiences among men tell of the vicissitudes of Christianity upon earth?

How deeply interesting is this book! How much there is in it which lies beneath the surface of the narratives! May we have the spiritual energy to find some of it. The heart engaged with this is satisfied indeed, and has little room for lust.

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## HEBRON AND ZOAN.

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“Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.”

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**I**N Num. xiii. 21-25, we have an account of the searching out of the land of Canaan by the spies.

At the command of the Lord, Moses had sent them. He gave them very explicit directions with regard to their mission, and here we read of the actual carrying out of the work which they were sent to do. Right in the middle of this account of their fulfilment of the mission on which they had been sent, there is a parenthetical statement. The narration tells us of their going to Hebron and of the sons of Anak they saw there; then there is a break in the account—a sort of an interruption. It is stated parenthetically, “Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.” This statement is not properly a part of the description of the work of the spies. It is something incidentally added. It is a statement put in. After the parenthesis the description proper is resumed and continued until completed.

But there must be some reason for putting in the parenthetical statement. If we look for the reason we will find it in the account of the effect of the report which the spies gave the people. There was manifestly in the spies, save Caleb and Joshua, a spirit of unbelief. This spirit was plainly shown in the report they gave, and the effect of it is seen in the murmuring against Moses and Aaron and in their saying, “Let us make a captain and let us return unto Egypt.” The spirit of unbelief in the spies developed the spirit of rebellion in the people; and the intensity and energy of this spirit of rebellion is

seen in the cry of the people to stone Joshua and Caleb for their efforts to stem the tide of disaffection and rally them to faith and confidence in God. Now this resolution of the people to return to Egypt, as being the result of the unbelieving spirit shown by the spies in their account of their searching out of the land, explains why this parenthetical statement is put in just where it is. Hebron was a more ancient city than Zoan. It thus had a glory outshining the glory of Zoan—the chief city of Egypt at that time. As regards age it had the greater renown—its origin was earlier. Israel in setting their face towards Egypt were turning from what had been built before Zoan, though at that time it was Egypt's pride.

I think now we have before us the features essential to a correct application and an unfolding of the spiritual lesson which this parenthetical statement contains for us. Through grace God has made us spies of the things in heaven where Christ is. The meaning of Hebron is "association" or "communion." We have been given to know the purpose of God as to Christ—that it is the good pleasure of His will that Christ should be Head over all things, both heavenly and earthly, and that we should be associated with Him in this glorious supremacy, not only as being individually identified with Him, but as being collectively His fulness—the one new man, Christ and His Church, jointly occupying the place of authority over all. What a revelation this is! How it gives us to be in communion with God—to enjoy, by the power of the Spirit through the Word, this revelation of the thoughts of God. This is Hebron indeed!

But when were these thoughts of God formed?

When was this purpose of God concerning Christ established? When did God determine on joining us to Christ and on giving Him an inheritance which we also are to possess, but possess as being united to Him? Lofty thoughts these! They have been revealed to us. We know and enjoy them. But when were they formed? Does not, "Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt" suggest the answer?

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, had their Hebron when nothing existed but themselves. In mutual counsel a purpose was formed. What was it? It was that there should be a Man at the head of everything, whether things in heaven or on earth. A determination was established to put a Man in the place of absolute supremacy over everything. It was fixed and settled that He should be "high above every principality, and authority, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come." What a position! But it was also determined that He should have companions to share with Him this position of supremacy—that from among fallen, sinful men there should be those who should be identified with Him in the place of exaltation to which *He* was to be exalted—to inherit, under Him, and yet as associated with Him, the inheritance that had been fixed upon as to be given Him.

But, wondrous and great as all this is, it is not the fulness of the Hebron of God. We must take in yet another thought in order to realize the fulness of the divine purpose. One might well say: Can there possibly be anything more than this? Can divine grace exceed making us the companions of

Christ in this position of immeasurable glory? With God mere grace is not enough. There are the riches of His grace. But even this does not satisfy Him. Such is the joy He has in Christ that in order to give expression to the fulness of what His own heart deems Him worthy of, He must take up in exceeding riches of grace some of the fallen, sinful sons of men and make them to be the fulness or completion of Him whose glory fills the whole universe of God, joining them to Him as the woman was joined to Adam. Even this was embraced in the purpose of God—that purpose which was determined upon in the time of divine counsel. What must have been the communion of the divine Persons as with one mind they established this grand purpose! How impossible to describe the joy with which they were filled. What a Hebron it was!

But this is the Hebron to which, through grace, we have been brought. The eternity to come will be but the realization of the purpose established in the eternity of the past. There will be no element of joy in the divine communion of the eternity that is before us but what was present to the mind of the divine persons at the time the divine counsels were established, and the purpose of God settled. That purpose has now been revealed. The revelation of it enables us to have communion with God—to be with Him in His Hebron. We are put in possession of what was in the mind and heart of God before the worlds were made. How stable then is our portion! Oh! that we were more stable and constant in our enjoyment of it!

But I must turn now to “Zoan in Egypt.” Egypt speaks of the world, and Zoan, meaning “a place of



departure," of what the world has become through the coming in of sin. Men enter the world, pass through and out of it. We are born into it, are travelers in it. It is not our fixed abiding home. We are here on a journey, under the necessity of passing on. We die and go out of the world into another country. The world is, as to the character which sin has stamped upon it, a place of departure. If, then, Hebron speaks of the communion of the divine Persons in the establishment of the purpose of God concerning Christ, the Second Man, Zoan speaks of what has come in since that purpose was formed. The world has been made since. Man, the first man, has been set up at the head of it. He has failed. He has brought sin into the world; and, through sin, has changed the world from an abiding home into a scene of death, where there is no abiding.

But which was God's first thought, Hebron or Zoan? The Second Man or the first? The scene of eternal blessedness, every part of which is filled with the glory of the man Christ Jesus, or the temporary scene in which men, however successful in the pursuit of worldly emoluments, have to leave their gains and pass on into another world? The answer is easy to give. Hebron was first. But more. Which of the two is stable? Which endures, Hebron or Zoan? Which is settled on everlasting foundations? It is plainly Hebron. Zoan endures for a while, and then passes away; but Hebron will abide forever.

But what a sin—after having the privilege of spying out Hebron, after entering there by faith and realizing its blessedness—to bring back an unbelieving report!—to say, our thought was that the goodly land was a land of quiet and rest, but we find it to

be a land of war. If we are going to claim Hebron as a present possession, there are towering giants there to resist our claim. Is it not folly to think of facing such foes? Ah, this is the language of unbelief.

But, alas! in how many of us this unbelief has been the root of rebellion. When God has said, Pass on into Hebron now, take possession of it now, claim it now as a present reality, enter on the present enjoyment of it, we have said, No, those giants are too much for us, we are not equal to the struggle with them. We prefer to enjoy the world; we can get more satisfaction in Zoan; it will be less trouble and easier work. Oh, how easy it is to turn away from Hebron to Zoan—from God's eternal purpose to man's world—from what was in God's mind before the world began, to what is in the world as man has made it.

But it is rebellion. It is disobedience. God's thought for us is that we should by faith possess, as a present thing, the purpose of the eternity past. He has secured our future possession of it, but He bids us claim it all as a present portion. He gives us the right to dispute the claim of the giants. Whatever the character they take—whether it be the pride of religiousness, the various forms in which the flesh assumes the right to claim the things of God, the unholy dealing in divine things of unspiritual and mere natural men, or the arrogant and blasphemous defamers of the holy name of Jesus—the cross of Christ is our title to all the fulness of God's Hebron whether now or in the future, and all other claims to it are illegitimate. No matter how bold or how arrogant, no mere usurper can make good his claim

to what can be possessed solely on the ground of the cross of Christ.

Let us, then, still the voice of unbelief. Let us urge going up boldly into the land of our blessing. Let us lay claim to the Hebron of God as a possession we are entitled to hold as our own now. Let us go in and take our own. But one thing is needful in order to do it. We need to realize that the cross of Christ is our title to it. It is truly as good a title for present enjoyment as future. May we ever have the sense of it.

C. CRAIN.

## A DRY WAY THROUGH JORDAN:

OR, WHAT DEATH IS TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.

*(Continued from page 52.)*

**I**N another place the apostle writes, "Forasmuch, then, as the children are made partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii. 14, 15). Here it is stated that the devil "had the power of death." He instigated that which brought in death, as seen in the third chapter of Genesis, and in this way he acquired "the power of death;" yet not, of course, power for himself to take life. God had said to the man, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 17). The devil, knowing this, using the serpent, said to the woman, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat

of every tree of the garden?" This was to instil into her mind the wicked thought that it was not goodness in God to forbid them eating of any tree where He had put them. The thought was imbibed, and had the sad effect intended, as her reply showed, saying, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." She was so occupied with the prohibited tree that she saw little or nothing else. Also, she added to the word of God "*neither shall ye touch it.*" She also made the infliction of the penalty doubtful—"lest ye die." Having thus gained much more than her ear, he was bold enough flatly to contradict God—"Ye shall not surely die;" not only so, but to slander Him—"for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." This incited to the overt act—"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (Gen. iii. 1-7).

But the Lord God came into this sad scene. And they, hearing Him "walking in the garden in the cool of the day, hid themselves from His presence among the trees of the garden." But He had not come as a policeman to arrest the guilty ones, but as a faithful and loving Creator seeking His deluded and erring creatures, to be helpful to them in their

to bring lasting ruin, is by grace, through the Cross, turned into blessing for those who believe: even death is "gain" to them. Yea, while in the body they have no need to hide themselves from the presence of God, seeing that they have got on "the best robe." They have title to "joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Happy portion!

The apostle John writes, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John iii. 8). God in His own due time sent forth His Son, born of a woman, to do this work. God doubtless meant this in saying to the serpent, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel" (Gen. iii. 15). Thus the serpent was to bruise the heel of the Seed of the woman. Though a bruised heel is very painful, yet it is not *fatal*. The "passion," or sufferings, of Christ, though unto death, yet were not fatal, as He came from death without seeing corruption, and His death was the ground of His triumph. With this meaning He said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit" (John xii. 24).

But the Seed of the woman was to bruise the serpent's head. A head fully bruised or crushed must be fatal—this, doubtless, meaning a full overthrow of his power. The bruising of the heel of the Seed of the woman was no doubt meant by God to accomplish this.

The Lord, as His public ministry was closing, was looking forward exultingly to the bright effects of His approaching bruised heel. "Now is the judg-

ment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself. But this He said, signifying by what *manner of death He should die*" (John xii. 32, 33, R. V.). He said to those who came to Gethsemane to take Him, "This is *your hour, and the power of darkness*" (Luke xxii. 53). "The prince of this world"—"the power of darkness"—was urging them on: as Peter said to them on the day of Pentecost, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts ii. 23). The prince of darkness doubtless wished to bring about the death of Jesus for the retaining of his own power; but God meant it for the complete overthrow of that power: as it is said in the passage already dwelt on, the Son of God took part in flesh and blood, "that through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. ii. 14, R. V.).

"By weakness and defeat

He won the mead and crown:

Trod all our foes beneath His feet

By being trodden down.

"He Satan's power laid low;

Made sin, He sin o'erthrew,—

Bowed to the grave, destroyed it so,

And death by dying slew."

All this will be carried out in power, in God's good time, when the empire of the devil, founded on man's fall, shall be destroyed and have no place. (See Rev. xii. 7-9; xx. 1-3, 10.) Although we may indeed rejoice that the full end of his power is coming, yet we have not to wait till then to be free from

his authority. It is enough for faith that redemption by *price* is accomplished. The apostle, writing to those who had faith, says: "The Father has delivered us from the authority of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Col. i. 13, new translation). The redemptive price being the precious blood of Christ, those who believe in Him have title to say, "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. i. 7). In the same epistle they are said to be "made nigh by the blood of Christ;" yea, so nigh that they are seen of God in "the heavenly places" in Him who appears for them there. And if they depart out of this life, they depart to be with Him. The dying malefactor expressed his faith in Jesus as being the Christ of God in saying, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom;" to which the Lord replied, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." And the blessedness of that remarkable trophy of grace is, according to the plain teachings of Scripture, the happy portion of all who die in the Lord. Though death came by sin, yet sin being gone for believers, death coming to them surely cannot be penal. It only takes that which detains them in absence from the Lord, and frees them from a scene of sin and grief; and their spirits enter into a blessed rest till the coming of the day of redemption by *power*, when the Lord Jesus returns, "who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory" (Phil. iii. 21, R. V.). "We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. We may say in joyous hope, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting

of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law: but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." R. H.

*(To be concluded in next number.)*

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## A HYMN OF PRAISE FOR THE PASSING YEAR.

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THE year Thou enrichest with mercy,  
With mercies poured forth in a flood,  
And all of the crowns that Thou givest  
Shine bright with exuberant good.

Thy truth is forever resplendent,  
And gildeth the clouds with its light.  
O may it still take of Thy glory,  
Exalting Thy good in our sight.

Thy love has been true to its story,  
Has spoken again and again  
Of treasure enduring and boundless  
Beyond the conceiving of men,—

The treasure acquired through the sorrow,  
The bitterness, pain and the blood  
Of the Holy One, bowing in judgment  
Under our sins' awful load!

Thy goodness! O give us the faith  
To believe Thou never wouldst cease,  
In the tempest of sorrow and pain,  
To command the storm into peace!

Thy goodness has given the bitter  
To make Thine own love the more sweet:  
For joys of the earth that Thou takest,  
Thou hast joys unalloyed at Thy feet.



O then, at Thy feet may we gather,  
 Our eyes on Thy face far above,  
 And, glad in the peace of Thy giving,  
 Rest here in the word of Thy love.

We would thank Thee with joy for the hope  
 Which taketh the veil from our eyes,  
 And looks to the day of Thy coming,  
 To be e'er with Thee in the skies.

O grant that our hope may be burning,  
 Its light shining forth from our way;  
 By Thine eye sustain our aspiring,  
 While we press on to that day.

E. R.

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### A MARVELOUS PLEDGE.

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GENESIS xv. is one of the most beautiful, comforting and instructive chapters in the Bible.

The revelations God gave to Abram, and the pains He took to assure him of the certainty of His promises, are simply marvelous. What could be sweeter than verse 1? After Abram had refused the offers of the king of Sodom, see how beautifully God comes in and says, "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward"! Just think of it: not merely "great reward," but "*exceeding* great reward"! Had he not proved Him to be his shield in the battle against the kings (chap. xiv.)? and now he was to prove Him to be his exceeding great reward, and the childless Abram was to hear of an innumerable seed assured by promise, and a glorious inheritance secured by sacrifice which not even the smoking furnace could rob them of.

I will not, however, dwell on the first part of the chapter,—God deigning to stand and talk with a man,

and give him such promises,—wonderful as it is, but pass on. “Abram believed God.” He honored Him by his faith, and God reckoned him righteous (ver. 6). Then verse 7 begins another subject, that of the inheritance which God intended for him; and that calls forth from Abram the question, “Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?” God might have said, “You ought to trust Me, Abram, and not raise questions;” but no; He condescends to Abram’s weakness, and gives him the most marvelous pledge imaginable, to satisfy him. God covenanted with Himself to secure it for him.

God said, “Take Me a heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove and a young pigeon” (ver. 9). And Abram did so, and divided the animals, and set the pieces one against another. Evidently Abram knew something of the meaning of that action of his, and protected the sacrifice from the fowls of the air. Then, when the sun was *going* down, a deep sleep, and a horror of great darkness, fell on him, and he heard God tell him of the servitude and affliction of his descendants in Egypt, as also of the judgment of their oppressors and their deliverance and entrance into the land of Canaan.

But the revelations did not stop there. God had still more to tell and assure to Abram: “And when the sun *went down*”—not when it was *going* down. How fitting the time for the revelation about to be given! Then Abram hears of a smoking furnace into which his descendants would be cast; but the burning lamp of promise and hope would shine amid that darkness and smoke, and assure them of final deliverance from the furnace and admittance into

the land once more. And this, I take it, is connected, not with Egypt and their sojourn and affliction there, but with "the time of the end," and their final deliverance from "the great tribulation"—that awful smoking furnace which yet awaits them.

But what could it mean to lay the pieces of those animals against each other, and for God to pass between them by His burning lamp? Turn to Jer. xxxiv., and read from verse 17. There we get an explanation of it in a later day. God had to charge His people with *not* having harkened to Him and done what He commanded; therefore He says, "I will give the men that have transgressed My covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant *which they had made* before Me when they cut the calf in pieces and passed between the parts thereof, the princes. eunuchs. priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf" (vers. 18, 19); and God gave them over to their enemies to be slain (ver. 20).

Now this, I think, makes it quite clear. To pass between the pieces of a slain victim, or victims, was to ratify, or confirm, a covenant which had been made, and it evidently involved the death of the contracting party if he or they failed to carry it out. Thus the people mentioned in Jer. xxxiv. 20 were to die because they had failed to carry out the covenant which they had made and solemnly sworn to fulfil when they passed between the pieces of the calf.

The wonderful thing, however, in Gen. xv. 17 is, it was God who, by that lamp (or flame) of fire, "passed between the pieces," and thus bound Himself to accomplish what He had covenanted to do. Abram did not pass through—it was God. He not

only made known the smoking furnace,—apt picture of the great tribulation which yet awaits them in a still future day, when the Sun will be completely hidden, or “gone down,”—but He went through the pieces by His burning lamp of promise and hope, and covenanted with Abram *that day* to give his seed the land “from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates” (ver. 18); and they shall yet possess it.

What marvelous grace on the part of God to answer Abram’s question, “Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?” and pledge Himself to carry it out! It is truly wonderful! Can that promise fail? Never! never! It depends neither on the faithfulness of Abraham or his seed, but on the almighty Promiser, who pledged Himself in that wonderful way when He “passed between the pieces.”

Abram’s seed, as we have seen, pledged themselves, failed, and died. God pledged Himself, has not failed, will never fail, but will fulfil His covenant, and give them the inheritance secured for them; not, surely, on the ground of the victims that Abram slew, but because of the death of the One of whom they were the type, our Lord Jesus Christ. And if an earthly inheritance is so secured to the earthly seed, will there be any danger of heavenly blessings not being made good to the heavenly seed, born anew, blessed, and fitted for heaven by the reception of the gospel in the power of the Holy Ghost? No, blessed be God, “all the promises of God are yea and amen in Him (Jesus Christ), to the glory of God by us” (2 Cor. i. 20). They can never fail. May our hearts, beloved, ever confide in Him “who is able to keep us from falling and present us fault-

less before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy," and thus in some little measure respond to the outgoings of that marvelous love till we are ushered into the fulness of what He has pledged Himself to give!

W. E.

*New Zealand.*

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## OUR WARRIORSHIP IN A DAY OF DECLINE AND APOSTASY.

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A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

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*(Continued from page 44.)*

**B**UT now we have something else: "Keeping yourselves in the love of God." Our attitude is to be one of continual vigilance. We are to be careful that no foreign element, or wedge of the enemy, gets in which in the least degree will rob us of the blessed apprehension of God's love. Keeping ourselves in that love is the sentinel's post; like him, we must be vigilant to allow no intrusion within the circle of communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son—our continual entrance into and enjoyment of the feast of love that God has spread for us in Christ.

And now the end of the conflict. We are "awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life"—the sure end, the glorious victory, we are going on to. It is the battle's victory won for us, inasmuch as it is the crowning of every hope, for the truth of which we have fought, with blessed and glorious accomplishment. No warrior has ever fought a battle with a greater and fuller measure of assurance of the victory to attend his arms than we are privileged to do as warriors for the truth of God.

It is certain, because He has promised. We await with certain expectation the bugle-note. It soon will sound, our Leader's command be heard, and we rise to enter with Him into our promised inheritance.

Does the opponent of the truth scornfully say we leave the battlefield in undisputed possession of the enemy? Be it so. We leave it for our God to take up the conflict along different lines, and in an offensive manner, while we are to come back with our glorious Leader to final conquest. "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints to execute judgment." But not that alone, but also to deliver a groaning creation from the thralldom of Satan and the power of evil.

We have now what characterizes our warfare, or the operations of it: "And some, who dispute, correct; and some save, snatching them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." (J. N. D., foot-note.) It is dispute in the sense that Satan did with Michael; and such we are to correct, that is all. We contend in that way for the faith. A disputer is clearly an enemy in the sense here spoken of; with such an one, we simply defend what he attacks.

Those whom we are to save, I apprehend, are those whom we may find of our own rank to have fallen in some measure under the power of the enemy's assault. For the recovery of such we are to actively contend, delivering them from whatever they may have become entangled with, hating the evil thing with which we find them ensnared—the garment spotted by the flesh.

The introduction of the flesh is an important point. With those for whose deliverance we are to contend,

we shall always find that the root of the evil which has ensnared them is in the flesh. We have seen that those to whom the apostle traces apostasy and evil are men who set themselves apart; natural, not having the Spirit, therefore of the flesh, and living in it. Those who come under their power in any measure must become defiled by the activity of the flesh, since it is in such power the error is wielded. The garment, the evil thing in which they have been investing themselves, we are to turn from with hatred, while we are to deliver them from the consequences of their error.

We close with a note of triumph in the midst of all the circumstances which we have been looking at. The way and the end come before us. Our note of praise is "to Him that is able to keep us from stumbling." No need of fear, though the road be rough and rocky; we are sure to learn by the very ruggedness of the path while we have the blessed sustaining strength of a Hand that will ever lead us, ever hold us up and keep the feet from falling. He is working in us by the same mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead; and by this power He keeps us.

What assurance, then, to know that this is the power that ensures the full accomplishment of the end to be attained! And this we have expressed for us in what follows: "And to set you with exultation blameless before His glory." Sinners saved by grace set in the glory of God! And when the heart is led up to the anticipation of this, the result, as it will be also in that day when the anticipation has become a fully accomplished reality, is the ascription of praise: "To the only God and Saviour, through Jesus Christ

our Lord, be glory, majesty, might and authority from before the whole age (or course of time), and now, and to all the ages, Amen." (J. N. D.)

It is to God as our Saviour that this prayer is given, but through Christ because it is He that has made God this for us. This brings in at once the way in which He has been glorified in the work of Christ. If He purpose to redeem, it must not be simply from the consequences of sin, but also the bringing in of infinitely higher blessing and glory than could have ever been if sin had never entered. This the work of Christ has fully accomplished.

Now to Him indeed, through the purpose of whose will being fulfilled this has been made possible, belongs every attribute; while it is by this perfect redemption demonstrated that they of right are His, and, furthermore, have been His from before the course of time, that is, in the past eternity, and now, the present course of time, and to all ages—the eternity to come.

J. B., JR.

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## PRIVATE PRAYER.

(*An Extract.*)

NOW what is the cause of most backslidings? I believe, as a general rule, one of the chief causes is neglect of private prayer. Of course, the secret, full history of falls will not be known till the last day. I can only give my opinion as a minister of Christ, and a student of the heart. That opinion is, I repeat distinctly, that backsliding generally first begins with *neglect of private prayer*.



Bibles read without prayer, sermons heard without prayer, marriages contracted without prayer, residences chosen without prayer, friendships formed without prayer, the daily act of private prayer itself hurried over, or gone through without heart,—these are the kind of downward steps by which many a Christian descends to a condition of spiritual palsy, or reaches the point where God allows him to have a tremendous fall. This is the process which forms the lingering Lots, the unstable Samsons, the wife-idolizing Solomons, the inconsistent Asas, the pliable Jehoshaphats, the over-careful Marthas,—of whom so many are to be found in the Church of Christ. Often the simple history of such cases is this,—they became *careless about private prayer*.

Reader, you may be very sure men fall in private, long before they fall in public. They are backsliders on their knees long before they backslide openly in the eyes of the world. Like Peter, they first disregard the Lord's warning to watch and pray; and then, like Peter, their strength is gone, and in the hour of temptation they deny their Lord.

The world takes notice of their fall, and scoffs loudly. But the world knows nothing of the real reason. The heathen succeeded in making the old Christian Father, Origen, offer incense to an idol, by threatening him with a punishment worse than death. They then triumphed greatly at the sight of his cowardice and apostasy. But the heathen did not know the fact, which Origen himself tells us, that on that very morning he had left his bed-chamber hastily, and without finishing his usual prayers.

Reader, if you are a Christian indeed, I trust you will never be a backslider. But if you do not wish

to be a backsliding Christian, remember the question I ask you,—*Do you pray?*

Moreover, we live in a world where sorrow abounds. This has always been its state since sin came in. There cannot be sin without sorrow. And till sin is driven out from the world, it is vain for any one to suppose he can escape sorrow.

Some without doubt have a larger cup of sorrow to drink than others. But few are to be found who live long without sorrows or care of some sort or another. Our bodies, our property, our families, our children, our relatives, our friends, our neighbors, our worldly callings,—each and all of these are fountains of care. Sickness, deaths, losses, disappointments, partings, separations, ingratitude, slander,—all these are common things. We cannot get through life without them. Some day or other they find us out. The greater our affections, the deeper our afflictions; and the more we love, the more we have to weep.

And what is the best receipt for cheerfulness in such a world as this? How shall we get through this valley of tears with least pain? I know no better receipt than the habit of *taking everything to God in prayer*.

This is the plain advice that the Bible gives, both in the Old Testament and in the New. What says the psalmist? "Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me" (Psa. l. 15). "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved" (Psa. lv. 22). What says the apostle Paul? "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanks-

giving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. iv. 6, 7). What says the apostle James? "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray" (James v. 13).

The only way to be really happy in such a world as this, is to be ever casting all our cares on God. It is the trying to carry their own burdens which so often makes believers sad. If they will only tell their troubles to God, He will enable them to bear them as easily as Samson did the gates of Gaza. If they are resolved to keep them to themselves, they will find one day that the very grasshopper is a burden.

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"'WHERE is a God?' doth Reason say—  
 'I see but starlit skies;'  
 'Where is the sun?' So calleth at noonday  
 The man with sightless eyes;  
 Thou little child, from thee God is not far;  
 Jesus has come from above:  
 Thou needest not to roam from star to star,  
 For God is love."

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## PORTION FOR THE MONTH.

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### ROMANS AND ECCLESIASTES.

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**E**CCLESIASTES is a sad sermon from an earthly king. Romans is good news from the King of heaven.

Beginning with the dark side, Ecclesiastes, note that

**The Preacher** is a king; the wisest, richest, most glorious in human history (2 Chron. i. 11, 12). But his is earthly wisdom, simply that of a very wise man. He is

guided by reason, not by revelation, and is thus only a moral philosopher, though the wisest one that ever lived. Mark, too, that he preaches from

**Experience** — the bitter experience of one who has tested the things men strive after, seeking satisfaction where all natural men seek it. Where is that? Do not the phrases, “under the sun” and “under heaven” (i. 2, 13, 14), answer the question? Are the things of Christ “under the sun” or above it? If thus it is only earthly things of this present life that he has tested, we can readily understand his language.

**The Sermon** of the preacher. Alas, text and discourse are summed up in his weary exclamation, “Vanity of vanities! all is vanity!” Has a sadder sermon ever come from human lips? He tried wisdom and knowledge, the pursuit of philosophers and scientists, and found vexation, grief and sorrow (i. 12-18). How significant that wisdom, which sees things in the world as they really are, should only increase his sorrow. Next he tries the pursuits of ordinary men—mirth, pleasure, folly, house-building, landscape-gardening, accumulation of wealth, music, etc. Here was worse disappointment (ii.) so that after all, wisdom, with all its pangs, is better than folly. The wise man, at least, has eyes in his head, while the fool walks in darkness.

We add a word of caution. The preacher's conclusions are simply those of a wise philosopher. At the simplest things beyond this life, he only gropes and guesses. Is there a difference between man and beast after death? he asks. The wisest man can but ask, Who knows? Further on, reasoning from God, he does better (xii. 7). But his blind question is still that of modern science, whose confessed creed is agnosticism—“no knowledge” beyond this life. Guided by God's word, faith alone can say, “I know!”

But we urge careful study of the great lesson of the

book—that all “under the sun” is vanity, unworthy the pursuit of the human heart. Oh that young saints would ponder it! What satisfying thing can we find in a world that Solomon’s wisdom, wealth and kingly resources have searched in vain? “What can the man do that cometh after the king?” Only “that which hath been already done!” To learn from Solomon is to save ourselves from years wasted in dragging our souls into the mire, to prove the world’s vanity for ourselves. The preacher also reasons concerning

**God, Death, and Judgment.** Fools may doubt God’s existence (Psa. xiv. 1). A wise man learns of God from creation (Rom. i. 20). But Solomon also sees death upon all, an evidence that God punishes sin; from which he reasons that after death God judges man (ii. 16–23; iii. 17; xii. 14). This leads to his

**Conclusion** (xii.). If the vexation and vanity of human life ends in death, which ushers men before God to be judged, what can human wisdom suggest? Simply that, remembering their “Creator” from their youth, men should obey and “fear God.” This leaves men trembling before their Judge; but it is “the *beginning* of wisdom.”

What will the awful Judge do to those who turn from earth’s vanities to Him? The philosopher cannot answer; but here we turn to

**The Epistle to the Romans** where God’s own voice declares the rich provision of His grace. We have room only to name a few of its grand themes. There are many helps to be had from the Publishers of this Periodical to the understanding of this Epistle.

**God’s Good News** concerning His Son is its general subject, as the introduction shows (i. 1–17). This news is God’s power unto salvation, and reveals His righteous way of procuring it.

**God’s Wrath** against man’s sin, revealed at the cross of Christ, proves that Solomon reasoned well of judgment.

God will judge all who repent not, whether heathen (i. 18-32), moral philosophers like Solomon (ii. 1-16), or the privileged Jews, who had the word of God (ii. 17-iii. 20).

**God's Righteousness** in saving sinners is revealed in the Person and work of Christ (iii. 21-v. 11). Justified by God's grace, His righteousness is for us. Justified by faith, our faith is counted for righteousness. Justified by blood, Christ is our Righteousness. Sweet and blessed themes!

**The Two Adams** (v. 12-21; compare 1 Cor. xv. 45-49) are heads of two races. The first man's disobedience plunged his race into sin, death reigning over all. Christ's obedience unto death constitutes His race righteous, and they shall reign in life.

**Our old Man Crucified** with Christ cancels sin for us, justifies us from it, and places us under grace, which teaches us to reckon ourselves dead to sin, and alive unto God "in Christ" (vi.).

**Experimental Deliverance**, both from bondage to law and the sin in the flesh, is a most important subject (vii., viii.). It is realized by faith, which gives up self-occupation to rest in Christ's sacrifice alone, and in the Spirit's law, of life in Christ.

**Redemption of the Body**, and indwelling by the Spirit of God, are among the rich features of the wonderful chap. viii.

**Israel's Hope**, following the judgment of Gentile Christendom (ix.-xi.), is another great theme of this Epistle, which fairly glistens with the wealth of God's good things!

**Practical precepts**, as interesting as important, complete the book (xii.-xvi.).

If things under the sun are "vanities" even to a philosopher, what are they to a child of God who inherits

this heavenly portion? May our reading this month fill the soul with thanksgiving!

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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**QUES. 5.**—Is a “business meeting” connected with an assembly, an assembly meeting?

**ANS.**—It altogether depends on the circumstances. It may be only an investigation in a matter of discipline, or a counseling together in any matter for the welfare of the assembly, in which case only those recognized as most wisely interested in the affairs of the Lord’s house will generally be found together. They are not the assembly surely, though occupied with its interests.

But when some action or decision is required of the assembly as such, proper announcement of the fact should be made, and then those who come together are truly the assembly. Even then consideration will not be wanting for such as may be unwillingly absent.

**QUES. 6.**—Is the “Numerical Bible” by F. W. G. another translation of the Scriptures like “New Translation by J. N. D.”?

Is it merely for the use of his exposition of Scripture in a Numerical way, or is it intended to be used at Bible Readings the same as other translations?

**ANS.**—The “Numerical Bible” is a *new* translation of the Scriptures from the originals, and so highly valued by diligent students of the word of God that request has repeatedly been made to the Publishers to print an edition of the text of the New Testament in a pocket form, for easy reference in public meetings and for constant private use, which it is hoped may be realized at some future time.

The forms of expression in the king James or “Authorized” version,—so well known and justly loved by all English speaking people—have been retained as much as practicable consistently with a true and faithful rendering of the original. To this end the most recent helps to a correct text have been used, as well as the best translations, such as the “New Translation” by J. N. D.; the “Revised Version” etc. carefully compared.

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## FAITH, LOVE, HOPE.

(Col. 1. 3—6.)

I JUST want to say a brief word about these three things. These Colossians had faith in the right person; love to the right people; and a hope in the right place. No wonder Paul thanked God when he heard of it. It had come to them by the hearing of faith. A faithful minister of Christ had carried the gospel message to them and they had received it, and it brought forth its fruits. It always does when received in faith into the soul; and where the fruits are not seen we are not called upon to believe that the gospel message has been received in reality.

They had faith in the right Person. It was "faith in Christ Jesus." They had "no confidence in the flesh." It was not a little bit of faith in Christ and a big bit in themselves. It was not a company concern in which Christ was simply one of the company. It was Christ alone. My reader have *you* exercised faith in Christ alone? You *must* do so if ever you are to be in the glory of God.

Observe it was not for the strength of their faith, or the amount of their faith, or the kind of faith, that Paul gave thanks, but because their faith was in the right Object, it was in Christ Jesus. We sometimes find that people who are anxious to be saved are greatly hindered for a long time, because they have made their faith the object instead of Christ. They are looking at, and occupied with, their faith. They are saying; "I think I believe." "I fear I don't believe." "I wonder if I do believe?" "Have I the right kind of faith?" "I'm afraid my faith is not



strong enough." And all these foolish expressions only tend to show that their faith is the object before them, and not Christ.

Now we must not forget that it is not the strength of our faith, nor the amount of our faith, or anything of that kind that saves us. It is having faith in the right person. It may be strong or weak. It may be only a touch of the hem of His garment, or a grasping Him with a mighty grasp—but it is *He*. It is Christ. It is the right object. It is not confidence in self, but Christ. Then when we have touched Him, God gives to us blessing according to His own estimate of the value of the Person and sacrifice of Him whom we have trusted. He does not bless us according to our estimate of Christ, but according to His own. He knows the value of His work. He knows how rightly to estimate it, and blesses accordingly. How precious this is.

Second, they had love to *all* the saints. It was not love to a mere few who saw eye to eye with them. Alas, there is too much of that sort of thing in these days. No, it was "love to *all* the saints." Their hearts took in all. The new life within them necessarily and naturally took in the whole family of God, of which they were but a small portion. All had the same life, and nature, and hopes, and aspirations; and all are to be conformed to the image of God's Son, and share the glory with Him above. Necessarily then, the affections flow out to all.

We must never forget however, that flesh, the old nature, may work in the children of God, if not watchful, and careful, and prayerful; and such may fall into the snare of the devil, and be found in a condition and in a position where we are debarred from

following them, or having any fellowship with them. We are told to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. v. 11). What then? Is the love to cease, or does it cease then? Certainly not. In fact it cannot cease. But it will display itself in another way, by "*abiding* in the light so that there is no cause of stumbling" (1 John ii. 10). It will weep and pray for such, and long for their restoration, but follow them it will not.

But it is right here where so many make a mistake, and fail to distinguish between true love and mere human kindness, and they speak evil oftentimes of those who refuse to follow them in their unscriptural and evil ways. This is very wrong. It must be "love in the truth," and "for the truth's sake." We are never told or asked to lay down *the truth* for the brethren, but "our lives" (1 John iii. 16). God's holy truth must ever be given first place, and then all other things will naturally fall into theirs. If faith makes the Christian, true love will display the Christian (John xiii. 35); therefore let us see to it, that our love goes out to all the saints, but let it be "love in the truth."

Thirdly, "the hope which is laid up for you in heaven." What a wonderful thing to have a heavenly hope. We are not Jews with earthly hopes, and prospects, and longing to be blessed on the earth. No. We were "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world," and are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. i.), are "partakers of the heavenly calling" (Heb. iii. 1), and we are "waiting for God's Son from heaven" to take us there (1 Thess. i. 10).

There are no events to take place before the Lord comes for His saints. It may be at any moment. It will take place suddenly; "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor. xv. 52). The summoning shout will be heard and "the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thess. iv: 16-18.)

Now is, "that blessed hope" the hope of the reader of these lines? If so, happy are you to be numbered amongst those who are to be "forever with the Lord." Well may we give thanks for you. A *chosen* one. A *called* one. God grant you may be found a *faithful* one. Let it really be a hope in your heart, and not a mere doctrine in your head. Let it mould all your life, and demonstrate to a Christless and Christ-rejecting world the power of the gospel to *make* heavenly men on earth, and *keep* heavenly men, while on earth, till the time comes to take them into their own place and portion, with and like Christ forever.

W. E

*New Zealand.*

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## NOAH'S ALTAR, HIS FOOD, THE COVENANT OF GOD, THE CLOUD AND THE BOW.

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NOAH'S passage out of the world before the flood, into the world that followed it, is a very suggestive type of the passage of Him who became the Second Man, out of the old creation, (into which He came in grace) into the new creation. It was a passage through judgment. The waters which over-

whelmed the world that then was, typify the waves of divine wrath, deserved by man's sin, which rolled over the head of Him who knew no sin, but in purest grace took the place of it. The sentence of death and judgment rested on every one of the sons of the first man. This sentence could not be set aside. The man Christ Jesus just steps into the place of those upon whom it rests. The floods of righteous judgment fall in all their infinite power upon Him, but having sustained all their fury, completely exhausted all their force, they land Him on the other side of it all. He who once stood in the blackness of darkness now stands in the light. Once He was under the frown of God, but now He is in His full favor. But as He was in the darkness of judgment for us, so also He is now in the light and favor of God for us.

It is as passed through the flood that Noah builds his altar. The altar of the new creation, of the place of light and favor into which Christ has entered, and into which He has brought those whom He has carried with Him through the floods, is one of His own building and from it there is perpetually rising a sweet savor, an odor of a sweet smell. The very presence of God is filled with this fragrance so sweet to Him. He is satisfied with the altar of Christ. Oh! the sweetness of the thought, God is satisfied! However blessed heaven itself might be, if there was one thing about which He was not perfectly at rest, about which He was not fully satisfied, it would be spoiled. The thought that God was not in absolute rest would be painful, and a bitter ingredient in our cup. But, blessed be the name of the Lord Jesus! He is at rest. God is in perfect rest, a rest nothing

can ever disturb. An altar has been built which fully suits Him. The incense of it, the odor of it, delights Him. It is an altar that will eternally abide. It is the altar of Christ (See Gen. viii. 20-22).

But if God has found a satisfying portion for His own heart, an altar that gives Him perfect, eternal rest, Christ and those who are in Christ have also what fully satisfies them. There is an abundance of suited meat. But we need to realize the character of the meat that is given to us. A serious mistake is made by many as to this. It is by death that we are supplied with food. But the flesh *with* the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye *not* eat (Gen. ix. 4). How many separate the life of Christ from His death. Such eat flesh with the life, or blood. But the food of new creation is a Christ that died and rose again. There can be no right understanding of His life apart from His death.

Again, there are many who eat things strangled (Acts xv. 20, 29), *ie.*, they make His death to be merely a martyr's death, refusing the thought of the pouring out of His life, or the shedding of His blood, as being a propitiation for sins. But what is insisted on is that the food of those who pass through death and judgment (through Christ's dying and being judged for them) is Christ as the one who died under the sentence that rested upon them. Only such as in reality feed on Him as the one who gave His life for the world can in truth say, "Worthy is the Lamb that died, because the death spoken of here is a sacrificial death, a death for atonement.

How plain the connection between these first verses of Gen. ix. and the last verses of chap. viii. There it is the altar, the altar that in every way

suits God. Here it is waiting at the altar and partaking of it. What a striking setting forth of the nature and character of our communion with God! Waiting at and partaking of that which gives the heart of God its eternal rest. We are brought by grace to enjoy that which is the spring of every joy with which the heart of God is filled—the Cross of Christ.

We get next a covenant proclaimed. God announces Himself as in covenant relationship with Noah, his sons, and everything connected with him. It typifies the relations which God has established between Himself and the risen Second Man. God has revealed the character of these relationships in which this risen Second Man and all under Him stand. These relationships are permanent. They are to abide forever. The storm of judgment that has passed over the holy head of the man Christ Jesus has passed by forever. It can never return. The floods of divine fury which once fell in torrents upon Him will never fall on Him again. The floods of judgment will never again assail Him; and He is the protection of all that is under Him. All of God's relationships with new creation are permanent. They are immovably established.

In establishing these relationships, such is the goodness of God, He gives a token and tells us where we will find it. "I do set my bow in the cloud." Now the cloud speaks of the darkness that came upon the blessed Lord Jesus when He was upon the cross,—that storm that burst unrelentingly upon Him, but spent itself there. It was a cloud that baffles all effort to describe. None but the Lord Himself can tell what the fury of that storm-cloud was. None but He can measure the force with which it burst upon

Cross? No; they will rest there forever. "I will look upon it, that I may remember." It will be perpetually before His eyes. It will be the spring of the joy of His heart—His eternal satisfaction.

It will be, too, the occupation, the eternal occupation of all whom God will surround Himself with. For God brings us to Himself to have communion with Himself in that in which He finds His ceaseless enjoyment.

Genesis viii. 20 to ix. 17 is but a picture; but it is a picture that helps us in the effort to realize what is foreshadowed by it. May the reality that the picture suggests fill our hearts. C. CRAIN.

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## A DRY WAY THROUGH JORDAN:

OR, WHAT DEATH IS TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.

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(Continued from page 69.)

THE same comforting truth is taught, though in a different way, in the following golden passage: "I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" (1 Thess. iv. 13, 14). The rendering here "*in* Jesus" is not the exact thought of the original. The little Greek word *dia*, here translated "*in*," means *through*. The revised has "*through*" in the margin as being the Greek. Dean Alford renders the passage "Them also which fell asleep through Jesus will God bring together with Him." Darby's version has *through* — "Those who have fallen asleep through Jesus." Young gives it, "Those who sleep

through Jesus." The American Bible Union version has "Those who fell asleep through Jesus." That is, those who die in the faith of Jesus have a blessed hope through His death, declared in His resurrection, His rising being a sure sign of full and finished atonement by His death. So this blessed sleep through Jesus gives assurance of a blessed resurrection.

The apostle goes on to unfold the blessed hope of both those who sleep and those who are alive and remain till the Lord's return. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

The same hope is continued in the next chapter: "Let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him." That is, those who are of the day, when the Lord returns, whether awake—that is, alive—or asleep in death, they will be thought of, and will be changed or raised, and so live together with Him; or, as it is in the previous chapter, "be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, and so be forever with the Lord." Blessed hope! Blessed hope! We are indebted to the Lord Jesus, who died for us that all this might be ours. How our hearts should be won to Him!



The following rich passage will lead us to the thought that death is a servant to the household of faith: "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or *death*, or things present, or things to come; all are yours: and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. iii. 21-23). The apostle here is evidently referring to things which are blessings to those who belong to Christ; and he puts death among the "all things." In another place he says, "All things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. viii. 28). And the passage on which we are dwelling includes *persons*—devoted and useful persons—among the "all things," namely, Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas. And what were they to those to whom the apostle was writing? He tells us in his second epistle to the same assembly, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves *your servants* for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor. iv. 5). Thus Paul and Apollos and Cephas were the servants of believers; but death is placed in company with these servants: so that death, though in a different but blessed way, is a servant to the household of faith. But is not death an enemy? Yes, the word of God calls it that. But an enemy may not be in a position to harm you. If you are in his hands he can harm you; but if he is in your hands, or in the hands of your all-powerful Friend, he cannot harm you, and may be obliged to render you service. Such is the relation of death to the household of faith—a conquered enemy, through the death of Christ, put in the place of service. It would not be well for all the children of God to remain awake during the long, dark night of the Lord's absence. So this dark servant is used to put them

asleep one by one until the day dawn and the Lord come, when those who sleep will awake, and those who are alive will not sleep: yea, all, dead and living saints, will be "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump" (1 Cor. xv. 52).

So the Christian nearing the departing hour may exultingly sing:

Death is but a servant  
To set my spirit free  
From all that now is mortal,  
The Lord's blest face to see;  
And soon He'll come in beauty,  
To change this body "vile;"  
Then shall I "be like Him,"  
And ever know His smile.

So if the blessedness of going out of the body to be with the Lord may be compared to the passing of Jordan on dry ground, surely the redeeming of the body may also be, seeing that it will be accomplished by a most signal display of divine power. The untold millions who have died in faith will, in the moment hid in the mind of God, rise in a new and blessed life; and those who have not died when that moment arrives will be changed, sharing the same blessed life. All this will be done in a *point* of time, like the lightning flash, or, as we have just seen, "in the twinkling of an eye." This is what the inspired Word says, and faith desires no more. And nothing is too hard for the Lord; and, precious thought,

"His love is as great as His power,  
And knows neither measure nor end."

Thus the advantage of death being but a servant to believers does not stop with their spirits being with Christ, however blessed that may be, but the

body, though "dead because of sin," the sin being atoned for, can be redeemed. Indeed, it is already redeemed by *price*, by blood; so that the body can now be the temple of the Holy Ghost, the value of the blood being thus divinely owned. The redemption of the body by *power* must follow. "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. viii. 10, 11). Those who have the first-fruits of the Spirit are waiting for "the redemption of the body" (Rom. viii. 23). So the dark servant will not abide in the house forever. "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world cannot die any more" (Luke xx. 35, 36). "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. xxi. 4). Thus death, with all the results of sin, will be dismissed, and have no further place in the family of the redeemed. Blessed hope indeed! And all through Jesus! Blessed be that peerless name!

Without further proof, which might be given, it is clear that death, coming to those who are the Lord's, must come in grace, if it come at all. It is equally clear that they will not come into judgment for their sins. They have believed in Jesus, who shed His blood for the remission of sins, and God says: "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." True, "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." This is the awful situation into which the devil got us through Adam's sin, and our sins. So, to take us from under the appointment to judgment as well as death, "Christ was once offered

to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. ix. 27, 28). Thus, instead of appearing to judge His people for their sins, He appears for their salvation.

It is true, however, that the apostle is addressing believers where he says, "We must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. v. 10, R. V.). Though believers are saved by grace without works, yet their works are to be good, and they will be rewarded according to such works; and so far as their works have been "bad" they will suffer loss. All this the word of God makes plain. Happy for those who so use the grace which has saved them as to receive a full reward.

O beloved in the Lord, let us think where grace found us, and see how fully through the Cross it has met our sad and deep need, leaving no part of our ruin unmet:—

"Death and the curse were in our cup—  
O Christ, 'twas full for Thee!  
But Thou hast drained the last dark drop,  
'Tis empty now for me.  
That bitter cup—love drank it up:  
Left but the love for me."

Yes, yes, He has done it all, left naught but love; all, all, is in grace to those who believe in Jesus. God may need to chastise them, but this is in love—this is for their good—it is to free them, in their spirit and ways, from that which injures, and that their lives may be the outflow of hearts fully won to Himself, waiting for His Son from heaven. R. H.

## THE OCCUPATION OF THE PLACE OF SERVICE.

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### I. LEVITICAL AND PRIESTLY CHARACTER.

THE occupation by the child of God of the place of service in a right and godly way, amid the varied circumstances occasioned by the existing conditions of the present day, is a question the importance of which can hardly be overestimated. Our whole life is to partake of the servant character, for it is as servants for God, in one way or another, (which way must be learnt from the Fountain-Head of all service) that we are left in the world.

We are delivered through the grace of our God from bondage to sin, delivered from subjection to the power of Satan, and are now "bondmen to God," the servants of His will. We are to bear before men the testimony of the truth which has made us free. What a distinctive, yea, exalted, position is ours therefore to bear before men "the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 6)!

In this way our service, like that of the Levites and priests, is all in relation to the tabernacle,—the tabernacle of witness,—which is the witness in the first place of what God is for us, and as a consequence it constitutes the witness we are to bear before men of what He has for them. Therefore the Levitical and priestly characteristics of tabernacle service are the type of the two very important parts of our own service. There is this marked distinction between them the Levite service is toward men, though it be from God, and for God; the priestly service is toward God; the face is turned toward

the sanctuary, and the censer of praise and worship is in the hand.

In the first, then, the face is toward the world, and we are to bear before it that character which will mark us as being *for God*, while also delivering to it the message we have *from God* for it, the testimony of His truth. "We are ambassadors, therefore, for Christ; God, as it were, beseeching by us, we entreat for Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. v. 20). This is distinctively the Levitical character. How precious and blessed to think that we who were once in the kingdom of darkness, and subject to the rule of its king, Satan, are now privileged to proclaim to those in a like position to that in which we were enslaved, the emancipating truth which will break every binding chain and set free for time and eternity! Many are the ways in which we may be occupied with such service. The very manner of our life should bear witness of the enfranchised position we occupy; and, accompanying this, the word of faithful and loving testimony when the opportunity is presented—the handing of a tract, or their more free distribution, if circumstances permit. How much of this kind of service is needed—perhaps we may say more important than public preaching in a way, because many, many precious souls can be reached in this manner who could not be brought to public meetings.

We are passing through a world darkened by the awful cloud of sin, and in which, as a consequence, the power of the spiritual rulers of darkness holds sway. We are passing among men blinded by the god of this world to all true apprehension of their real condition, in whom the carnal mind, with its in-

herent hatred to all that is of God, controls the life. Into our hearts, beloved, God has shone "the radiancy of the glad tidings of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 4—J. N. D.), and this for the purpose that from us should shine forth the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Christ. It is the rays of such light which will dispel the darkness of unbelief, which will pierce the inmost recesses of the human heart and search it out. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. i. 16), and we are the called and chosen to proclaim it to perishing fellow-men, since we are its depositaries. In view of our great blessing and consequent responsibility, what is the measure in which this blessed light of God shines forth from us, which He would have illumine this darkened world? Are we fulfilling, in the ways laid open to us, our Levite service? May we consider with deeper earnestness of heart that "open door" which our blessed Lord has set before us, remembering that "no man can shut it," and go forth, in fresh energy derived from its only source, God's presence, with the wine and milk of salvation, to offer it without money and without price.

But indeed it must be in the energy, grace and strength drawn from the secret place of the Most High. And this brings us to consider the connection with Levitical service of priestly character. In this latter, as we have said, the face is Godward, its object the sanctuary. Thus, that which distinctively marks priestly position for us is that we have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Heb. x. 19). We have access to the very presence of God Himself, the veil being rent. We are privileged to pass by faith into that blessed glory, and

pour out our hearts at a throne of grace. How blessed to turn from the heartrending sight of this sad world of suffering and shame, to pillow the head in simple faith upon the breast of our blessed Lord and Saviour! What rest, beloved—what peace! It is the peace Christ has given, which the world cannot take away. Do, we as we should, avail ourselves of the inestimable privilege of communing with God, our Father, as those who are His children—owned as such by the gift of the Spirit of adoption? No fear, only filial love for the soul and heart to enjoy. And then, again, to Him we are a holy priesthood, for the offering up of spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving. How sweet to come to the golden altar in plain sight of the throne and the propitiatory (the veil rent), and bring our incense-offering of praise, knowing full well that it is accepted in the value of Christ's precious name—an odor of a sweet smell! The darkness is cleft, and the True Light now shineth.

Whence all this blessedness? The cup of blessing from which now we can drink to the full, God can put into our hands because He has first pressed the cup of our shame and judgment to the lips of our blessed Lord, and He has drained it to the last dark drop. The light of the glory in which we now stand is the eternal sequel to the awful darkness and anguish of the cross of Christ. We are freed because the stroke of divine righteousness has smitten Him, and now in the infinite value of that perfect sacrifice we are accepted. Yea, in the glory of His resurrection we stand before God. What a price has been paid for the blessing we are called to enjoy! How our hearts should be stirred afresh to lay hold of it all!



Surely, as we do this, our hearts shall be filled to overflowing, our lips be opened to speak the praise of Him who died. Then shall we be ready, our own hearts warmed by the love and light of the sanctuary, to go forth and perform our Levitical service toward men. It is important to notice in this connection that the Levites are joined to the priests for service (Num. iii. 5-10). The Kohathites could not bear any of the sanctuary vessels until the priestly house had entered the sanctuary and covered all, and of course not until Kohath had taken up his burdens could Gershon or Merari commence to take theirs. This plainly tells us that before Levite ministry there must be the priestly work; for upon communion and worship all other ministry depends; with such a basis alone can it be real and effectual.

May we then, by God's grace, as the days shorten, enter more fully into these blessed priestly and Levitical characters, which should mark our occupation in the place of service down here for our absent Lord.

J. B. JR.

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## DAY AND NIGHT.

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“Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge” (Psa. xix. 2).

**W**OULD that all the Lord's people were parable-readers! What a wealth of voices we should hear, speaking things of God! Precious truth everywhere would open to us in nature's fruitful analogies.

The heavens declare God's glory. The sun is a type of Christ. The moon figures the Church and Israel. Stars suggest saints and assemblies. The

wine is like the quickening breath of God. The ocean of air suggests the great Omnipresence in whom all live, move, and have their being. Water figures the word of God. Our daily loaf is an emblem of Christ. (How fitting to receive it with daily thanks!) Gold symbolizes God's glory, silver His salvation, copper the Word. Every precious stone gains its peculiar beauty in virtue of its way of transmitting light. The rainbow's glory, amid tears of storm, projected through prismatic raindrops, is no dim figure of the Urim and Thummim of Divine Light, refracted through the Word-made-flesh, alone in the awful storm of Calvary.

But where shall we stop? "Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God." Nature's kingdoms—animal, vegetable, mineral—unite ten million wonders in happy conspiracy to declare God's glory with the lips of a mighty cloud of witnesses. The pebble beneath the feet, the insect brushed aside, the flower we idly pluck—each is a parable. Nay, carefully examine any living thing,—plant or animal,—and its wondrous organism reveals a veritable book of parables. One after another, analogies appear of the various features of such deep things as our vital connection with God by links of eternal life and nature, and our union with Christ as members of His body. If we are children of God in communion, and not hardened scientists, we will drop the microscope and fall on our knees to lift up an anthem of praise—so rich is the treasure-house of parables in the lowliest creature!

Assuredly God has written parables in phenomena so familiar as day and night. A volume might be filled with them, which shows that we must here

confine ourselves to a thought or two. The year's four seasons prophesy—the bloom of life in summer, the decay of autumn, the cold death of winter, the resurrection of spring. Day and night press home kindred lessons every twenty-four hours. What contrast so violent as between midday and midnight? What does it suggest? Light and darkness! life and death! holiness and sin! mercy and punishment! communion with Life and Light and Love—alienation from them! blessing in the ray of God's presence—banishment into outer darkness!

The phenomena of day and night depend entirely upon our position in relation to the sun—a type of Christ. If the sun is overhead, it is day. Clouds may obscure, or a storm be raging; yet if the solar star hangs above, it is day, and we are children of his light. But if he be below our horizon, it is night. The air may be balmy, while gentle zephyrs blow and flowery fragrance lulls the senses; yet if the sun is absent it is night—the owl, the bat and the wild beast are abroad! Put Christ in place of the sun, apply the interpretation to day and night, and the story of blessing or of curse is told. Have we Christ? Then we “walk in the light” (1 John i. 7); we are “the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness” (1 Thess. v. 5). And as the sun is the life of earthly things, so is Christ of spiritual. Having Him, we have life; for “he that hath the Son hath life” (1 John v. 12).

Do these lines meet a reader's eye above the horizon of whose soul the “Light of men” shines not—in whose heart this glorious Day-Star has not arisen? You, then, *are* of the night and of darkness—a child

of wrath, a child of night! O come to the Light! Come! ere the wrath of God now abiding on you settles down forever, making your night eternal! God grant it may not be! But oh, do not tarry!

But some Christian asks, If night reigns over the world with Christ the Light now absent, in some sense are not even Christians on earth in night and darkness, though children of the day? Are we not sons of light who enter man's gloom to serve him? One would not deny this point of view. The professing Church on earth, looked at as a body with which natural men have mixed themselves, is so represented in Revelation (i. 20), under the figure of a lamp, or lamp-stand. Is not a lamp a light in a dark place—a light surrounded by darkness? Yes, indeed! It is a thing on earth, whose oil may fail, whose wick may sputter, whose light may grow dim or go out, so that the Judge removes it from its place (Rev. ii. 5). Nevertheless, it is the special object of this little paper to show that Scripture has a different way of looking at the true saints of God, and their mission to the world.

The whole world lies in darkness. It "lieth in the wicked one" (1 John v. 19, *Gr.*)—blackest midnight, surely! But the child of God walks not in that shadow, nor enters it even to serve. We are not of the world. God's work on the first day separated the light from the darkness (Gen. i.). His children are separated from the rest of men—translated into the kingdom of the Light of lights, while other men are in a kingdom of darkness (Col. 12, 13). We beseech the world as ambassadors of God, but carry the morning of Christ's glory with us. We speak with a worldling face to face; yet while in God's

thought he is in midnight, we who stand beside him are bathed in fulness of glory of the noonday Sun! We speak not of physical impossibilities, but of moral realities. And even the physical world affords a perfect analogy.

The same verse (Rev. i. 20) which represents the professing Church as a lamp, figures what is really of God in it—its spirit, or angel, the true body of Christ—as a star—a figure applied to individual saints in Philippians (ii. 15, 16). Look into the heavens! behold the moon and glorious planets, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Mars! Is not earth plunged in night? Are not these heavenly orbs like lamps, shining into the dark place? Yet are they themselves in darkness? Are *they* in night? If they were, would one ray come from them? It is day upon them; the sun is above their horizon; it is his glory, reflected in their faces, that lightens up the gloomy night of earth! They are heavenly witnesses, telling earth, though it be wrapped in night, that the sun still shines in heaven! They sit in heavenly places, beholding the sun's glory, reflecting his bright rays to a benighted world below!

Beloved saint! is this your position and service, and mine, as well as that of the whole Assembly of Christ? How do we answer to it? The light of a single planet is strong enough to cast a shadow. The dimness of one saint may seriously affect souls! The planet's illuminated surface, turned toward the earth, is sometimes but a narrow disk; and sometimes the orb is wholly absent from our night-sky. Dear reader! how is it with us? Moon and planets have their phases, figuring our failures. But we should have none. Keeping ourselves in the love of

God, occupied with Christ in glory, serving and bearing witness at every opportunity, we will not have dark phases, nor eclipse.

What a glorious calling, to sit in heavenly Radiance, reflecting down to the world all the light it has in Christ's absence! How momentous such a service! How solemn its issues! When the clouds are absent, planets, stars and full moon make even midnight luminous! Compared with day, such night is dim; compared with starless gloom, how clear and bright! And mark; on such a night, for all except the blind, is there not light enough to guide the footsteps, and reveal the form and character of ordinary objects? Saved reader! it is your solemn responsibility, and mine, to afford the world such light,—sufficient for it to discern between good and evil, truth and falsehood, life and death, in all essential things. How are we meeting this wondrous privilege, this grave responsibility? What are we going to say at the judgment-seat of Christ?

May the night show us her knowledge, and the stars search heart and conscience with solemn prophesyings! How they would sing together, had they our privilege! Night by night they serve us, enthroned in heavenly places, faithful to their trust. May they exhort our faith, and beckon to our courage, to mount up with wings as eagles, to run and not be weary, to walk and not faint!

F. A.

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## PORTION FOR THE MONTH.

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 LUKE AND EPHESIANS.
 

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**I**N Luke we see God, in Christ, coming out to man. In Ephesians we see man, in Christ, going in to God. In both books the death of Christ is seen in that aspect which the peace-offering emphasizes. God and man are brought together in communion, and man is blessed by riches of grace suited to the worth of Christ's sacrifice.

To take up one of the Gospels is like entering the sanctuary. As we approach this holy ground, let us loose the shoes from our feet, exploring every chapter with hearts that worship.

**The true humanity** of our Lord, as born of the virgin, is the opening theme of Luke (i.-iv. 13). We see a Man of a new and wondrous type, who is indeed "the Lord out of heaven," whom angels worship. And even as Man He is "the Son of God" in a special sense, begotten of God on the one hand, if also truly conceived of Mary on the other.

Yet the reality of His humanity dawns upon us with convicting power as the Spirit of God lingers over these holy scenes, showing us the little Babe, and then the Child, increasing "in wisdom and in stature." What songs are born in creature-hearts as this Babe is born into the world! Elizabeth sings in anticipation. Mary bursts into a wondrous hymn. Zacharias sings because his own child is the forerunner of the Other. And when the Babe is born and laid in a manger, the angels burst forth in a grand chorus. The shepherds also glorify and praise God. A little later, at Jerusalem, Simeon lifts up a hymn as he holds the Babe in his arms. Anna also gives thanks to God, and tells the good news to other

waiting hearts. From that day to this, human hearts have been filled with song as the Holy Spirit brought these things to remembrance.

**The Saviour** comes before us in chapters iv. 14-xviii. 34. The grace of the Saviour, and of the salvation He brings, are emphasized by Luke. Some very touching portions, like the parables in chapter xv., are found nowhere else. Other things are told in a way peculiar to this Gospel. Everywhere it is God's grace dispensed to us by the hands of a Man; God's face shining upon us from the face of a Man.

**The Man of prayer**, the Man of faith, the Man truly dependent upon God, and truly obedient, is also especially before us here. He is our pattern and example, as well as the light of our souls.

**The peace-offering** is seen in Christ upon the cross, where we see also the High Priest interceding for the people (xviii. 35-xxiv.). The salvation of the thief is only found in this Gospel. Last of all, the risen Priest and Saviour, blessing His own, ascends into heaven, to appear before God for them.

**God's will** as the source of all our blessing is the subject of Ephesians i. We learn that all the wealth of blessing which now comes to us through Christ is simply the carrying out of a purpose which God had before the world's foundation. That purpose is summed up in two things: (1) that the Man Christ Jesus should be Head over all things; (2) that His Church should be brought into this glorious inheritance with Him as His body, itself the fulness of Him who fills all. But note the rich details.

**God's workmanship** is the subject of chapter ii. There is a new creation. Dead in sins, we could do nothing; God gives us life with Christ, raises us up, and seats us in heaven in Him. Thus it is God's work from first to



last, as well as God's plan. All is of grace, and nothing of ourselves. We are "God's workmanship;" by Him "created in Christ J<sup>e</sup>sus."

**One new man**, formed out of Jew and Gentile, and looked at as the fruit of Christ's death, also comes before us in this chapter.

**A holy temple** and a house are two aspects in which the Church is viewed in this same chapter. The temple here is the Church as a growing thing, composed of all the saints, living or dead, since Pentecost. The House, inhabited by the Spirit of God, consists of all the saints on the earth at any given time.

**The mystery** is unfolded in chapter iii. In Old Testament prophecy the Jew everywhere has a place of superiority over the Gentile, when both are blessed by God. But not so in the present dispensation. Gentiles are fellow-heirs with the Jews who are saved, are no longer separate but united together in one body, the Church, and equally partake of the blessings in Christ unfolded in the gospel. This is the mystery (verse 6).

**The Assembly**, Christ's body, a living organism, is presented in chapter iv. Christ is its Head, from which the body draws nourishment. The Spirit of God indwells it all. There are special gifts—men fitted for special service; yet the body edifies itself in love by that which every part, every member, supplies, drawing from Christ, the Head. The Church as

**The Bride of Christ** is seen in chapter v., brought in when the apostle gives practical directions to husband and wife, whose relation is a type of that of Christ and His Church. Practical precepts for parents and children, masters and servants, and for our work through the world, also appear. The thought is that the character of our heavenly calling should be brought into all our natu-

ral relationships, glorifying them, as in Luke we see how our Lord glorified them.

**Christian warfare** is a most important subject of chapter vi. It is a warfare of principles, of truth against error, holiness against wickedness. Though we may seem to be opposing men in it, the fight is really against the wicked spirits in the heavenly places, who rule over this present age, and have the men of this world under their power and inspiration. Oh for the whole armor of God, the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit, and the knees bowed down in unceasing prayer! On the knees, in the sanctuary, is every victory really won. What need for this in our day!

F. A.

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**Ques. 5.**—Is the prophet Elijah to revisit the earth again after the Bride of Christ has been translated to glory? Malachi iv. 5. Matt. xvii. 11. What time do these scriptures refer to?

**Ans.**—It is plain from Malachi iv. 5 that Elijah—that is, one with Elijah's characteristic ministry—was, after Malachi's day, to be sent to Israel to bring them again to the right condition of soul toward Jehovah, that He might give them the blessing and glory intended for them.

It is equally plain from Matt. xvii. 11–13 that the coming of John the Baptist was the fulfilment of this, but as the effect of his ministry was yet left of God to the responsibility of Israel, with the receiving or rejecting also of the claims of Jesus as their King, both were rejected, and both are again to appear. This, of course, can only be after the Church has been taken to heaven, as the re-grafting of Israel in her own olive tree can only be after the cutting off of a fallen Christendom (Rom. xi). Then God will send again an Elijah, and the King, and in *sovereign grace* this time all prophecies concerning them shall be fulfilled, as also all the promises toward Israel, “for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

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## THREE KINDS OF PROFESSION.

2 Kings v.

IN this chapter are recorded the histories of three people who had to do with God the "little maid," Naaman, and Gehazi.

The three illustrate clearly three kinds of profession there are to-day among those who are known to the world as the Lord's people. Would that all the Lord's people were as the "*little maid*" in the earnestness and simplicity of their profession of their God and Saviour!

She was little in this world, not seeking for great things, nor anxious for positions and honors. She was a captive, longing, no doubt, with all her heart to be at home and with the "man of God;" detained as a foreigner against her will.

Meanwhile she performed her appointed task, she "waited," and the result shows she did her work in such a way as to command the respect of those with whom she came in contact; for when she delivered her message, they paid heed to it. Her message was all about one who could give healing, the "man of God," Elisha, which means "God is Saviour."

O fellow-Christian, to whomsoever these words will come, will you not, in this day of empty profession and open desertion of our Lord Jesus Christ, heed the message which the Spirit of God would give us from this portion of the Word?

Be satisfied to be of no account in this world "Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh" (Jer. xlv. 5). We are but captives here. Let us live with our hearts away from this scene, our minds

ever turning homeward, where our blessed Lord is, "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

We are but strangers here. Our citizenship is in heaven. Let us then be as strangers and pilgrims passing through a foreign country, our heart not with it, but with "the man of God."

While we are here let us do with our might what our hands find to do, seeking, by quiet, contented, earnest exhibition of our dear Lord's example, to impress others with respect, and thus to command a hearing when we shall find occasion to deliver our message.

Our message is to guilty, sin-defiled lepers, and it is all about One who can give healing—the true Elisha, of whom it is written "God is Saviour" (Titus i. 3, 4; 1 Tim. i. 1).

Let us be clear about that, dear friends. This same Jesus, who "shall save His people from their sins;" this same Jesus, who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification; this same Jesus, who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree, is also the mighty God—the Father of eternity—the great God who shall appear in glory—the Christ, Son of the living God, and the God whose throne is for ever and ever (Matt. i. 21; Rom. iv. 25; 1 Peter ii. 24; Isa. ix. 6; Titus ii. 13; Matt. xvi. 16; Heb. i. 8).

Our message to lost sinners should be clear as to the person and power of the blessed Lord, as was the little maid's "The prophet would recover him of his leprosy." "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

Blessed person ! blessed power ! Let us always confess both ; and let us walk here in humble, child-like confession of Him who loves us and gave Himself for us. This is the true profession which delights the heart of Him whom we love.

There is no doubt that *Naaman* was healed of his leprosy ; “ he was clean ” (ver. 14). In this he represents a sinner defiled by the leprosy of sin, who, taking his place under judgment (in Jordan), the place of true repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (Jno. v. 24), is cleansed. In his love to the God whom he has just come to know, he rightly determines not to offer “ burnt-offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord.” But, alas ! there is a halting : he makes reservation.

Had he been true to his profession, he would undoubtedly have lost caste with his master the king ; he might have lost his position and wealth and honor ; he would probably have been deprived of his command in the army ; but he would have been right with God.

When we have a single eye, an out-and-out acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus Christ, the world has no place for us any more. It gives its honors and rewards to those who are agreeable and “ pleasant ” to it, as *Naaman*’s name indicates. The world wants no one who is continually reminding it of judgment to come, but wants men and women who will deal pleasantly with it. “ Tactful ” these half-hearted Christians are sometimes called, saying nothing to give offense ; doing nothing to remind the world that it all lies in the wicked one, is under the curse, and hastening on to judgment.

“ When I bow down myself in the house of Rim-

mon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing."

No doubt "the house of Rimmon" was beautiful, and Naaman's master goeth there and leaneth on his hand; but the God of Israel was not there, and Naaman must walk in a path apart from Him when he went to "the house of Rimmon."

Have we no house of Rimmon to which we sometimes go, and leave Christ outside?—some place of worldly beauty or worldly advancement?—some place to which we go with the king, but upon whose threshold we part with Christ? Naaman may have held his honors and his king's friendship in the house of Rimmon, but he is never heard of as having a name among God's people, Israel. Had he chosen "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," and "counted the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures" of Syria, what a place might have been his among God's people!

O soul that at heart loves the Lord Jesus Christ, forsake the house of Rimmon! forsake the world's favor, and let it not lean on your hand! Let our answer from a grateful, devoted heart be, "Jesus only." Forsaking all else, let us "follow Him wholly."

Unfortunate it is that the profession of *Gehazi* (denier, or diminisher) is only too common among those who claim to be Christians. He was a servant of the man of God, but one of the unprofitable ones, who will be cast into outer darkness. He never served the Lord from his heart, or his judgment would not have come upon him. Spite of his apparent service to Elisha, he was at heart a "denier." He was one who stood in the way of others being

blest, and one who could not be recognized by God as having power with Him.

When the Shunammite's son lay dead, and she would bring her trouble to the man of God, Gehazi would come near to thrust her away. How many false professors there are who not only will not bow to Christ themselves, but hinder others from coming! How often is the name of Christ a reproach because of false professors of Christianity! It certainly does not excuse those who do not come that there is a "denier" in the way. Nevertheless a Gehazi is responsible many times for dishonor done to the name of the Lord. Then, when Gehazi essays to use Elisha's staff to bring life to the child (iv. 31), there is "neither voice nor hearing." There can be no fruit for God from the life of a false professor.

And now his true character comes out, as well as his judgment. We cannot see into men's hearts, and are not to judge their profession except as the leprosy in them shall be manifested; but when the Lord comes, He "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." Think not, false professor, that because others do not see your evil heart of unbelief and greed, that God does not. Outside of the holy city will be "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie;" and if in your heart you are false before God, you are hastening on to judgment, as was Gehazi.

The 20th verse shows us Gehazi coveting, which the apostle tells us is idolatry. All idolaters, alas, are not to be found outside of the Christian profession.

The 22d verse shows us Gehazi lying; one sin leading down to another, and worse.

The 24th verse shows us Gehazi stealing; and his iniquity being full, there is nothing now left before him but judgment.

And judgment swift and terrible falls. The appointed time has come, and nothing can stay his punishment. The wheat and tares may grow together until the harvest, and men may not be able to discern much difference, but in that day "God shall judge the *secrets* of men by Christ Jesus, according to my gospel." The judgment on Gehazi is "forever." Just as sure as it is that those who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ are eternally saved, so all who deny Him will be under judgment everlasting.

May the Lord lead His people into simple, child-like confession of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, that we may honor His name among all with whom we come in contact, for His own name's sake. Amen. F.

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## THE RISEN SECOND MAN THE CHANNEL OF ALL BLESSING.

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Ephesians i. 1-14.

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**I**T was never the intention of God eternally to bless men in connection with the first man. It was necessary to put him on trial in order to show the impossibility of his being a channel of blessing, but the trial did not imply that it was the intention of God to bless men through him. Furthermore, it was necessary that the sons of the fallen first man should have the opportunity to show whether they possessed the power to recover themselves. The trial of this question has been a fair one. There has



been no hasty conclusion of it, nor an insufficient number of cases put to the test. One after another has been given the opportunity to show the suitability of his being a channel of blessing; but not one has ever done so. Long and varied as the trial has been, it does not at all mean that God ever expected or intended to bless men in connection with the first man or any of his sons. The purpose of the trial was to show man's unfitness to be a channel of blessing.

God's thought all the time has been to bless men in connection with the risen Second Man. More than this, it was His purpose to do so before ever He made the worlds. Before ever He exerted His power to create, He had planned to put a Man at the head of all things. The Man who was before His eye and in His mind was the risen Second Man. It was His thought even then to bless men in connection with Him.

The Second Man is brought in and subjected to the severest testing to show that He is worthy of being the channel of blessing to men. He is proved to be a Man with whom God can link His name. We read that God was not ashamed to be called the God of Abraham. But God did not link His name with Abraham as a man in the flesh: it was as a man of faith. Speaking of men as men simply, there never was a man with whose name God could link Himself. Not until the Second Man appeared could God do that. In a sense in which it was not true of Abraham, God is not ashamed to be called the God of the Second Man.

But if God links Himself with Him, is not ashamed to be called and known as His God, it means that He is the channel of blessing to men—that blessing

which was in His heart and mind for men before ever the worlds were. It is as the God and Father of the risen Lord Jesus Christ that He has blessed us. It is in this character that He has given us *all* our blessings. How this does away with boasting! If every blessing comes to us through Him how impossible to glory in ourselves! If all is bestowed because of Him how every thought of self-merit or worthiness is excluded! It is to Christ we are indebted for everything. To realize this is but to make Him the theme of our praise and join with the apostle in saying, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

But what are the blessings of which the risen Second Man is the channel? They are all spiritual blessings.

First. We are holy and without blame before God in love. This is absolutely true of Christ, but it is not true of us except as we are covered by Him. What an inestimable blessing! It was planned for us "before the foundation of the world." It was God's thought then to put Christ upon us. This is one of the blessings He had in mind when He determined to bless men in connection with the risen Second Man. His intention was to put us in the same position in which that Man was to stand. His thought was to associate us with Him in His place of Son. It is a position to which we have no title, either natural or acquired. Indeed it is impossible for us to acquire a title to such a place—a place that belongs by right to only One. He must therefore be the channel through which the blessing is conferred upon us. But if we are to have His place as Son—the place of the Son of God in manhood, we must

be suited to the place. Christ Himself is the only possible fitness. It is only as in Him—covered by what He is—that we are suited to the place. We are graced—adorned—in Him. Oh, what a blessing!

Second. In Him “we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” How good to realize that our sins have not thwarted the purposes of God. The blood of Christ is the ransom paid for the right to redeem. He has title to forgive sins. It is His right to exercise grace. The right being founded on the shedding of His blood, there is no limitation to the grace. Whatever the measure of our guilt it cannot exceed the measure of the grace He has title to show. The redemption we have in Him implies therefore the forgiveness of *all* our sins. The forgiveness is free and full.

The grace He has title to show is not limited to the forgiveness of sins. It includes also the revelation of His counsels concerning the Man with whom He links His name. He has, therefore, abounded in grace up to the measure of making known to us His purpose to put that Man at the head of all things. The redemption we have in Christ implies not only the forgiveness of sins, but the knowledge of what He has planned for the glory of the One whose God and Father He is. How great a blessing this!

Next, believers—whether Jews or Gentiles have in Christ an inheritance. They inherit along with Him. They possess jointly with Him the things that God has put into His hand—things heavenly, things earthly—whatever He is made Head over. It is an enduring inheritance. Who can compute its value? What untold wealth and glory! But let us remember Christ is the channel through which it

comes to us. The title to it is vested in Him. He does not surrender His title, but holding that in His own hands, eternally, He takes us into joint possession with Himself.

Finally, in Him we have the Spirit of God—the seal or mark which God has put upon us as witnessing that He has claimed us for the day of glory, and the power for present apprehension and enjoyment of the things to which we are heirs—joint heirs with Christ, while yet we wait to be put in possession of them.

These are our blessings—the blessings with which we are blessed in Christ. Everything is included. It is a broad, comprehensive view of them—not a detailed enumeration, the point here being to emphasize the essential fact that Christ is the channel through which all flows to us. He is the One with whom God has linked His name. He is not ashamed to be called and known as His God and Father. It is in this character that He has blessed us. He has blessed us richly, but it is all in connection with Christ.

If, then, Christ is the channel of all our blessing, what place ought He not to have in our hearts and thoughts? Does He get His due from us?

C. CRAIN.

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ONE great thing we have to seek is, that communion with Christ Himself be as strong as all the doctrines we hold or teach. Without that the doctrine itself will have no force: besides, we ourselves shall not be with God in it, and after all, that is all.

J. N. D.

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## A "DRY" WAY THROUGH JORDAN

OR WHAT DEATH IS TO THE BELIEVER.

What ailed thee O thou Jordan, that thou wast driven  
back?—Psa. cxiv. 5.

And all the Israelites passed over on dry ground.—Josh. iii. 17.  
O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?—  
1 Cor. xv. 55.

WHERE is thy stream, O Jordan?  
Where are thy waters fled?  
I see not thy dark current,—  
I see thine empty bed.

Thy waters rolled o'er Jesus  
When on the shameful tree;  
They stand now far off, yonder,—  
Thy channel's "dry" for me.

My sins were laid on Jesus,  
God's holy, spotless Son;  
He, dying, bore them for me;  
From me, thro' grace, they're gone.

Thy sting, O death, where is it?  
Thou hast no sting for me;  
Thy sting was left on Calv'ry:  
The Cross has set me free.

Yea, death is but a servant,  
Though it may give me pain;  
Sin gone, death cannot injure;  
Its coming is my "gain."

It takes but what detains me  
In absence from the Lord;  
And should not such a service  
Receive my heart's accord?

It frees me from what's blighted,—  
A scene of sin and grief—  
To rest above with Jesus;  
Will this not be relief?

Yet death is not abiding;  
 It serves "a little while:"  
 The Lord then comes in brightness  
 To change the body "vile."

This too's like crossing Jordan,  
 The way indeed is "dry,"  
 The change is "in a moment,  
 The twinkling of an eye."

Then, caught away to Jesus,  
 I meet Him "in the air;"  
 In soul and body like Him,  
 That joyous scene to share.

How rich and bright my portion,  
 Forever with the Lord!  
 In yonder heav'nly Canaan,  
 According to His word!

The glory's due to Jesus,  
 He, He has done it all;  
 I'll gladly cross the Jordan  
 Howe'er He gives the call.

R. H.

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## NOTES OF AN ADDRESS by A. E. Booth.

(2 Cor. xii. 1-10; Phil. 7, 8, 14-20.)

WE have just had a precious lesson from the picture given on the other side of the cross (Luke ix.). Those three favored apostles were taken up to the mount of transfiguration, they *saw* a wonderful vision and *heard* wonderful words.

Here, in 2 Cor. xii. we have a similar lesson to a sample man on this side of the cross, with added things, according as this apostle is the herald of fuller light and truth for us. Luke ix. is a vision of the Kingdom; 2 Cor. xii. a heavenly vision for the man *in Christ*—a taste of what awaits those who belong

to heaven. To the apostle to whom are committed the heavenly things God opens up the heavens and gives him a taste of his future home. We have two lessons at the very threshold.

*First*, God takes him up to the heavenly scene and gives him a taste of what he was to have in the future.

*Second*, the same man who has the heavens opened up to him now has to return to earth, and is left here to represent the One he had just seen above, and illustrate in his life the precious things he had learnt.

Paul saw visions and received revelations that made a wonderful impression upon him, and he could not find words fully to express what he saw. His soul was so raptured that he could not even tell whether he was in the body or out of the body at the time. This was to be the power within for his testimony in suffering afterward to the end of his course. It would enable him to bear in patience the "messenger of Satan" who would seek to hinder him in every possible way, but who, in the hand of God, would be the means of preventing him from pride—the cause of the downfall of all who become possessed of it.

So the disciples in Luke ix.: they are given a glimpse of the coming glory of the Kingdom, that they may in patience meet all the difficulties of Satan's opposition until the Kingdom is set up.

We have the same lessons to learn, and God uses the same means, though in a different form: we get glimpses of Christ in the glory also, that we may face the stern realities of the Christian life. Each heart knows what its own exercises and sorrows are in this respect, and Satan intends these to hinder us

also; but God uses them to deepen the spirituality of our lives. We have seen the apostle in the heavens; next we have seen his return, and then his exercises begin; now we will notice a few lessons which follow, rather finer examples than the failures we note in Luke ix. after the transfiguration; yet these failures all went for blessing. Exercise of soul is sure to follow seasons of elevation. When Paul comes down from the third heaven he is brought where there is need of prayer. Yes, he prayed three times. And is not this a great blessing? If we have things that try us, things from the *world*, or the *flesh within*, or from *Satan* without, do we not then value prayer more? Every exercise and sorrow, if taken rightly, produces more prayer and if this be the case the result is profit and blessing to ourselves, and glory to God.

But we move on with the progress the Spirit gives in this dear man's experience.

The Lord answers his prayer by saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

What a lesson we learn here! He does not get what he first prayed for, because the Lord saw something else was better for him. But He gave him *grace* to endure his circumstances, through which he would be the better fitted to be His servant. All this is written for us. We have *exercises*; we are made to feel the need of *prayer*; and next we learn that "my grace is sufficient" for the whole path until we reach the end and see our Lord face to face.

See now the *resignation* which follows: "I will glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ might overshadow me" (New Trans). He is living here for Christ; and *anything* that will enable him



the better to carry out the purpose of His heart, he is willing to submit to. What a lesson for us! The Lord give us the desire thus to follow the apostle even as he also followed Christ.

Turning now to Phil. iii. we get further testimony in the same way.

When the apostle returned to the sober realities of the life of service, the impress of that glory-sight remained upon him so powerfully that he says he counts everything here as *filth* that he might win Christ (New Trans. J. N. D., Phil. iii. 8). Things he might glory in and use, even enjoy perhaps—to Paul, the man who had had the heavenly vision and the glory of the Lord pass before his eyes—all must go for Christ. Compared with Him all is *filth*. What divine energy!

He knew Christ, but knew Him only to desire to know Him more. He had learnt to know Him, to walk with Him, and now he desired to be here only to represent Him. Now with a longing heart he is looking for the Saviour (vers. 20, 21) from heaven to bring the desired end, and so do we. Nearly 1900 years have passed since He left the Mount (Acts i.) and since He said, "*I will come again*" (John xiv.), but He is surely coming, and we believe the time is now very near. This last verse gives us what we shall get, and I love the last word, "Himself." Yes, all will be right then; perfect in spirit, soul, body—all, all *like* Himself, and *with* Himself. It is Himself who shall come, yes beloved, Himself the Saviour forever.

May the Lord help us to respond to such light and truth, that the yearnings of our heart may be, as we look on to the end, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

## STRENGTH AMID TRIAL.

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“My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.”

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DO trials and sorrows surround thee?  
 And griefs,—are they found everywhere?  
 Ah! thy Shepherd walks closely beside thee;  
 There's nothing to dread or to fear.

Thy flesh is but weak and vexatious;  
 Thy heart can do naught but deceive;  
 But *God* is thy strength and salvation,—  
 With Him all thy weakness then leave.

While now thou art down in the valley,  
 Fret not; earthly streams are all dry;  
 No earth-hills, though lofty, can shelter  
 A fountain so heavenly high.

In the world thou shalt have tribulation,  
 Thy Master has said. Let it come;  
 The *Lord* is thy portion forever;  
 Thy pleasure and wealth, in His home.

G. A. T.

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## HEAVEN ALWAYS THE ABODE OF DEPARTED SAINTS.

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IT is being taught that until Christ had ascended to heaven departed saints were not in heaven; and that paradise to which the Lord went when He died, and to which the saved thief went, was a lower compartment, or abode—a place where the saints awaited to be taken to heaven. Then, it is said that, at the Lord's ascension, paradise and its inhabitants were transferred to heaven.\*

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\* "Two Roads," etc., C. J. B., Delaware St., Kansas City, Mo.

But where does Scripture say this? and what does Scripture teach us upon the subject? As to the Lord having at death descended into a lower abode, it may be supposed that Scripture implies this by the quotation in Peter's address at Pentecost (Acts ii. 27), from the sixteenth psalm—"Thou wilt not leave My soul in hades, neither wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption." But the Old Testament does not reveal the eternal conditions of things. The veil was not withdrawn.

The sixteenth psalm refers to the Lord's death; and the interpretation of the passage in the second chapter of Acts tells us that it means that Christ was not to be left in death; that is, His soul was not to be left in separation from the body, and His body would not see corruption. But this in itself does not decide whither He went—only that He died—that for a time He was in that condition.

Now what is a fair method of interpretation in such a case? Is it not, plainly, to allow the New Testament to explain to us what the Old Testament does not? The Old Testament keeps us waiting for the revelation of the New Testament as to eternal things in general, as is well known.

Now what does the New Testament say to us as to where the Lord went at death? It tells us that He went to paradise. "This day shalt thou be with Me in paradise" was His word to the saved thief. Now we know that the Bible is a kind of dictionary to explain its own terms, thus inciting us to search the Scriptures; and turning to 2 Cor. xii. we find that when Paul tells us that he had been caught up to the third heaven, he adds that he had been caught up to paradise, in words that show us plainly that in

the two utterances he was speaking of the same place, and that paradise is heaven.

Is it not therefore the plain teaching of the New Testament that paradise is heaven, and therefore that when the Lord's soul was in hades, it meant that His soul—that is, He Himself—was separate from His body, but that while His body was in the tomb He Himself was in paradise—that is, in heaven?

There is surely no warrant in Scripture for the strange theory that paradise was a lower abode, and that it and its inhabitants were taken to heaven when the Lord ascended.

If Scripture does not use Scripture terms with uniform significance, and paradise means heaven in one place and something else in another, what basis of interpretation is left us, what confidence can we have in searching the Scriptures? But Scripture tells us that paradise is heaven, and says nothing about a transfer: what necessity, then, for a thought that is both grotesque and unscriptural, except the necessity of a second error to consist with a first!

Shall we decide what Scripture should tell us? or shall we wait to find what Scripture does tell us? That we all need to be upon our guard here is freely acknowledged. But if Scripture takes us beyond the dark shadows of our own thoughts into the light of divine and heavenly revelations, let us not linger in the shadow, but rejoice for the consolation and the grace.

As to the Lord having "descended into the lower parts of the earth" (Eph. iv. 9), men live on the earth's surface; He went beneath it; He died, and was buried. And as to the marginal rendering, that

when He ascended He "led a multitude of captives" (Eph. iv. 8), the translation in the body of the text, in our common version, is, "He led captivity captive;" with which agree the translations of J. N. D., F. W. G., and the Revised Version—without any notes. If it is meant by "He led a multitude of captives" that the saints were captives till then, this would be an unworthy thought. Abraham, David and the prophets were not captives to the enemy. They were worshipers of God, and rejoiced in Him, and were certainly not less than they were here when they had gone from this scene.

But let us now consider briefly the general tenor of Scripture on the subject.

Moses and Elias appeared in glory with Christ upon the mount, and a voice came from the cloud. Peter tells us (1 Peter i.) that this voice "came from heaven:" and if Moses and Elias were in heaven, so were all the departed saints of old. And the fact that they were so presented, these two, without explanation, shows that we need none. There could be no other place for departed children of God but where God dwells; that is, heaven. Is it not a striking proof of how self-evidently plain a doctrine is supposed to be, when a passage not primarily set forth to prove it, yet in reality declares it? as the Lord showed the Sadducees (who denied the existence of the spirit) their ignorance of "Scripture and the power of God" by quoting from it, "Moses called the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; —for He is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him" (Luke xx. 37).

Why should we desire to think that God's children, when released from this life in the olden time,

were debarred from His presence? Would it be to His glory? Why prefer to have the mind groping in some lower abode, when Scripture occupies us with the brightness and blessedness of His presence?

Shall we say the Lord<sup>1</sup> could not enter heaven when the Cross was accomplished? We need to be careful here. "By His own blood" He entered in (Heb. ix. 12). It is true that this entrance, officially, was at the end of forty days, as High Priest; but it was *by His blood*. The work was finished on the cross, on the basis of which He entered at the end of forty days. There was nothing therefore to hinder His entering personally at once, which, as we have seen, He did. He was in paradise—in heaven; His body in the tomb, for the appointed time.

We do not look in the Old Testament to find a revelation about the condition of the departed. It is not to be found there.\* But the New Testament tells us that Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, and that he and others desired "a better country, that is a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. xi. 10-16). And what was taught the disciples confirms this, for they were taught to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven:" and, again, they were told, "Great is your reward in heaven" (Matt. vi. 9 and v. 12). And again, "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. viii. 11).

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\* See "Facts and Theories," etc., F. W. Grant, page 144; "Sheol, Hades, and Paradise," Loizeaux Bros., New York.

It would be vain to say that this only implies that heaven would be theirs in due time—at last: for plainly, if they were taught to look for heaven as their reward, it was because it was their portion, and belonged to them of right by grace, to be entered upon on leaving the wilderness-journey and its trials. This hope sustained the pilgrims through the wilderness of this world in every age. Nothing less than this is implied by the passage in Heb. xi. Shall we allow the thought that after overcoming the trials of the way here, and bearing the reproach of Christ to the end, they would in any measure be debarred from His presence? If so, Abraham had a happier lot here, for he entertained the Lord when the three visited him at his tent door (Gen. xviii.).

But let us be thankful that Scripture allows no such unworthy and dishonoring thought. It makes plain that heaven was the expected portion for the saints of old at the end of life's journey and sorrow, as it is the hope of the saint now—"the hope that is laid up for you in heaven" (Col. i. 5). As already suggested, the very fact that this heavenly hope of the Old Testament saint is only referred to incidentally rather than in the way of needed proof, is the strongest proof that it should never be doubted. No argument should be needed to establish what is so plainly precious and scriptural and for the glory of God.

It is also said that the sins of Old Testament saints were not "put away," but only "covered" before the Cross, and that the word "atone" means "to cover." But as to this, is it not true that the sacrifices of the Old Testament did not "cover sins" really? On the contrary, they were rather "a re-

membrance again made of sins every year," as on the great day of atonement (Heb. x. 3 and Lev. xvi.). But they prefigured, as we know, the work of the Cross, in view of which Old Testament believers were under the forbearance of God—even while under the law (Rom. iii. 25). And so David could speak of the blessedness of one whose "transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered," and to whom "the Lord imputeth not iniquity" (Psa. xxxii.). Therefore, when sin is "covered," it is covered by the blood of Christ, and is thus "put away" from before the eye of God.\* But we must distinguish between the condition of Israel after the flesh as a nation, under the law, and those among them who were children of God, and who knew the grace of Christ in their souls. Thus David could partake of the showbread, which was only for the priests, because he realized that all was a ruin on the ground of law, and had taken his stand upon the ground of grace (Matt. xii. 1 and 1 Sam. xxi. 6).

So, also, he could take the ephod and approach God in priestly intercession (1 Sam. xxx. 7), and again he could shout aloud for joy (Psa. xxxii. 11). But, before the period of law, Abraham was plainly declared to be "justified" when he believed the testimony of God about the son of his old age—a type that foretold him of Christ; and he foresaw Christ's "day," and "was glad" (John viii. 56).

But the *proclamation* of the gospel could not be until the trial by law was completed; for to have proclaimed life and free grace to those who were, under law, to try to get life by works, would have

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\* As to "covering" and "atonement," see foot-note, page 217, Vol. I., "Numerical Bible," Loizeaux Bros., New York.



been clearly inconsistent. Still those who believed were subjects of grace, and possessors of life in Christ, by faith in Christ as the Saviour who was promised.

If it is said the Old Testament saint was debarred from heaven when he died, because the Cross was not accomplished, may we not as well say that he was not a possessor of life—that he was not born again? But that they were born again is certain from the necessity of the case, and we are plainly assured of it in Rom. ix. 7, 8 “Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the *children of God*; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” And if it is said, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John iii. 3), it is certain that if he is born again, he is ready for the kingdom of God, and so, ready for heaven, when he leaves this scene, in any age.

We speak of the Old Testament *saints*, and rightly. They were *saints*—as redeemed—as born of God. Shall we say then that “saints” were not ready for heaven?

In how many ways, therefore, does Scripture refute the error we are considering!

That departed saints in every age had gone to heaven, has been commonly accepted by Christians who have an open Bible. It may well be called an orthodox doctrine, and when such a truth is attacked it is a serious matter. The heart that is true to the Lord is pained, and driven to the throne of grace.

The error, as we have seen, dishonors God, in declaring that His own children, His saints, were not

fit to go to heaven—not fit for His presence. It casts a shadow upon the person and upon the work of Christ, in alleging that when He died He was for a time limited to an abode that was not heaven.

We need to have the loins girt about with truth against “the wiles of the devil;” and that we may not be “carried about with every wind of doctrine,” (Eph. vi. 14 and iv 14). May we “grow in grace,” and not have narrow thoughts as to His grace and power; and may we grow in the “knowledge of the Lord,” that we may be able to discern what would dishonor Him, and refuse it.

The enemy is pressing hard in these days to bring all into confusion. May we do as Hezekiah, when the enemy threatened, he “spread it before the Lord;” and both he and Isaiah “prayed and cried to heaven” (2 Chron. xxxii. 20). It was then a matter between God and the enemy, and the victory is assured. We must not be “at ease,” but “be vigilant.” And “that good thing which was committed” to us, we are “to keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us” (2 Tim. 14). Paul could say at the end of his course—and what a joy must have welled up in his soul as he said it—“I have kept the faith.” But there was an utterance that preceded this one, that we must not forget. It was this: “I have fought the good fight.” This was not sloth and self-indulgence. Inwardly he “kept the body under” (1 Cor. ix. 27). Outwardly, he “fought the good fight” (2 Tim. iv. 7).

May it be so with us, and we shall be kept from every snare of Satan, and the soul will be preserved by the truth, which alone can sanctify.

E. S. LYMAN.

## AN EXTRACT FROM ONE OF OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

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**D**EAR brothers in Christ,—I consider it my first duty, at the beginning of my letter, to render you my thanks for that booklet, “Fallen From Grace; or Castaway.” Oh, how precious is the word of God to me! Every moment I can spare to read God’s blessed and endeared Word, I consider gain to my soul and it increases my happiness as it reveals to me more and more the perfections of my dear Saviour—the Redeemer of my soul. I learned about Him in a time of affliction and trial. I was taught in my childhood that Christ died and suffered for our sins, but never knew Him in the light I do now.

Thus my sorrows proved a blessing to me, and so I now understand why trials and sickness are inflicted upon us. By their means I have learned to know my Saviour as my Deliverer from all my sins. Oh, that many sin-stricken souls may yet learn to know Him as I have of late, and find the rest which I have found, and which may be had by all, through His one offering on Calvary’s cross. A. S.

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## PORTION FOR THE MONTH.

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### LEVITICUS AND PHILIPPIANS.

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**L**EVITICUS is the typical book of sanctification by blood. Its types set forth the work of Christ as that which perfectly cleanses sinners from their sins, and sets them apart to God in sweet fragrance. Thus He can accept sinners as priests and worshipers, to abide in His presence forever. The corresponding New

Testament doctrine is found in the epistle to the Hebrews. The following are prominent in Leviticus:

**The sacrifices** (i.-vii.) all point to the one sacrifice of Christ. They are simply different ways of viewing it, each type emphasizing some special truth connected with the one great Offering.

**The burnt-offering**, with its meal-offering (i.-ii.), presents Christ's sacrifice in its grandest character. Here we see a work done for God, by the Son of His love, which carries out His perfect will, perfectly glorifies Him in connection with sin, and affords an everlasting "odor of rest." In this character the Sacrifice was offered for the sinner's "acceptance" (Lev. 3; *Rev. Ver.*; comp. Eph. v. 2). In such a sweet savor, therefore, all who believe abide before God. Psalm xl. and the Gospel by John view Christ's work from the standpoint of the burnt-offering. The meal-offering emphasizes the perfection of the life which Christ laid down at the cross.

**The peace-offering** (iii.) sets forth the blessed effects of Christ's sacrifice. It reconciles sinners to God, and seats them at an eternal feast, in which God, Christ Himself and saved sinners all have their portion. Psalm cii. and Luke's Gospel view the work from this standpoint.

**The sin-offering** (iv.-v. 13) emphasizes the terrible judgment of sin at the cross—a thing abhorrent to the holy nature of God, which He smites in awful wrath. Psalm xxii. and Mark's Gospel view the sacrifice from this standpoint, with the cry of the forsaken Substitute rising out of the black darkness of His abandonment. What a price His love has paid for us!

**The trespass-offering** (v. 14-vi. 7) represents Christ's sacrifice as that which repairs the injury done by sin to God's glory and man's blessing. As the trespass was to be overpaid, so has Christ restored greater glory and blessing than God and man were robbed of by sin. Psalm lxix. and Matthew's Gospel view the work of Christ thus.

**Aaron's priestly house** is the subject of Lev. viii.—xv. The anointed Priest and priests are typical of Christ and Christians (compare 1 Pet. ii. 5–9), whose anointing is the Spirit of God. Most sweet, therefore, should be our meditation over the anointing which sanctifies the priests, the sacrifices which consecrate them, their food, service and dealing with sin (leprosy), not forgetting the lesson of Nadab and Abihu.

**The day of atonement** (xvi., xvii.), in its broad interpretation, as in Hebrews, typifies the purging of the entire universe by Christ's sacrifice, with the sanctification of His people, whether heavenly saints (Aaron's house) or earthly saints (the nation).

**The holy walk** which becomes a people sanctified by Christ's blood is typically set forth. It includes our responsibility as saints (xviii.—xx.), and our special responsibilities as priests (xxi., xxii.).

God's blessings, on the basis of sacrifice, are summed up at the end (xxiii.—xxviii.). God's feast-days and rest, the light of testimony, the provision for communion, and our holy character when in final possession of the land of promise, all have their place here. Possession of the land is the glorious consummation.

PHILIPPIANS gives a summary of Christian practice, closing Paul's first series of epistles. It presents the (1) character, (2) Example, (3) Object and (4) joy which should mark the life of one who has been laid hold of by the truth brought out in Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, and Colossians.

(1) **Our character** should be Pauline. We should be defenders of the gospel, partaking of Paul's grace; sincere, filled with fruits of righteousness, with a manner of life consistent with the gospel and unterrified by the adversaries, knowing it is God's *gift* to us not alone to believe but to "suffer" for Christ's sake, having the same conflict seen in Paul.

(2) **Our Example**, however, more perfect even than Paul, is Christ Himself. We are to be animated by the same tenderness, mercy, love and humility seen in Christ Jesus in His amazing journey from the glory to the cross. Thus shall we shine as lights in a dark world, holding forth the Word of Life as sons of God without rebuke, in contrast with those who seek their own things. Timothy and Epaphroditus were practical illustrations of this grace. How blessed some day to find our names upon the same roll of honor!

(3) **Our Object**, as well as our Example, should be Christ. Worshiping God, glorifying Christ, refusing the flesh, despising all its glories in, forgetting what lies behind, whether to our praise or condemnation, we are to speed on in the race with eye fixed on the prize of our heavenly calling—Christ Himself. Would we finish as victors? Then we must not shrink from fellowship with Christ's sufferings, and conformity to His death. But think of Philippians ii.—did not the downward path lead Christ to the highest glory? And need we fear it? Nay; for it brings to us the sweet benediction of our Lord's "Well done!"

(4) **Our joy** is thus in Christ alone, and this is the secret of strength amid all circumstances. Temperance, freedom from anxiety, liberty for prayer and praise, heart and mind garrisoned by the peace of God—these are certain fruits of joy in Christ. Joy in Him occupies with the "lovely" things of which He is the centre; and whether we are abased or abound, full or hungry, we are satisfied. Never is Christ more precious than when circumstances fail—if He is indeed our joy. And what a savor in all such service! Though it be but a communication of carnal things, it becomes the odor of a sweet fragrance of Christ, a sacrifice well-pleasing to God. Oh, to know the power of this—not merely in theory!

F. A.

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## THE WITNESS OF THE BOOK OF JOSHUA TO THE MOSAIC AUTHORSHIP OF THE PENTATEUCH.

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THE death of Moses is an historic event. It occurred in the early part of the year 1405 B. C., some weeks before the passage of the Jordan. The mission of Moses, whatever it was, was complete. His work was finished. He leaves it as a legacy to his successors. But what was his work? The answer of the word of God is nowhere equivocal. It uniformly maintains that the law was given by Moses. Moses, while he was alive in the world, not only acted as a mediator between God and the generation of Israel of his day, but by divine authority established the covenant relationship under which they and their successors were to be the people of God and enjoy His blessing. Now, the history of the children of Israel under these covenant relationships is to be distinguished from the establishment of the relationships. Moses is not the author of their history under the covenant, but the author, under God, of the covenant under which their history occurred. He gave by divine direction all the laws by which their conduct was to be regulated. He promulgated all the divine communications in regard to the establishment of the covenant. He wrote the history of the communication of the covenant. When he died, the work of communicating the covenant was finished. He left thus a body of writings which ever after was referred to under specific names, such as, The Law, The Law of Moses, This Book of the Law. These terms do not apply simply

to the testimony,—the tables of the law, put into the ark,—but to the entire body of the writings of Moses, i. e., the authorized copy of the history of the establishment of the covenant.

That this body of writings existed, complete and perfect, and was known as the work of Moses, the book of Joshua is a sufficient witness. In chapter i. 1.-9, we have the Lord's first communication to Joshua after the death of Moses. He begins by giving Joshua a command to pass over Jordan into the land He had promised them. He refers to His promise as one already well known—"As I said unto Moses." He evidently speaks of it as a promise He had authorized Moses to communicate to the people. He is thus referring to it not simply as something Moses knew about, but as something he had written about also. Further, in verse 7, Joshua is exhorted to "observe to do according to all the law, which Moses My servant commanded thee;" and in verse 8 he is told, "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein." He is not speaking here of a law to be promulgated hundreds of years later, but of one already existing, and that too by divine authority. "This book of the law" was a well-known body of writings. It had been already written. The one who had the authority to do it had commanded it. He had written it by divine direction. It existed among them, was well known, and regarded as having the stamp of divine approval. Further, in verses 12-15, Joshua reminds the Reubenites, Gadites and half the tribe of Manasseh of what Moses had commanded them concerning their



going over Jordan along with their brethren, and helping them conquer the land. Could it have been possible for Joshua to have convinced them that Moses had made such a commandment if he had not really done so? Surely such a fraud would have been exposed at once. Could such a fraud have been imposed upon the nation at any time, say in Josiah's day, or after the captivity? I am bold to declare it impossible. If no such arrangement had been ordered, it would not be found in the book of the law of Moses. Nothing purporting to be by him would have the least authority, or be in any way binding if it were not one of the communications he had given by divine authority. The simple fact of its not being in the body of writings written by Moses would decide its claim to authority. But it will be said the people lost the work of Moses, forgot all about it, and it would be easy to persuade them when in such a state of ignorance. I answer: To succeed, it would be necessary to establish divine authority. It would have to be traced to Moses. If it could not be traced to him, no matter how much traditional authority there might be, it would not be binding. Just as now, there are many things for which authority is claimed; but they cannot be traced to the apostles. They have abundant traditional authority; but that does not represent the authority of God. For this we must look to Christ and the apostles. Their communications have the stamp of the authority of God. Whoever does not hear them (1 John iv. 6) is not of God.

It was divine authority to which Joshua appealed in chapter i. 12-15: "Remember the word which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you."

If by divine authority Joshua acts, there cannot be any conflict with what Moses has appointed. God is not divided against Himself. The word given by Moses is binding. It was divine authority to which the Reubenites, Gadites and half tribe of Manasseh submitted.

Now this principle will be found to underlie the whole book of Joshua. It is true Joshua represents the authority of God just as Moses did; but for that reason all that Joshua does is according to what "Moses the servant of the Lord commanded." "As it is written in the book of the law of Moses" was true of all the acts of Joshua that were divinely authorized and approved.

Moses and Joshua typify Christ and the Spirit. Moses gave the law. Joshua and others following gave communications from God that Moses could not give. Christ, in contrast with Moses, displayed grace and truth; revealing thereby God and the Father. But He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you; but ye cannot bear them now." Then He goes on to speak of the Spirit who was to come to tell the things He could not tell them. That Spirit came, and has told us these things; but there is no conflict between the things Christ told us and the things the Spirit has told us. Both communications have divine authority. The communications we have received from the Spirit are according to the communications we have received from Christ. In the same way Joshua's work was according to what was written by Moses. If Moses did not give the law, complete and perfect, the ostensible connection of Joshua with Moses is destroyed, and the evident type of Christ and the Spirit is lost—the true relation of Joshua's

work to the work of Moses is broken. How present-day theories as to the origin of the five books of Moses show the originators and defenders of these theories to be sadly lacking in spiritual discernment! The nature and character of the mission of Moses is not understood, nor the meaning and significance of the work of Joshua: the true lessons of both are lost. The very essential element of divine authority entirely disappears in their systems. Their views give us at the best mere human systems which may be compared with other human systems, but lack the authority of God: there is no "Thus saith the Lord" in them.

But how different when we turn to the Pentateuch itself! It is the voice of God we hear, Moses being the instrument through which He speaks. On turning to Joshua, we are still in the presence of the same God. The communications through Moses are not set aside. They are the tests by which we may assure ourselves that the new communications are by the same divine voice. Joshua thus witnesses to Moses, proclaiming him the servant of the Lord, His authorized representative, the instrument of the establishment of the covenant relationship, the writer of the history of that establishment.

How simple and plain! There is no uncertainty, no perplexity, but the voice of God Himself, clear and unmistakable—an authoritative revelation—a communication bearing the stamp of the authority of God.

C. CRAIN.

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## A WORD TO GOD'S DEEPLY TRIED ONES.

YOU have had a history, a history which none but the all-seeing One has fully read—a life, it may be, full of events, events deeply trying and sorrowful; or you may have a life of hidden sorrow, something which you cannot speak of to your dearest earthly friends, but which has been a lifelong grief. Indeed, the sources of grief are so varied that they cannot be enumerated. But your God and Father knows them all, so that you may truly say, “When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then *Thou* knewest my path” (Psa. cxlii. 3). He not only looks on you in tender pity, but He cares for you, and can and will use all that you are passing through for your real and eternal good, if you truly wait upon Him, and in a spirit of quiet submission bow to all He has, in His inscrutable providence, permitted to come upon you. Do so, dear soul, and victory is yours, and you will gain that which is of more real value than all you have lost. Your sorrow will be turned into joy, and this joy none can take from you. Let the blessed Lord Jesus, who loves you, and who has washed you from your sins in His own blood, be your strength for the way—yea, the portion, the Beloved of your heart, and the constant guide of your life during the “little while.” Though others may sadly disappoint you, and even prove false, yet He will ever prove true and faithful. In this way your remaining days can be bright, and your end peaceful and joyous; and when you get to the tearless shore, how fully you will be able to say,

“Our Jesus hath done all things well”!

O, keep near to Him. He loves you with a love

far surpassing all other loves put together. And He has all power. He says, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18). So that He can act out His love to the fullest extent. Power and love are combined to make you blessed. Then you may trust Him. Read something of Him daily in the precious word of God. Tell Him your whole heart. Be true to Him. It is sad that so many of those who profess His name are so false to Him during His absence, going hand in hand with the world which is an enemy to Him to whom they profess to be espoused!

O, beloved tried ones, be true to your absent Lord. Thus be practically ready for His coming. Soon the marks of sorrow will disappear, and your joy will be full and forever.

He is a present help *now* in your time of trouble. He will help you *now* in your weakness and daily cares. And to know that you have a happy home awaiting you, you can well bear the inconveniences of the way. Soon your night of weeping will be over, and the morning of joy will have come; then

"A day without night,  
You will feast in His sight,  
And eternity seem as a day,"—

"*Seem* as a day," because so blessed. No tedious hours in that day! Yet the sun of that day will never go down. And all is of grace through Christ. Praise God and the Lamb! You will do that forever, and no trace of former grief to mar your bliss. "The God of all comfort" *now* gives *real* comfort; *then* it will be *full*.

R. H.

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"SUNNYBANK," WAKEFIELD,  
NELSON, N. Z.,  
20th FEB., 1904.

To the Editor of *Help and Food*.

My dear Brother in Christ :

I'am sending you, enclosed, some thoughts by our brother Mr. Easton, about "Sealing" with the Holy Spirit etc., being the outcome of intercourse and correspondence, to which I trust you will give a place in "*Help and Food*." The subject is one which, as a rule, I have reason to believe saints are in much ignorance about, at least in this country; nor does it appear to have been grasped in its true bearing by several leading brethren who have written upon it.

I therefore venture to send it to you for publication in the hope that it may prove helpful to others.

Affectionately yours in Christ,

H. MORROW

## BRIEF REMARKS ON SOME SCRIPTURAL TERMS.

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**I**N the flesh," it seems to me, is the state of every unconverted person. It is simply man's state by nature. It does not mean his physical state as in the body, but his moral state of alienation and opposition to God, and can only be true of the unconverted (Rom. vii. 5; viii. 8).

"In the Spirit," is the state of every soul indwelt by the Holy Ghost (Rom. viii. 9), and is in contrast to being "in the flesh."

"Fleshly" or "carnal" (see 1 Cor. iii. 1, 3, New Trans) is, when a Christian (who is "*not in the flesh*" but in the Spirit," Rom. viii. 9) is walking according to the flesh, instead of according to the Spirit.

"Spiritual," is the manifestation of being "in the Spirit," and is in contrast to "fleshly."

The Corinthians were "in the Spirit," and *not* "in the flesh," for they were indwelt by the Holy Ghost

(chap. vi. 19) but Paul could not speak to them "as unto spiritual," but "as unto fleshly" (chap. iii. 1, 3). This shows clearly that "in the Spirit" and "spiritual" *cannot* be the same thing, nor can "in the flesh" and "fleshly" be the same; and, to me at least, this is a great help.

Then "in Adam" and "in Christ" are contrasts, and, I judge, have nothing to do with the reception of the Spirit as an indwelling Person, though if one is in Christ he must necessarily be also "in the Spirit." But we do not come to be "in Christ" by the reception of the Spirit, but by life. A family oneness, or a race, is constituted by the reception of the same *life* by all the members from him who is its head.

A man is "in Adam" by the fact that he is a human being, born into this world, and partaker of the same life and nature in its fallen state as Adam, and so likewise he is "in the flesh." And does not the correlative truth hold good? I am "in Christ" by a new birth which identifies me with the new family—God's family—children of God: and which likewise associates me with the Head of a new race as being part of that race. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Second Man and Last Adam, is the Head of the new race, and as quickened by Him, and possessing life in Him, I am part of the new race and thus "in Christ."

The question then arises, do we receive the Spirit at new birth? or is there something more to be believed and to take place before that blessing can be ours? \* Let us look at it thus. Do we get eternal

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\* The operation of the Spirit in producing the new life is not in question just now; all agree as to that.

life at new birth? Surely we do! There are not three kinds of life and each obtained in different ways, (1) natural life, (2) new birth life (of some undefined kind or character), and (3) eternal life as a further thing. With the Gospel and Epistles of John in our hands we cannot believe such foolish assertions. We therefore believe that we receive at new birth a new life, and that life is eternal life. Are we forgiven at new birth? We should again say, Yes, surely! We cannot conceive of an unforgiven child of God! Then can we have life and forgiveness without the Spirit? We are compelled to say, No! Then that *settles* the question. All else is merely a matter of knowledge or experience. Difficulties may crowd in, but they belong to knowledge or experience and not to the fact as to what God has given, and given as the fruit of the sacrifice of His beloved Son on the cross, and which is the portion of all the family of God in this day of grace irrespective of their intelligence.

We may be reminded of people who evidence new birth and yet cannot *say* they are forgiven or saved. Well, the question would be, Have we any right to acknowledge such as born again while in that state? If we have, then we have an equal right to believe that all Christian blessings belong to them—that they *are* theirs, though they have not as yet learnt it so as to rejoice in the fact of possession of them. On the other hand, is it not just *possible* that these cases may be mere religiousness, or cases of conviction which have not as yet reached to conversion?

I know suppositions are dangerous, but let us take one for a moment. Suppose a man in that state, that is, born again but not yet indwelt by the Spirit,



and dying suddenly; would he go to heaven? I shall be told that God would give him the Spirit ere He took him because the Body of Christ is being formed and every one born again in this dispensation *must* be in it. But how could God give him the Spirit if the possession of that gift depends on his having believed in the forgiveness of his sins and the man had *not* believed that?

It seems to me that Scripture joins faith and new birth and every other Christian blessing, now that we are in the full light of Christianity, and does *not* suppose a new birth apart from faith and the possession of all else that goes with it. "Of His own will begat He us *by the word of truth*" (James i. 18). "Born again by the word which by the gospel is *preached* unto you" (1 Peter i. 23, 25). "Born of water and the Spirit" (John iii. 5). If then there is faith to produce new birth, or if you like to reverse it and say, new birth to produce faith, then surely there must be forgiveness along with it, if Scripture is to be our guide, seeing Col. ii. 13 connects quickening with forgiveness. And if so, then the indwelling of the Spirit likewise goes with it, for this last blessing is given "to all them that obey God" (Acts v. 32).

The knowledge of, and enjoyment of these things, of course, is another thing. We learn them gradually as they are ministered to us by the Spirit through the Word; but not, surely, that we only get them separately in that way. That would be to make the reception of them depend on our intelligence, and not on the value of Christ's sacrifice which has procured them for us. "All things are yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's," but I have to learn

what I have got in and with Him. I got the casket containing *all* the jewels when I got Christ; I have to find out what is in it, but they are mine to start with.

It is said by some that we are "in Christ" by the indwelling Spirit. But what then becomes of all the saints before the cross and after the Church is gone? The reply given is, "Scripture is silent as to *how they* will come to be 'in Christ.'" But is this so? Scripture does not, that I am aware of, speak of two ways in which that blessing can be effected, and if that view be correct, then *all* saints *must* receive the Spirit as an indwelling Person the same as we do, and consequently they must likewise be in the body! This, we know cannot be.

Now there can be no question that *all* saints from Adam to the end of time are and will be "in Christ," for there will only be one new race with its Head "the second Man" and "last Adam." To be part of that new race then is effected, not by the indwelling Spirit, but by having the life of Him who is its Head. All saints have and will have that, and so will be equally part of the new race. Saints in this dispensation alone have the indwelling Spirit and form the body, and are distinct from all others in that respect.

Saints before the cross had life and were therefore in the Son, the source, or if I might use the word, the reservoir of it—life was ever in the Son. "In Him *was* life." It is not a question of how much they knew or understood about it, it is the fact. Life in Him must have put them in Him, so that when the Son came into the world, and died, and went on high, and was "made Lord and Christ," they were then necessarily in Him who was now *Christ*,

and are thus "in Christ," just as we are, and as all saints in a future day will be. That none in the past dispensation had the indwelling Spirit, John vii. 39 makes evident, and none will in the future. It is peculiar to the Church as the body of Christ and to Christianity. But all saints have the same life—His life, and therefore can and will be "in Christ" and form the one new race of which He is the Head and which abides forever, in contrast to the fallen race which passes away.

WM EASTON.

*New Zealand.*

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## SHUR.

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MUCH instruction may be derived from a consideration of the meaning of this name, when taken in relation to the passages where it is found.

The word means "beheld," from a root signifying "to look," "to behold" in a rather ominous sense, such as would be involved in the expression "father is looking," when the child is not suspecting that he is "beheld."

In Psa. xcii. 11 the word is in the plural and rendered "mine enemies," no doubt in the sense of "my [adverse] beholders."

Four times the word is translated "wall," viz. Gen. xlix. 22; 2 Sam. xxii. 30; Job xxiv. 11; Psa. xviii. 29, where in each case "wall" is no doubt a "rampart" whence the adverse party may be observed.

It occurs six times as a proper name, the first time being in Gen. xvi. 7, where Hagar is found by the angel in her flight from her mistress. "And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water

in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur."

Hagar is interpreted for us in Gal. iv. as the legal covenant "which gendereth to bondage." Sarai standing for the principle of grace.

The legal covenant has its fruit, though it be to be cast out, and no sooner does Hagar realize that she is to be fruitful, than she is lifted up with pride and despises her mistress. Then the righteous requirements of grace (Sarai) become irksome and Hagar flees. Those who are under law never really hear the law (Gal. iv. 21). Hagar is found by the angel near a fountain in the wilderness.

It is a wilderness, but there is a fountain in it. The law, in order to be fully tested, or more properly, in order that man may be fully tested by the law, there must be grace shown to enable him to apply it and learn its lesson.

This fountain is "in the way to Shur." She is on the road to "beheld," if she will but listen to her schoolmaster; but as we have said, those under law have not listened to it. She could realize that she had "looked after" the living One who had "beheld" her (ver. 13), but that holy eye was irksome to her, she did not dwell at Lahai-roi: Isaac did. (Comp. chap xxv. 11 and see Ex. xxxiii. 23.)

The Lord had a purpose in giving the law; it was a "schoolmaster" and had lessons to teach: so Hagar must return to her mistress. Grace must ever be mistress, even in teaching the lessons the law was designed to teach. On the ground of pure law man could not stand a moment.

The next time we meet the word "Shur" is in Gen. xx. 1.

Abraham, the man of faith, is leaving the sanctuary we see him in (chap. xix. 27) and "journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur." An equivocal position this "between Kadesh (i. e. 'sanctuary') and Shur" (i. e. "beheld"). His journeying toward the south would seem to indicate that he is seeking sunshine, comfort, and how often that is the case after some victory, after some special enjoyment of the Lord's presence; the armor is laid aside and the *victory* rested in, rather than the One who gave it! And he "*dwelt*" there. Gerar suggests "restlessness;" there he sojourned; could not, of course, be at rest there; but dwelt *between* the sanctuary and the place which spoke of the holy eye "beholding" all. How sad indeed when a child of God needs the warning that "Father is looking," instead of finding His presence his one necessity.

But not only is Abraham "beheld." Sarah is also, and so is Abimelech. He who has promised that grace shall reign, is "beholding" all, and sees to it that every attempt of the enemy to frustrate His purpose, or to mix with it some effort of nature, is turned rather to its furtherance.

In chap. xxv. 18 we have the next occurrence of the word—the third.

It was said of Ishmael, ere he was born, that he should "dwell in the presence of all his brethren" (chap. xvi. 12). And so here, the son of the bond-woman is passing away ("in the presence of all his brethren"); and "they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur." "Havilah" means "circular" and seems to suggest that dreary round of ritualism which effects nothing more than "a remembrance again of sins

every year" (Heb. x. 1-3); the other extremity being that ominous "beheld" they never quite reach, and cannot be at home in the presence of, though pride may blind them to enquire "Are we blind also"? or to cavil at grace which "receiveth sinners and eateth with them"—their outlook is ever and only Egypt which enslaved God's people, and Assyria (Babylon) which corrupted them.

The fourth occurrence of the word Shur is in Ex. xv. 22.

"So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur." A warning and an encouragement is in being "beheld" here. They are being tested. Will they remember that Hagar was "beheld" here? That even a bond-woman found a well and an angel's voice here? Can they trust the One whose eye is upon them, and who has just brought them across the Red Sea, to supply their need? Alas, the flesh cannot trust God for eternal life. The murmuring spirit is there ready to break out.

We next meet with Shur in connection with king Saul.

Israel have chosen their king, and the Lord is putting him through his schooling—will he obey His word?

He is told to destroy Amalek utterly, and not to spare. "And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt.

Saul was "beheld." Well would it have been for him if he had heeded the warning thus held out to him, but he "took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive." "Spared Agag, and the best of the sheep,

and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them" (1 Sam. xv. 7-9); so the Lord set him aside as unfit to rule His people (ver. 23).

The sixth occurrence of the word is in 1 Sam. xxvii. 8, in connection with David, the Lord's chosen king.

David is here in an equivocal position. He had "said *in his heart* I shall now one day perish by the hand of Saul;" so he flees into the land of the Philistines, and identifies himself with these inveterate enemies of God's people; accepts a position under Achish, king of Gath, and receives from him Ziklag, where he and his men settled down with their wives and families.

David invades "the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites," and was unsparing in his slaughter of them, but not because they were the enemies of God's people, but rather "lest they should tell on him, saying, So did David, and so will his manner be all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines." David was "beheld." He had pursued the enemy "as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt," going in the same direction, but going no farther than Saul had gone in chap. xv, but going towards that ominous "eye," that warning "beheld," which, had he been warned by, might have spared him the humiliation of chap. xxix. and the burning of Ziklag in chap. xxx. where even his own men spake of stoning him.

We may, then, gather up the lesson from all this, that if we will not, as Isaac, dwell at Lahai-roi ("the living One, who sees us") finding Him our one necessity, then He must force us to Shur to prove to us

that we are beheld still by One who will turn our very failures to account, as with Peter, of whom it is said, "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said unto him, Before the cock crow thou shalt deny Me thrice. And Peter went out and wept bitterly" (Luke xxii. 61, 62).

*Findochty, March, 1904.*

J. B. J.

## THE LORD JESUS CHRIST A SUFFICIENT SOURCE OF CONSOLATION.

Substance of a letter from Jonathan Edwards to the wife of Sir William Pepperrel, Governor of Massachusetts, on the occasion of the death of her son; written in the year 1751.

DEAR MADAM :

When you spoke of my writing to you I soon determined what should be the subject of my letter. It was that which appeared to me to be the most proper subject of contemplation for one in your circumstances.

And this was the Lord Jesus Christ;—particularly the amiableness of His character, which renders Him worthy that we should love Him and take Him for our only portion, our rest, hope and joy; and His great and unparalleled love towards us.

Let us, then, contemplate the loveliness of our Blessed Redeemer, which entitles Him to our highest love; and, when clearly seen, leads us to find a sweet complacency and satisfaction of soul in Him, of whatever else we are deprived. The Scriptures assure us that He who came into this world in our nature, and freely laid down His life for us, was truly possessed of all the fullness of the Godhead; of His infinite greatness, majesty and glory; His infinite wisdom, purity and holiness; His infinite



righteousness and goodness. He is called the "Brightness of God's glory and the Express Image of His Person." He is the Image, the Expression of infinite beauty, in contemplation of which the Father had all His unspeakable happiness from eternity. That eternal and unspeakable happiness of the Godhead is represented as a kind of social happiness in the society of the Persons of the Trinity. Prov. viii. 30: "Then was I by Him as one brought up with Him, I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him." This glorious Person came down from heaven to be the Light of the World, that by Him the beauty of the Godhead might shine forth in the brightest and fullest manner to the children of men.

Infinite wisdom has also contrived that we should behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ to the greatest advantage; in such a manner as is best fitted to engage our attention and win our hearts, as well as inspire us with the most perfect complacency and delight. For Christ having, by becoming man, come down from His infinite exaltation above us, has made Himself our Kinsman. And His glory shining upon us through His human nature, the manifestation is wonderfully adapted to the strength of the human vision; so that, though it appears in all its effulgence, it is yet attempered to our sight. He is indeed possessed of infinite majesty to inspire us with reverence and adoration: yet that majesty need not terrify us, for we behold it blended with humility, meekness and sweet condescension. We may feel the most profound reverence and self-abasement, and yet our hearts be drawn forth sweetly and powerfully into an

intimacy the most free, confidential and delightful. The dread naturally inspired by His greatness is dispelled by the contemplation of His gentleness and humility: while the familiarity which might otherwise arise from the view of the loveliness of His character merely, is ever prevented by the consciousness of His infinite majesty and glory; and the sight of all His perfections united fills us with sweet surprise and humble confidence; with reverence, love and delightful adoration.

This glory of Christ is properly and in the highest sense divine. He shines in all the brightness of glory that is inherent in the Godhead. Such is the exceeding brightness of this Sun of Righteousness that, in comparison with it, the light of the natural sun is as darkness; and hence when He shall appear in His glory the brightness of the natural sun shall disappear as the little stars do when the sun arises. So says the prophet Isaiah: "The moon shall be confounded and the sun shall be ashamed when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and before his ancients gloriously." But although His light is thus bright, and His beams go forth with infinite strength, yet, as they proceed from the Lamb of God and shine through His meek and lowly human nature, they are supremely soft and mild, and, instead of dazzling and overpowering our feeble sight, like a smooth ointment or a gentle eye-salve, they are vivifying and healing. Thus on them who fear God's name "the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in His beams."—Mal. iv. 2. It is like the light of the morning, a morning without clouds, as the dew on the grass, under whose influence the souls of His people are as the tender grass

springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Thus are the beams of His beauty and brightness fitted for the support and reviving of the afflicted. He heals the broken in spirit and bindeth up their wounds. When the spirits of His people are cut down by the scythe, he comes down upon them in a sweet and heavenly influence like rain upon the mown grass and like showers that water the earth.—Ps. lxxii. 6.

But especially are the beams of Christ's glory infinitely softened by His love to men, the love that passeth knowledge. The glory of His person consists pre-eminently in that infinite goodness and grace of which He made so wonderful a manifestation in His love to us. The apostle John tells us that God is light, and again that God is love; and the light of His glory is an infinitely sweet light, because it is the light of love. But especially does it appear so in the Person of our Redeemer, who was infinitely the most wonderful example of love that was ever witnessed. All the perfections of God have their highest manifestation in the work of redemption vastly more than in the work of creation. In other works we see Him indirectly; but here we see the immediate glory of His face.—2 Cor. iii. 18. In His other works we see Him at a distance; but in this we come near and behold the infinite treasures of His heart.—Eph. iii. 8-10. It is a work of love to us and a work of which Christ is the author.

His loveliness and His love have both their greatest and most affecting manifestation in those sufferings which He endured for us at His death. Therein, above all, appeared His holiness, His love to God, and His

hatred of sin, in that, when He desired to save sinners. rather than that a sensible testimony should not be seen against sin and the justice of God be vindicated, He chose to become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Thus in the same act He manifested in the highest conceivable degree His infinite hatred of sin and His infinite love to sinners. His holiness appeared like a fire burning with infinite vehemence against sin, at the same time that His love to sinners appeared like a sweet flame burning with an infinite fervency of benevolence. It is the beauty and glory of His love to us polluted sinners that it is an infinitely pure love, and it is the peculiar sweetness and endearment of His holiness that it has its most glorious manifestation in such an act of love to us.\* All the perfections of Christ both divine and human have their highest manifestation in this wonderful act of

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\* Writing to a lady in affliction, Edwards dwells more on what Christ is personally to us. It is, nevertheless, of the highest importance to see that what makes Him an all-sufficient source of consolation to me, in any and every circumstance, is that His death on the cross perfectly glorified God, in respect of my sin. Hence, in beholding the cross, the thought of His love to God, is above that of His love to me. It is what he undertook, and accomplished, on behalf of God, that gives all its value to His work for me. It is also important to see that the cross was more than a sensible testimony against sin. The awful cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" implies something deeper than that; something indicated—not explained, it could not be explained—by, "He hath made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us," 2 Cor. v. 21, and His presence in the glory at God's right hand assures me of what the other half of that verse states, "We are become the righteousness of God in Him." Moreover, His death was my death—the end not only of my sin, but of me. "I have been crucified with Christ."

His love to men—His offering up Himself a sacrifice for us, under these extreme sufferings. Herein have abounded towards us the riches of His grace in all wisdom and prudence.—Eph. 8.

Herein appears His perfect righteousness; herein, too, was the great display of His humility, in being willing to descend so low for us,—His obedience to God, His submission, patience and meekness, when He went as a lamb to the slaughter, praying God to forgive His crucifiers. And how affecting this manifestation of His excellency and amiableness to our minds when it chiefly shines forth in such an act of love to us.

We see, then, how rich and how adequate is God's provision for our consolation, giving us a Redeemer of such glory and such love, especially when we consider the ends of this great manifestation of beauty and love in His death. He suffered that we might be delivered. His soul was exceeding sorrowful to take away sorrow and impart everlasting consolation. He was oppressed that we might be supported—overwhelmed in the darkness of death that we might have the light of life. He was cast into the furnace of God's wrath that we might drink the river of His pleasures. His soul was overwhelmed with a flood of sorrow that our hearts might be overwhelmed with a flood of eternal joy.

We may also well remember in what circumstances our Redeemer now is. He was dead, but He is alive and He lives for evermore. We have Him to go to in all our afflictions. He is not one who cannot be touched with the feeling of our weaknesses, but was tried in all points like as we are, apart from sin. He is a hiding

place from the storm and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Having found Him who is as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, we may sit under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit will be sweet to our taste. He said to his disciples "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." He will be our light in the darkness. Our morning star, in a little while He will arise upon our souls, the sure harbinger of approaching day; and our sun shall no more go down. We shall see His face; there will be no interposing cloud, no veil; the Lord shall be our everlasting light and our Redeemer our glory.

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## PORTION FOR THE MONTH.

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### HOSEA AND HEBREWS.

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**I**N Hosea we see Israel set aside by God, upon the principle of law, after a long and patient trial. In Hebrews the whole Jewish system is set aside. Hosea prophesies that Israel will again be taken up and blessed. Hebrews shows the ground on which this can be done. Grace must reign instead of law; Christ and His sacrifice displace the forms of Judaism; and simple faith takes the place of man's dead works.

The twelve minor prophets give a summary of God's ways with man under trial (the principle of law), with a forecast of His ways in grace (the principle of faith). Hosea, first of the twelve, presents this from the standpoint of God's *relationship* to His people. Jehovah and Israel are figured as Husband and wife, and as Father and son. This brings out a touching revelation of God's nature—holy and abhorring evil, yet moved by a fervent, jealous, yearning love, which can not give up His people even in their sins!

### **The symbolical marriage and children (Hos. i.—iii.).**

The prophet opens with a symbolic object lesson. Hosea ("salvation") symbolizes Jehovah, and in terrible irony he is told to do precisely what Jehovah had done. Hosea's "wife of whoredoms" is Israel, espoused by Jehovah under the law.

Jezreel ("the seed of God"), the first symbolical child, shows that there is a true seed, an "election of grace," in spite of the condition of the nation. This "seed" includes Christ, as well as the Jewish saints. Jehu, who is judged for spilling the blood of Jezreel, represents Israel as a governing power. As such, she has persecuted God's "seed" in the past, as she will persecute it in the future, when back in the land in unbelief.

The other children, Lo-ruhamah ("That hath not obtained mercy") and Lo-ammi ("Not My people"), are the issue of Israel's law-marriage to Jehovah. Her children do not keep the law, and, instead of obtaining mercy, bring themselves under curse. This proves they are not God's people—not a seed born of God, which "cannot sin" (1 John iii. 9), but hopeless sinners of Adam's race. Thus the law levels Israel with the Gentiles.

But in this very place grace can bless them (i. 10—ii. 1). When Jews or Gentiles come to the end of themselves, God can take them up and make them "sons of the living God," Ammi ("My people") and Ruhamah ("Which hath obtained mercy"). Israel's national blessing after this fashion will be the great day of Jezreel—they shall become "God's seed."

Chapter ii. (2–23) emphasizes the same lesson. The marriage under law ends in divorce. Jehovah puts away the harlot nation, repudiating her children as not His. Israel is thus exposed to her lovers—the present time of her rejection. Yet she is to be blessed. Her coming judgment (the great tribulation) will be made a door of hope. She will repent, God will betroth her anew, and

become her Husband in grace—Ishi, not Baali. God will then sow her in the earth: “Jezreel” will be realized in an earthly nation. During Israel’s rejection, the “seed of God” is called to heaven.

The rest of the prophet becomes clear in the light of these opening chapters. Chapter iii. represents Israel’s present condition. Stripped of national dignity, she maintains an outward allegiance to God, though still adulterous in heart.

**Israel as Jehovah’s son** comes before us in chapters xi.–xiv. How tenderly God has brought up His child, yet what self-will is manifest! Shall God give him up? Nay, His own heart cries, “How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel?” In chapter xiv. the wayward son is seen recovered, through the unfailing grace and love of the Divine Parent. Beautiful picture! Here and elsewhere we must carefully note the dramatic dialogue—Jehovah and repenting Israel speaking one to another.

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**God’s Son and Heir**, the true Israel on whom all rests, comes before us in Heb. i. We see the personal glories of God’s Heir, who, having purged sins from His inheritance, has seated Himself upon the throne of power. Angels, under God, administered the past age; the coming one is in the hands of this Man, who is also God over all, blessed forever. Amen!

**Christ’s work for His inheritance** is the theme of chapter ii. He tasted death for every thing. He is the Sanctifier of “brethren,” many sons of God, whom He brings into glory. He “takes hold” (actual salvation) of Abraham’s seed, the seed of faith, first laying the foundation in a death which annuls Satan’s power over sinners. Does the great Heir despise His inheritance? Nay; He is a merciful High Priest, who has made atonement for the sins of the people!

**Over God’s house** we thus see Jesus, the Apostle and



High Priest of the faith we confess. God's house is the universe, and the One put over it is its Creator, God's Son. But we who believe are now that house in principle, as those who, in this day of His rejection, already acknowledge the One set over the universe by God. The throne over the universe is, for us, a throne of grace, where our High Priest bears us up, and where God invites us freely to come for needed grace and mercy! (Heb. iii., iv.)

**The Melchizedek priesthood of Christ** is set forth in Heb. v.—viii. He has this priesthood from God, saluted Priest after this order in resurrection, after offering the sacrifice of Himself which makes Him author of eternal redemption to all who obey Him. The Melchizedek Priest is no mere creature, but God's Son, with power to save to the very end. His priesthood is unchangeable; He lives forever to make intercession for us. He is holy, heavenly, with all power in His hands for our blessing, since He sits on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.

**A new covenant**, in contrast with the law which only condemned man, is that on which the blessings ministered by the Melchizedek Priest depend. Under this covenant God does all—forgives sinners, takes their blessing in His own hands, so they can never forfeit it (viii.).

**The sanctuary, and the sacrifice** on which the new covenant rests, are seen in chapter ix. The sanctuary is heaven itself, not an earthly tabernacle or temple. The sacrifice is Christ's sacrifice, offered up for our sins at the cross.

**A purged conscience** is the result to the sinner of resting, through faith, on such a glorious foundation. He becomes a happy worshiper of God, with access into heaven itself. Even now, for faith, the place of prayer and worship is before the throne of God.

**Faith** is thus all that is needed on the sinner's part in order to enter into the fulness of this blessing; and in

chapter xi. a cloud of witnesses tells us that it was ever faith which pleased God. It is the testimony of Jezreel, "the seed of God."

**The Father's chastening**, a most important subject, comes before us in chapter xii., together with a summary of the glorious things to which Christianity brings us, in contrast with Judaism.

**Rejection with Christ**, outside the camp, (chap. xiii.,) is the present portion of those who walk according to this epistle. But we embrace it joyfully. Will He who brought the great Shepherd of the sheep from among the dead, and crowned Him with glory and honor, forget to give the crown of righteousness to the faith that walks here with the rejected Man? F. A.

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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**QUES. 6.**—Would you please tell me what the Scriptures teach in regard to Life Insurance? That is, is it right for a believer to get his life insured, or to engage in the Life Insurance business?

**ANS.**—We are not aware of insurance being distinctly named in Scripture, and cannot therefore refer to any passage specifically applied to it. Nor is this usually God's way in such matters. He puts down great general principles from which His people form a true judgment concerning the details of practical life. This, of course, is not so easy as, "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not," for it requires exercise of conscience, prayer, a single eye—i. e., a mind bent on knowing the will of God, and *doing* it when known. It is the way however of Christian growth and development—of passing from Christian childhood to Christian manhood.

A good test for any practice or avocation in the household of faith is, Does it cultivate faith in God? Does it place us among men as true witnesses who seek to lead them to put their trust in God? How is it in the light of such scriptures as Matt. vi. 24-34 and Luke xii. 15-40? There is nothing God loves like being trusted. It is the very secret of salvation and of all after progress. Is insurance conducive to that? The spiritual man must judge of these things for himself, for there are practical issues in such matters which may overtake him in which nothing but the consciousness of having chosen a path pleasing to God will sustain him.

On the other hand, where does the appalling indifference which is now so prevalent in the house of God *start* from? Is it not expressed in this, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes"?

## THE SON OF GOD UNDER HUMAN LIMITATIONS.

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**I**T is needful in all considerations of the truth of the person of the Son of God to remember that no one but the Father has full knowledge of Him. This is true whether we speak of His deity or His humanity. Only the Father knows the full perfections of what He is in His essential nature as one of the Godhead, and He only fully understands the absolute perfection of the manhood He was pleased to assume. On these points we need especially to acknowledge that real knowledge is possessed alone by God. All our knowledge is relative knowledge. He knows absolutely, intrinsically, essentially; but we do not. With us, knowledge is derivative. On all questions concerning the person of the Son of God we are dependent altogether on revelation—cannot have the least knowledge without it.

The simple remembrance of this will check any tendency to engage in speculation on what has not been revealed. It is always intruding where we have no right to go to raise questions about what God has not revealed. On the other hand, we ought not to be deterred by the greatness of the subject from entering the fields of inquiry which God invites us to search out. If we undertake to investigate such fields in the spirit of those who desire to learn what God has given, our researches will be profitable. It will not be forbidden knowledge that we are seeking, but knowledge that is intended for us to possess.

Much has been said of late in many quarters of the human limitations of the Lord Jesus. In a good deal that is current teaching on the subject there is manifest error as to His person. He is robbed of His true 'glory as a divine Person. In fact, the human limitations He so graciously entered into are used to deny that He was divine and thus, in such minds, the Christ of God is destroyed.

That He is God, in the true and real sense of the term, revelation abundantly asserts. He is Immanuel—God with us. If He were not divine in the highest sense, this could not be true. But to be true He must also be man in the true sense of what humanity is. He is then both God and man.

Now it ought to be evident that, as God, He knew no limitations that Deity is not subject to. He had full divine power, could and did use it. He possessed full divine wisdom. He knew all things. He knew them divinely. It was in Him as absolute, essential knowledge. It was the power and wisdom of the Godhead.

Before He became incarnate He was equal with God. It was not a usurped equality. It belonged to Him by a divine right. It was essentially His. But though being in the essential form of God He was pleased to assume the form of a servant, to enter into the human conditions and limitations of men. In this place which He took, human conditions and limitations applied to Him. It was not as God that He grew in stature and wisdom, but as man. Both these things are said of Him, but it was only true of Him as man, as being in man's human conditions.

Now He is set before us in Scripture as perfectly fulfilling these human conditions. He never drew

on His divine power and wisdom merely for Himself, however freely He used them for others. Having entered upon the path of men, He trod the path as men have to tread it. Men need the counsel and wisdom of God. They need to seek these where God has given them. In man's path the Son of God sought the wisdom of God, sought it where God had put it for men, and found it. He could say, "I will bless the Lord, who hath given Me counsel" (Psa. xvi. 7). In all His human conflicts He used only the means which God has provided for men to gain their triumphs—the written word of God. He did not meet the devil with His divine knowledge, but turned to what God had written for men to live by. "It is written" was His answer—His oft repeated answer.

So always all along His human path He depended on the provision which God had made for those who were in the path. Wherever God had made no revelation for men there He submitted to the will of God. In matters about which God had not spoken He did not turn to His own divine knowledge. A notable illustration of this is found in the Gospel of Mark (chap. xiii. 32). The Lord is speaking about the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds with power and glory. But God has not revealed the day of this great event. He has not spoken a word to men on the subject of the hour when this momentous event will take place. So the Lord as the perfect servant of the Father, will not draw on His own essential divine knowledge: He will not act independently of the Father. He observes perfectly the conditions of the place He has entered upon—the human place He has taken. He says, That is a matter about which I do not find any revelation has

been given. As a Man in man's place of dependence on what God has revealed to men and for men, He says, I must wait until God reveals the day and the hour: He speaks as a man dependent on the revelation of God.

Looked at in this way there is perfect consistency. There is no need of denying His deity in order to explain it. While thus we preserve the truth of His divine Person, which Scripture again and again asserts, at the same time we get a more exalted view of the absolutely perfect obedience and dependence of the blessed Lord. If the very Son of God Himself could come down into our human path of dependence, and there perfectly fulfil the human conditions of that path, what honor has He thus put upon the path. If He could put aside His absolute, perfect divine knowledge, and tread the path as if He were not a divine Person, but a mere man, and then say as in the sixteenth psalm, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage," does He not thus teach us the perfect blessedness of the path it is our privilege to tread—a path of submission to God, of dependence upon His will, of obedience to His written Word?

It scarcely needs that I consider other examples of this. There are, in fact, a large number of them, but it is with the point of view that I am concerned here. If we have taken the right one for the illustration that has been before us, we have found the one from which we are to look at all the rest. What is involved in the question is a right conception of the person of our Lord. To the extent in which we deviate from the truth as to His person, to that extent we rob ourselves of what lies at the very foundation

of all our blessing. It is possible to lose the foundation altogether. Many have done so, and substituted for the Christ of God a Christ who is but a myth, who never existed, and who would have no worth even if he had.

The Lord help us to abide in the truth, and above all, the truth of His person—to realize that He was very God and very man; and, while we trace His human path, to realize how perfectly human He was without losing the divine glory that everywhere shone forth as manifesting Him to be One who had in grace assumed the human. C. CRAIN.

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### "DEAD TO SIN" AND "YE ARE DEAD.

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"**D**EAD to sin" of Rom. vi., has for its type the passage of the Red Sea. "Ye are dead" of Col. iii. is the passage of the Jordan. It is said that the passage of the Red Sea must have added to it the passage of the Jordan, to be a type of Rom. vi. (and vii.); but the two types illustrate, as surely they must, different, though kindred truths—the Red Sea being in itself a complete type of the deliverance of God's people from the bondage of sin, according to the doctrine of Rom. vi. and vii.

In Rom. vi., we are dead to sin and alive to God in Christ risen, and so set free from the power of indwelling sin to serve God: reckoning it to be so, is simply keeping in mind the fact—by faith.

Thus, in Romans, we are set free to walk through the world as led of the Spirit, as Israel was set free by the Red Sea deliverance to follow the emblem of God's presence with them—the pillar of cloud and of

fire, through the wilderness. At the Mount they were called upon to yield themselves to God; so in Rom. vi. we are exhorted to yield ourselves "to God as alive from the dead" for "sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law (as was Israel at Mount Sinai) but under grace." The Red Sea deliverance did not bring Israel to Canaan, but it brought them to God—that is to the Mount: "Ye shall serve God upon this mountain" (Ex. iii. 12). So, in the Epistle to the Romans, we are not said to be in heavenly places, but we have the doctrine of our liberty to serve God. We are brought to God—alive to Him in the risen Christ.

In Col. iii. how does "ye are dead" correspond with "dead to sin" in Romans? The same as Jordan corresponds with the Red Sea. The passage of the Jordan illustrates the doctrine of Colossians. The believer is there presented as at the end of the wilderness: that is, as in heart having done with this world. He has nothing here. If it is asked, When will he have something? the answer is, "When He who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." We are dead and risen with Christ. There is nothing for us but to seek the things which are above where Christ is, and seek the coming glory.

The Epistle to the Colossians thus gives us a very peculiar spiritual atmosphere, and a very precious one. The early part of the third chapter is a kind of twenty-third psalm of the New Testament. May we abide in the truth of it,—mortifying our members which are upon the earth.

E. S. L.

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## JUSTIFIED BY FAITH.

ROMANS V. I-II.

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

THE apostle has already concluded his argument as to the impossibility of man being justified on the principle of law. He has shown the hopeless ruin of man, be he the lawless Gentile or the religious Jew. The difficulty as to the law, in the minds of so many, lies not in what the law is, but in what it was given for. There can be no question as to the plain fact, and we cannot insist too strongly upon it, that, "The law is holy and just and good." But when the question arises, For what purpose did God give the law? many who will readily assent to the truth of what the law is, will here answer wrongly.

It is not that Scripture is not plain enough in its utterances on this point. Its own question is: "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of (i. e., that we might have) transgressions, till the Seed should come, to whom the promise was made" (Gal. iii. 19). "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound" (Rom. v. 20). "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; *that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God.* Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight, *for by the law is the knowledge of sin*" (Rom. iii. 19, 20).

These texts, and many more, show clearly the purpose of the law was to bring out what was actually

in the heart of man—to give him a knowledge of sin, and of what it is as a principle of evil, acting in power when provoked by the interdict of law; for from law sin derives its strength. “The strength of sin is the law” (1 Cor. xv. 56). The gracious object which God had in this was the ministration of death and of condemnation. The sentence of this received by man would be the opening of his eyes to the provision of God for his need as seen typically in the Jewish sacrifices, or as now, in all its divine fulness, in the sacrifice of Christ. The law was a *ministration*—something by which man was to be served, if only he would accept the service.

The question is raised in Rom. iii. 31, “Do we then make void the law through faith?” The answer is: “God forbid; yea, we establish the law.” One or other of two things was demanded by the law—fulfilment or death. It could not demand both. *Fulfil* it we cannot—we are hopelessly sinners. *Establish* it we can. Its purpose was to serve the sentence of death upon us, and by the acceptance of this we establish the law. We establish it as being holy and just and good when we accept, on the testimony of the word of God, which is faith, its sentence upon ourselves as breakers of it. “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law” (Rom. iii. 28).

Two witnesses are produced in proof of this principle; such two that would-be law-keepers must sanction as competent to testify—Abraham and David. As to Abraham, “If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for

righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 2-5). God here imputes righteousness, apart from works, to Abraham. "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom. iv. 6-8). And again, as to Abraham, Scripture declares: "Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 23-25). "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1)—justified by faith, declared righteous by the acceptance of God's testimony to His Son. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15).

It is in the owning in the presence of God that we are sinners, that we find eyes to see Christ as the way to the arms of His saving love. It is here, in the owning that we are sinners, His voice is heard, "Come unto Me." The convicted soul may say, But I might dishonor Thee. His answer is, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God." Peace with God! Oh, the blessedness of it! Where disquiet reigned, where dread laid

hold on the soul, where terror was, as we thought of God in His holiness looking upon us in our sins, where the conscience cowered in guilty abasement, —now, peace! Precious word! Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: Christ the object of faith; the One to whom our trust is invited, the One who has met sin's just deserts in our stead. Peace, grounded on the wondrous fact that the Son of God has met the sword of divine justice wielded by the hand of the righteous Judge, the thrice holy God, and met and satisfied its every claim. Satisfied it too, in such fashion that He, the claims of whose righteousness demanded such an awful penalty, has had that claim transformed to debt, so that divine righteousness owes to itself the justification of him that believeth in Jesus.

Moreover we have also by Him access, through faith, into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Faith gives us access into the place of favor in which grace has now placed us. The favor of God to sinners, undeserved surely, has through the work of Christ, given all who have faith in Him an indisputable, abiding, and unchanging place before the throne of the Majesty on high. For by one offering He hath perfected forever (in continuity) them that are sanctified, and we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Heb. x. 10, 14).

This place of standing gives boldness,—grounded as it is on that which is external to, and not of, ourselves in anywise, that is, on the blood of Jesus,—boldness to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. We can speak with boldness and gladness of heart when we think of that future hour of bliss which shall re-

veal God in all the wonders of His own perfection as displayed in the person, attributes, and offices of Christ.

But meantime we pass through a world wherein tribulation is our lot. We glory however in tribulations, (that is, in the midst of them) knowing that the gracious purpose of God through these tribulations is to work patience in us, and through that, experience—that is, a larger knowledge of His ways, and being weaned from the world. How often He has to put bitter trials in our path to wean us from this world so attractive to our sinful hearts. Experience worketh hope—begets it in power in the soul. Thus, not only in view of our place of standing but also in the midst of all our trials, undauntedly we may boast in hope of the glory of God; for those trials are designed by Wisdom's hand of love to clarify our vision; and thus hope, the hope of *the glory of God*, becomes an active principle in the soul, sustaining and comforting us as we pass on to the scene of its display. It is a hope that cannot be disappointed, and so cannot leave the soul ashamed. We know this because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us. We have tasted the preciousness and the faithfulness of that love, the Spirit of God Himself filling our hearts with a sense of it, as looking at Calvary, where, when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. "Yet"! After ages of patient trial, during which God sought to bring home to the heart and conscience of man his utter ruin, that in his helplessness he might turn to Him and find mercy.

Those ages of trial ran their course, and the due

time came—the time for a settlement of the question of sin, the question of God's righteousness in dealing with it while yet showing mercy. These questions must now find their solution: and solved they are by Christ dying for the ungodly. The love that provided for us as without strength will surely have patience with our weakness while working in us conformation to that which is its desire for us. Nor yet will failure, shameful as, alas, it may be, stop the flow of that love which manifested itself for us while we were ungodly.

Man was proven to be ungodly when he, as representatively tried in the trial of the nation of Israel, set up the golden calf in the face of the commandment which he had accepted of God: "Thou shalt have no other gods before *Me*." It did not alter, but only aggravated, the intrinsic idolatry when they linked the name of Jehovah to their idol and their feast. How active is this principle to-day—men attaching the name of Christ to things that are openly contrary to that name; cheating themselves into believing that this "christening" gives sanction to all else, thus showing how the power of desire dominates that of reason, when the will, while away from God, is set towards its object.

Man was proven to be without strength when, in the second giving of the law, for centuries he was afforded opportunity to recover himself, provision having been made for his failure in the sacrificial system. But, he still drifted toward idolatry, and finally was so given up to it that God sent him into captivity. When returned from the captivity his religious inventiveness produced that master-piece of delusion—Phariseeism,—the first necessity of which

is a heart away from God, so far away from Him as to mistake the glow of self-complacency for the warmth of His approval. Phariseeism is that which makes of the law of God a thing of rags and patches, that it may bolster up a fancied righteousness. The pure light of truth streaming from the gracious Son of God exposed so thoroughly its hollowness and corruption, that it rested not till it saw Him in the tomb, sealed and made sure—sure as man could make it. We must always bear in mind it was the religious people who were primarily responsible for the murder of the Son of God. It was the religious people who said: "This is the Heir, come let us kill Him." It was the religious people, who, when Pilate was minded to let Him go, clamored for His blood. The natural man at his best, in the midst of his own religious excellence, is but an enemy of God and a hater of His truth.

Truly the law did its work well. He who gave it knew how to bring to the light that which was in the heart of man. The law was added that the offence might abound. But, blessed be God—"where sin abounded there did grace much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." How different this love to that of man. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die,"—human love is attracted by merit in its object—"but God commendeth *His* love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

No merit—only helplessness, corruption and ruin in the objects of His love. That love finds its motive in itself; and so a world of sinners is no barrier to its display, but on the contrary, a fit place for the shining forth of its holy unselfishness.

Oh, that men could see how wondrous and how great is the love of God which He commends to us in the gift of His Son as a sacrifice for sin! It is not difficult, ordinarily, to show men they have sinned; but while they admit this, the treachery of a deceitful heart would whisper the hope of a bettering change. The common confounding of effect with cause, always mischievous, is most seriously so here when men argue they are sinners because they have sinned; while the truth is they have sinned because they are sinners.

When one lays hold of the appalling fact that he is a sinner, and the reforming of his ways as affecting for the better his moral conduct can in no wise alter this fact, then a true turning-point toward God is reached; then true repentance is possible, and not merely a passing remorse because of some specific acts of sin; then the soul will be ready to accept God's judgment upon itself personally, as separated from its fellows, and having to do with God alone in strict personal responsibility. Then how good for the soul to be brought to know the love of God, a love that was always there, a love with a wondrous commendation—the love of God as displayed in the sacrifice of Christ. Then the meaning of the cross, the meaning of these words, "The Son of man *must* be lifted up," comes upon the soul bringing with it a deep sense of shame and humiliation that such awful necessity confronted divine love ere it could pour itself



out in grace and truth—ere the truth of what I am could come to me in the grace of what God is toward me. Truly “herein is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” In my need I am led by the goodness of God to repentance, and to the acceptance of the truth that God in His grace has met my soul's deep need by the blood of Jesus.

“Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.” I am now declared righteous because in the shedding of the blood of Jesus my sins have been atoned for in righteousness, and I am covered by the sheltering blood that has been shed under the wrath of a just God against my sins. Therefore I shall be saved from wrath through Him whose blood has met the judgment which was my due. The wrath-meeting blood of Jesus is the only shelter for a sinner from judgment. How good to know there is no wrath for me; to know it too on the testimony of the word of God set forth in plain statement and argued from the logic of divine facts. “For if, when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son,” the argument is, “much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”

I am brought to the arms of eternal love—saved from wrath; reconciled to God. How wonderful! yes—but not only so: for we also joy in God. Nothing could be further removed from the fear of God's wrath than to find our joy in Him. But how can joy be found in a holy God by one who has been an enemy?—“through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation.”

## WHY?

Why are ye fearful? (Matt. viii. 26.)

Take no thought for the morrow (Matt. vi. 34).

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? (Psa. xlii. 5.)

In nothing be anxious (Phil. iv. 6, *R. V.*)

**W**HY have to do with to-morrow?  
 To-day is enough at a time;  
 Do not of the future borrow,—  
 Yea, dread it as thou wouldst a crime.

*Why brood over ills in the past?  
 That gives thee a sorrowful now;  
 Then, let not thy griefs further last:  
 Determine, by grace, this to do.*

*Why faint 'neath the ills of to-day?  
 Their mission to thee is in love;  
 This, this, with His own, is God's way,  
 To draw their affections above.*

*Why worry o'er troubles not come?  
 Not come! then thy worry's for nought;  
 If they come, fresh worry they cost;  
 So that twice the troubles are bought!*

*Why fret thee o'er wrongs not thine own?  
 Dear soul, all commit to the Lord:  
 He, He can rule all for thy good;  
 Then, trust in the Lord, and His word.*

*Why grieve over those who forsake?  
 Cheer up, thou art not left alone:  
 Yea, Jesus will care of thee take,  
 Then bear thee above with His own.*

*Why repine o'er ought that may try.  
 Think of thy Lord, and His sorrow;  
 Lo, now He is for thee on high!  
 And thine soon, His bright to-morrow!*

*Why not e'en joy in all trial?*

Yes, "count it all joy," says the Word;  
 "Be perfect,"—"entire,"—be real,  
 And patiently wait for the Lord.

Sufficient, who is for *the way*?

My strength is but weakness indeed:  
 Jehovah'll sustain thee *to-day*,—  
 This meets *all* thy wilderness need.

R. H.

## THE OCCUPATION OF THE PLACE OF SERVICE.

### II. THE GERSHONITE CHARACTER.

(Num. iii. 23.)

(*Continued from page 103.*)

**I**N the third chapter of Numbers we have presented to us the encampment, around the tabernacle, of the Levitical families in association with the priestly house, with Moses and Aaron. The service which pertains to each of the four families is detailed, and the special character connected with each one. It is striking to notice that under the three Levitical heads, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, are *eight* families engaged in bearing the burdens of the tabernacle. Eight is the new-creation number. Thus, for us, Levite service is the ministration to others of new-creation blessings amid the wilderness scenes of the sin-blighted old creation—ministry directed by the glorious Head of the new in heaven for the need of ruined man under the fallen head of the old.

Gershon is the first in the order of this chapter, and his position in relation to the tabernacle is "*westward.*" "The families of the Gershonites shall pitch

behind the tabernacle westward." The four cardinal points of the compass as mentioned in Scripture, with the winds which come from these directions, doubtless speak to us of the many hostile influences of which this world is the scene, opposing those who are no longer of it, and mark for us in this connection the ways of the fallen creature. The west is literally "toward the sea"—type of the ceaseless trouble and unrest of a fallen creation, but in which, nevertheless, the natural man finds a certain enjoyment in the gratification of his lusts. From the sea—the Mediterranean, which lay west of them—come those showers which refresh the earth and make it a scene productive of those influences of delight and pleasure for man, coming, though they do, from a restless and fallen condition. Is it not these influences which act with great power, and often with success, upon the child of God? How easily we may be lured from the narrow path by present advantages or opportunities which will yield some passing enjoyment! If it has not been in deed with us, dare we say not in thought?

Now it is Gershon who faces west, and confronts this side of the world's influence. His name means "*exile*," in the sense of *separation*; and this gives us the key-thought of our attitude, or the manner in which we are to occupy the place of service in this direction, and toward these things of the world. "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). "For me to live is Christ" (Phil. i. 21). What a holy path this means for us! Can I for one moment associate myself with a world that has cast out Him whom

I own as Lord and Master? How separate He was from it all in His walk among men, yet how blessed the ministry of His infinite love to their need! *He is our example in all things.* "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be" (John xii. 26). May we by God's grace, by which alone we can do it, seek to follow Him more closely, seek that the work of grace shall be wrought out in our souls, that somewhat of His moral beauty and perfection may shine forth from us.

But what is the character of service which accompanies this attitude, or position? Gershon bears about the coverings—the white linen hangings of the court. They speak to us of practical righteousness—the exhibiting before the world of the Christ-like character. And this answers to Gershon's first son, Libni, whose name means "white." So the first offspring of our separation from the world is to be that practical righteousness suggested by the white. This, of course, can only be by letting the word of Christ dwell in us richly. May our hearts be drawn out in unwavering obedience to that Word and increased devotion to Himself.

But Gershon bears also the coverings of the tabernacle, which speak of the various characters of Christ, and thus of what is to be the subject-matter of our testimony. This answers to Gershon's second son, Shimei, whose name means "my report." This is naturally the second offspring of our separation—my testimony, or report of that which is the basis or reason of my separation. And is it not truly Christ in just those characters of which the curtains speak? How blessed that the lips which once defamed that

blessed name, or were at least dumb to its praise, can speak of its glory and worth! It is grace, all grace. First of all, the fine-twined linen, with blue, purple and scarlet interwoven. This is the spotless purity and holiness of the man Christ Jesus linked with His heavenly character and His double kingship over Israel and the Gentiles, therefore over the whole world. Then there is the goats'-hair covering. This tells us of Him as the Substitute for sinners. The rams' skins died red is His consecration unto death, and the shedding of His blood, without which there could be no remission of sins. Lastly, the badger skins, unsightly, unattractive to the eye. "He had no form or comeliness; and when we saw Him, no beauty, that we should desire Him." Thus it is the outside covering, that side of Christ's character which the world sees. But what glory and beauty underlie it for us, now enlightened by God! These things are what constitute the blessed testimony put into our hands, and directly connected with our separation, exile down here, of which Gershon is the type.

We may notice, too, that Gershon carries the screens which form the entrance into the court, and also the holy place. It is only in connection with true separation, marked by practical righteousness and testimony to Christ, that there can be any real entrance into the blessed realities within, and covered over by these curtains. These screens of entrance are made of white, blue, purple, and scarlet, presenting Christ again, as we have already seen. It is, of course, by Him alone we have entrance to the blessings within, but as resulting in our taking our separated place. "If any man love Me, he will

keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John xiv. 23). This means for us entrance into the fullest blessing. To love Christ is not to love the world; for it gives Him no place; and His word is, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." To keep His words, then, means separation from the world—to stand aloof from all that is of it. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John ii. 16). And so, if the Father is to come and abide with us in that practical sense of enjoyed communion and fellowship, we must be apart from this world as Christ was—separate from that which is not of Himself.

How blessed to retreat from all association with a world-system under condemnation, and whose judgment is sure and drawing near—to retreat to the sanctuary of our blessed God, to sit at the table spread with heavenly blessings, to partake in fellowship of all with the Father and His Son! In what calm repose the heart can rest, while the joys of heavenly springs flow forth to fill our cup to overflowing.

To take and maintain in fellowship with Christ the Gershonite character is the secret of occupying in a proper and godly manner the place of service and testimony toward western power and influences. May we be found, consistent with the blessed truth we know, in the position outside the camp, in fellowship with the blessed Lord. May our hearts be spurred with fresh zeal and love for Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

J. B., JR.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—

My letter to Mr.—— though private, concerns us all. There is a principle at work which puts external unity before righteousness—uses unity to hinder righteousness. Now to me righteousness goes first. I find that in Rom. ii. let grace be what it may in Sovereign goodness, it never sets aside righteousness. The course of ——, I was convinced, was wicked; I was so convinced from the beginning; and it was not a mere mistaken act, but a course pursued, and I could not own them. The question goes far deeper than local claims;—whether Christian profession, and so called unity (to which in its place I hold thoroughly as ever, as plain scriptural truth) is to go before righteousness—God's claim to fidelity to Him. I do not think that any church-theory, however true and blessed when walking in the spirit, can go before practical righteousness.

Such is the substance of my letter as to principles—what I have gone on all along.

Affectionately yours in the Lord,

*April 20th, 1881. Letters of J. N. D. Vol. ., page 184.*

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### AN EXTRACT.

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“THERE were critical periods in the Mission history; there were dissensions that might have broken up the stations; there were questions to be decided that concerned the welfare of God's kingdom in Java and Nagpore; there was a unity of thought and action to be maintained among many at the most opposite points, and perhaps of the most opposite opinions; an unbroken connection to



be kept by letters with every settlement; the Mission paper had to be edited; the training school at home to be diligently watched; nay, the very income itself was uncertain, for it was left to the private thoughts of Christian brethren.

“Whose head would not be puzzled if left to its own wits in such a tangle? What peculiar doctrine of chances would cover with a uniform and calculable success the venture of twenty years? What known human power can determine that when a man receives twenty pounds he will be kept as comfortably as if he had one hundred? Yet push forward such questions and the world will set busily to answer them. It does not believe in our day that there is anything which it cannot do; it must account for all phenomena upon its own principles. It is a monstrously clever world: steam and telegraph and photography, and planets discovered before they are seen: Great Eastern and St. Lawrence Bridges, are very fair credentials. *But there is a kingdom into which none can enter but children, in which the children play with infinite forces, where the child's little finger becomes stronger than the giant world—a wide kingdom, where the world exists only by sufferance, to which the world's laws and developments are forever subjected, in which the world lies like a foolish, wilful dream in the solid truth of the day. Gossner had been brought into that kingdom; these questions were nothing to him—it was enough that he could kneel down and pray.*

“‘Here I sit,’ he would say, ‘in my little room; I cannot go here and there to arrange and order everything; and if I could, who knows if it would be well done? But the Lord is there, who knows and can

do everything, and I give it all over to Him, and beg Him to direct it all, and order it after His holy will; and then my heart is light and joyful, and I believe and trust Him that He will carry it all nobly out.'"—From "*Praying and Working*," by W. F. Stevenson.

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## PORTION FOR THE MONTH.

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### MARK AND 1ST CORINTHIANS.

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WITH Mark's pen the Spirit of God sets before us the great divine-human Servant of God and men. The works of Jesus are the special theme. His longer discourses, found in Matthew and Luke, like the sermon on the mount and the parables of the kingdom of heaven, are omitted or much shortened in Mark. What we see here is the great Hand and Heart of love *at work!*

With untiring energy the ministering One passes from one case of need to another; healing following His word and touch. If He stops to teach, it is still to serve. We trace His steps with growing wonder, for a strange power and vigor is in the narrative. The very spirit of service breathes through it. Matthew tells us of Christ's royal birth, and traces His genealogy back to David and Abraham, the roots of Messianic promise. Luke gives the birth and infancy of a human Child, with a genealogy of the Son of man and woman's Seed back to Adam. John takes us back to God the Word, the Creator. But Mark's theme is neither the kingship, humanity, nor the divinity of Christ, and he does not introduce his book with genealogy, birth, infancy, or divine antecedents.

His introduction is abrupt. It consists of one sentence—"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." These are the credentials of the Servant.

He is Jesus, a man, yet Jehovah the Saviour. He is the Christ, anointed of God for His mission. He is the Son of God, with divine power and authority. It is enough! The coming forth of such an One to minister is, indeed, "the beginning" and foundation of "good news"!

Each of the three main divisions of the Gospel can be viewed from a touching standpoint.

**The Son of God offers His service** in Mark i.-v. He finds men undone, confessing sentence of death in baptism. At once He is baptized with them, offering Himself to die in their stead. He preaches the good news of the kingdom, announcing that the time is at hand. Next He does the works of the kingdom, proving both His power and willingness to serve man's need. He teaches with divine authority, casts out demons, heals diseases, forgives sins, commands the powers of nature.

What is the result? They reject Him and His work. The forgiveness of sins they call blasphemy. They murmur because He eats and drinks with sinners, and quibble because He does good on the Sabbath. They plot to kill Him, and charge that it is in league with Satan that He delivers from Satan's power! Thus we have,

**The rejected Servant still serving** (vi.-x. 45). We need not dwell upon this, but may ponder over His words and acts of love, viewed from this standpoint. The coil tightens round Him; the shadows deepen; He is the Man of sorrows. Yet His love knows not how to falter, and He moves on to shame and death along a path fragrant with deeds of grace.

**The crucified Servant still serving** is the climax of the book (x. 46-xvi.). The service at the cross in Mark has the full dread character of the sin-offering—Christ "made a curse" (Gal. iii. 13), enduring divine "indignation and wrath" (Psa. cii. 10), forsaken of God (Mark xv. 34). While men were slaying Him, He was bearing for them the penalty of their sins! Marvelous Servant,

beside whom all others pale and fade! Marvelous love, whose heights and depths we may forever explore, but never fathom!

How different is *our* service, seen in 1 Corinthians! We walk not alone as He did, but in fellowship with the saints, fellow-members of the Church, His Body. Practical directions for this are the subject of this epistle, which is a kind of divine assembly-manual. We note some of its main points.

**The Assembly a unity** is the point in i. 1-16. The epistle addresses not some, but all Christians. Such have a competency in Christ, and should not be mere followers of men. Christ is undivided; should there be parties or divisions among Christians? The existence of sects and denominations is condemned.

**The Assembly is unworldly** (i. 17-31). It is founded on the Cross—Christ crucified. Nor has God chosen what the world esteems, but foolish and weak things. This is our calling. Neither the world nor the flesh has a place. Christ only is God's wisdom for us—our righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. In Him alone we glory.

**The mind of Christ** should characterize us (ii.). Christian fellowship is fellowship in supernatural things, deep things of God, revealed by His Spirit, which the natural man cannot enter into. Even we who are called need to be spiritual in order to enjoy and understand them. If we act like natural men, how shall we discern things which belong only to the spiritual, or Spirit-led?

These principles are practically applied (iii., iv.). The Corinthian saints were unspiritual, with a party spirit, worldly wisdom, worldly ways. In correcting them the apostle brings out another great truth:

**The Assembly is God's building, God's temple**, indwelt by the Spirit of God. Paul laid the foundation of truth concerning the Church. Let all take care how they

build thereon. Saints who build not according to the truth will suffer loss. They will be saved as "through the fire," which burns up their bad work. While unregenerate destroyers of God's temple, God will destroy.

**Sin must be judged** by the Christian company (v.). If we are God's building, God's temple, we must purge out all defilement. We are to put away from among ourselves, and neither "eat" nor "keep company" with professing Christians guilty of sin such as is here described. Thus the unity elsewhere desired does not involve the going on with *such* persons. But if they repent, the division may be healed.

The judging of evil does not mean that we should be insisting upon our personal rights (vi. 1-7). If we are Christlike, let us suffer wrong. Nor have we any license to sin (vi. 8-20). Our bodies are members of Christ, temples of the Holy Spirit, to be used in glorifying God. Chapter vii. gives directions concerning marriage.

Again, we are not to stumble weak consciences, nor to please ourselves (viii., ix.). In connection with this we have—

**The Lord's table**, with its loaf and cup of blessing, typical of Christian fellowship (x.). We cannot link the Lord's table with that of demons; and as we are viewed as always at the Lord's table, this fellowship with Him separates us from all fellowship inconsistent with it.

**The Lord's Supper** follows (xi.). It is the characteristic Christian feast, a memorial of Christ's death, in celebration of which saints "come together in assembly." We are to observe it in self-judgment, tolerating no evil.

**The power for ministry** in the Assembly is the Spirit of God (xii.). He has baptized all Christians into one body, the body of Christ, and given different gifts to the individual members. He is also the indwelling Power, to guide and use each member as He wills.

**Love**, however, must prompt all Christian service (xiii.). Otherwise it is nothing, whatever be one's gift or knowledge. Let us learn how love behaves itself from this chapter, and test all our service by it.

**The assembly meeting** for edification is described, and abuses guarded against (xiv.). How beautiful—this order and liberty, all being done unto edification, the spirits of the prophets subject to the prophets, and the prophets in subjection to the Spirit of God! May we know more of it in practice! In God's thought each assembly is a band of anointed prophets.

**Resurrection**, the foundation and hope of the assembly, is the theme of chapter xv. Wondrous doctrine! It is the real foundation of all the practical directions of this epistle. The true Assembly of Christ is a risen, heavenly body, acting in the energy of resurrection-life derived from her Head!

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**QUES. 7.**—Is there scripture for women to take part in Meetings in the way of asking questions and giving out thoughts, (outside of the morning meeting for breaking of bread), and is the meeting together to break bread the only assembly meeting? It has been brought up of late in our little gathering, and we are not all of the same mind as to it. I trust we all shall come to a happy unity by the Word. Please answer in "Help and Food."

**ANS.**—1 Tim. ii. 11; 12 and 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35 are plain and decisive answers to your double question. Both plainly forbid woman's voice being heard in the assembly, and the latter is not a meeting for the breaking of bread but for mutual edification. "At home," as verse 35 enjoins, is evidently the God-appointed sphere for women, both to ask questions and to minister. See Acts xviii. 26. This is a sphere large and inviting, not only for godly women but also for godly men. Would to God there were more to occupy it.

## EGYPT AND BABYLON.

**E**GYPT, as presented in Scripture, is a type of the world as it is in its natural, fallen state; alienated from God by sin, and ignorant of Him; living in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; enjoying sin in the various forms which adapt themselves to the different tastes of men.

A child of God going back to Egypt, as seen typically in Num. xi. 4-6; xiv. 1-4; Jer. xlii. 13-22, etc., means, therefore, that he has ceased to find in Christ, and the things of Christ, the satisfaction and joy he once found, and that he has, in the measure of the vacancy which this has left in his heart, returned to the things of fallen nature to fill it up. He is finding pleasure in them again. This is an awful thought, and sufficient to call for tears of repentance in them of whom it is true, even though there be no evil things marring the life in the eyes of men.

Returning to Egypt is by the allurements of "the pleasures of sin," which faith had forsaken. When God took Israel out of Egypt He purposely took them through a strange way,—the Red Sea,—that they might learn how absolutely He had separated them to Himself from it, never to return to it. Paul, in the energy of faith, expresses this thus "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." He has in this manner parted with Egypt forever.

Babylon is quite another thing: The people of God never go there willingly, but get there forcibly by the judgment of God, by the very fact that "He

cannot deny Himself." They would not for a moment think that a principle false to His Word, and which they imbibe, leads to such ends; but it does. They find no satisfaction in those ends, of course, but become mourners there in due time. They are reaping the fruit of corrupting the truth; it is the judgment of God upon His people for departing from His Word, and taking up with that which annuls it. Having by redemption brought them out of the world,—of its service, mind, and principles,—He brings them to a place of His own, to have them there for Himself, to form them for His purpose, govern them by His own principles, and use them for His own glorious ends. If they depart from that by disobedience and self-will, they corrupt His things and bring in man's. For instance, they substitute the Saviour, by Mary and penance and good works; the Head of the Church, by a pope; the ministry of Christ, by a man-made clergy; the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, by human organization; the following righteousness, by ecclesiastical pretensions; the unity of the Spirit, by sectarian union; Christian liberty, by license, and what not?

As a result we have Babylon: a confusion of tongues which forbids understanding one another, an oppression which makes God's people long for deliverance, a condition of things which is beyond their control and makes them sigh and mourn.

God alone, under whose judgment they are for their departures, can relieve and deliver them. He did open a door of deliverance to His people Israel under Ezra and Nehemiah before Messiah came, and He has unquestionably done the same to His Church before her Lord returns, and He declares that "none



can shut it." The return from captivity to God's liberating truth, from *man's* centres and grounds of assembling to *God's*,—may be in the greatest weakness; but the mercy of God to His sighing and mourning people is expressed in it, and they who avail themselves of it will reap the rich and everlasting results, though there be more apparent defeat in it than success.

P. J. L.

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## GIBBORIM OF GOD.

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"In the world's broad field of battle,  
In the bivouac of life,  
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!  
Be a hero in the strife!"

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NOT as the poet sings "the psalm of life," out of dim twilight of world-ideas, are his lines cited here; but as shadowing forth something which for the christian is a deep reality. "The *world's* broad field of battle" is not ours, in the poet's sense, for we fight not with the world, but against its errors, its groveling principles, and the wicked spirits that inspire it. But only believers in Christ can really claim "the bivouac of *life*." The camp of life, fellow-believer, belongs to us, and we to it. The rest of men are dead, even while they live; and we alone are enlisted soldiers in life's camp, divinely drilled and disciplined, and led into battle under the beauteous banners of Christ. This is familiar truth—alas, become too common in many of our minds! But may our God awaken us to the glory of our calling, the glory that beckons faith in all our present opportunities!

How can we be so slow of heart—we who know the truth? Do men of the world lack energy in grasping the baubles for which they struggle? For them the battle is on. Led by lusts of wealth, political power, social exclusiveness, professional distinction, military renown, ecclesiastical preferment, literary success and scientific fame, under the sin-stained pennon of ambition they strive for mastery with earnestness worthy of a better cause.

The whole world dreams of heroes. The burden of its literature is the exploits of those it reckons such. Mythologies of Greece and Rome, myths of the ancient nations of the East, sagas of the Northland, tales of chivalry, annals of kings and warriors of every clime and age, all express the hero-worship of the human heart. Base and trashy are most of the standards of heroism, but their existence discloses a universal instinct. What is man's novel, or a play in his theatre, without its hero and heroine? What but man, in his heroic phases, is the theme of poet, historian and biographer? Is not the imagination of the babe in the nursery fed on the same food—the exploits of Jack the Giant-killer or some fairy prince?

But are not these ideals, ambitions and literature which the Christian eschews? Assuredly, dear reader! If our mind lusts after these things the spirit of Christian heroism lies dormant in us. Instead of battling in ranks of a heavenly chivalry, we are held in ignominious captivity to the world, needing some Christian hero to rescue us with wise thrusts at heart and conscience by the sword of the Spirit. Nevertheless, the universality of human ambition and hero-worship teaches a wholesome lesson—that God

designed man for great things. To this the whole fallen race bears witness, in the blind instinct and strenuous self-will which still rebelliously clutch at the destiny sin has forfeited.

Consider the noble being to whom God gave dominion over the earth. His body linked him with the chemistry and mechanics of water, earth and air. Five bodily senses afforded avenues of communion with the physical universe, of whose atomic bricks his earthly tabernacle was constructed. Thus could he decipher the Maker's stamp on even the invisible atoms of matter, and explore the Architect's design in their visible combinations. Involuntary, or vegetative functions of his body—respiratory, digestive and nervous—linked him with the vegetable world. Thus life in lowest terms and simplest phases he could study, an unconscious, mysterious vital force, and read its symbolism of creature existence most useful and fruitful when void of self-will, perfectly passive under creative, directing, and controlling Power. His soul linked him with the animal, where profound lessons in psychology awaited him. What a mirror of his own soul's blind volition, affections, desires and instincts, in the creature that acknowledged his sway! What a picture of his own dependence upon a higher Intelligence! In domestication, development and training of the beast, awakening its dumb affections into touching communion and companionship with himself, what a prophecy of the blessedness of his own submission to the will of God! Last of all his spirit, created in the image and after the likeness of the great Triune Spirit, Maker of heaven and earth, constituted him the offspring and son of God! It was a spark of the divine which God

one of antiquity could boast a conquest of death and the grave, bursting through the gates of hades and coming up from the underworld? Yet is not this our boast, fellow-believer? Our race came into being through such an exploit. The youngest babe in Christ can boast of this deed of our infancy—a reality far more wonderful than the fabled exploit of the infant Hercules in strangling two serpents in his cradle. But do we take the praise? Nay, we ascribe it to the Head of our race, for the keys of Death and Hades hang at His girdle. Yet His glory is ours; the mantle of His power has fallen upon us; the same Spirit that wrought in Him now dwells in us!

We are *gibborim* of God, with a glorious genealogy. We once were like other men, mere wrecks of sin. But Death and Hades, the jailers that hold men in ward for the lake of fire, have not prevailed against our race. We have overcome them with the sling of faith, and one smooth stone from the brook of God's word. Already passed from death unto life, never to come into judgment, we belong to heaven, alive unto God, in the power of Christ's resurrection.

Our genealogy? Born of God! The life of our race is eternal life of the Eternal God, without beginning, without end. Our nature is "the *divine* nature," as eternal as the life. Sons of God of a nobler race than angels, our spirit of sonship is the Spirit of Christ! And not as descended from Adam, through a long line of ancestors, are we born of God. Not someone of our number, but every son of our race, has sprung by divine generation directly from the racial head, "God over all, blessed forever!"

Our destiny? That of heirs of God! judges of the world! judges of angels! wielders of power over the nations, to rule them with a rod of iron, and break them to pieces like potters' vessels! Destined to reign in heaven from thrones around God's throne; over the millennial silver age to reign from the throne of Christ; and through eternity's golden age to reign for evermore as sons of God who serve Him! The destiny of God's firstborn, with names enrolled in heaven; heroes, who by the Lamb's blood have conquered the world, the hosts of Satan, life, death, sin, the grave, the gates of hades, the lake of fire,—under God, the first order of beings in His universe!

These thoughts bring us to the threshold of a grand, far-reaching theme. We cannot now pursue it further; but each can ask how far his life answers to our glorious calling. Is our faith keen and bright? To faith have we added courage? Have we the spirit of the overcomer? Does the energy proper to our race freely pulsate through our veins? Do we earnestly contend for the faith? As men expose their lives for the eagle of the empire, or the cross of the legion of honor, do we strive with striving for the incorruptible crown of righteousness laid up for *gibborim* of God who fight the good fight, finish the course, and keep the faith? Even though we have been lagging, God grant that heart and conscience may hear the bugle calling, and leap into the battle where our Captain smites the foe! F. A.

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# QUICKENING, NEW BIRTH, AND ETERNAL LIFE.

## *A Reply to the Doctrine of A. G's. Paper*

### "THE GROUNDS OF THE MONTREAL DIVISION RECONSIDERED."

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THE apostle John tells us the children of God do not need the teaching of men. Even the very babes among them possess in the teaching of the Spirit of God what is entirely sufficient for abiding in the truth. The teaching of God by His Spirit, then, is the test to which all teaching may be brought. Whatever answers to it, is in agreement with it, may be unquestionably received; but whatever does not agree with it may be rejected without the least hesitation. We do not have to stop to inquire the name of those who bring the teaching. The human instrumentality is nothing, so far as the authority of the teaching is concerned. The stamp of authority—divine authority—is on the teaching of God, and on that alone.

In a tract by A. G., entitled, "The Grounds of the Montreal Division Reconsidered," there are some doctrines which have a strange sound. I propose bringing them to the test of the teaching of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures. If they prove to be what He has taught us, then every child of God is responsible to receive them; but if they are not the doctrines of the Spirit of God, they lack the stamp of His authority; we are not to receive them, then, but on the contrary must refuse them.

One of these strange doctrines is that the Old Testament saints, while they had faith in God, did

not have faith in Christ. On page 17 of A. G's. tract, the reader will find it stated thus:

"In the past dispensation there was *faith in God*, but not *faith in Christ*; for the Son was yet secluded in Deity."

Does the Spirit teach this? It is simple to ask the question. It is just as simple to find the answer. It is not difficult to apply the test. A. G. does not appeal to Scripture; and no wonder, for the doctrine is not there. His one argument for it is, "for the Son was yet secluded in Deity." This he seems to think quite sufficient. But is it? Was there no testimony in the past dispensation to Christ? Who would dare say there was not in the face of Christ's own declaration, "Moses wrote of Me." When in Luke xxiv. 44, He says, "Which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me," does He not affirm that He is, at least, the principle subject of testimony in the Old Testament? Do I need to make any further quotations? I leave it with the reader to look them up.

"The Son was yet secluded in Deity" is a most unhappy expression. The New Testament tells us of things that were secluded in Deity, hid in God, not revealed to the sons of men—was Christ one of these things? These were secrets from the beginning of the world, but Christ was not one of them. *Some things* concerning Him were not revealed, but that does not imply that there was no revelation at all about Him.

It may be said, perhaps, A. G. means that Christ was not manifested, and that He could not be the object of faith until He was manifested. Very well. God was not manifested. How then was He the ob-

ject of faith? If it be said, What is intended is that He had not been sent into the world and presented to men as the Son: this will not avail either, for God had not been proclaimed as the Father. If Christ could not be the object of faith until He came and proclaimed Himself the Son, how could God be the object of faith before He was proclaimed the Father? It will be said that it was as Jehovah that He was the object of faith. But the title Jehovah belongs equally to the three persons of the Godhead. There are numerous passages in the Old Testament in which that title applies to the Second Person. There are passages, too, in which it is Himself that is the speaker (Isa. vi. 8; xli. 14; Ex. iii. 7, 8, and many more).

Faith gathered a doctrine of the trinity from the Old Testament. It was a belief of the Jews that one of the trinity would appear among them as a man. They were expecting an incarnation. They did not deny incarnation. They did not reject Jesus because they did not believe in incarnation, but because they would not believe *He* was the incarnate One they expected. Nathanael knew from the Old Testament that Israel's King would be both God and man. On discovering that Jesus was God, he not only confessed Him as being a divine Person, but was convinced that He was the King they were waiting for, and at once acknowledged it: "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel" are the words in which he expressed the faith that was in him (John i. 49). So, too, Peter. His Old Testament taught him that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. xvi. 16, 17). It was there he found the Father's voice in testimony to Christ.



All this shows that Christ was a very distinct object of faith in the past dispensation.

Again, in the conduct of the men of faith in Old Testament times we see that Christ was the object of their faith. For example, take Abel. From what God had revealed in connection with the promise of the woman's Seed and the clothing of Adam and Eve with coats of skin, Abel judged that the only way of escape from the death to which he was exposed, was by another—the woman's Seed—taking that death for him. So he puts before God the symbol of the death of Christ. His own sacrifice was not the object of his faith: it was merely the witness that he trusted in the provision God had given testimony to. So it was all along down the whole length of the past dispensation. God was witnessing to Christ. Faith had the One God testified to as its object. Faith looked deeper than the ritual it was so careful to observe, and saw in it not the provision of God, but the symbol of it, and in the use of the symbol proclaimed its faith in the Christ it witnessed to.

A. G's. doctrine, then, that "in the past dispensation there was faith in God, but not faith in Christ" is clearly disproved by Scripture. It is not the doctrine of the Spirit of God. It must therefore be refused.

When a person puts forth an unscriptural doctrine he must have some reason for doing so. The doctrine is essential to some purpose, grows out of some need. We have not to look far for what manifests the need of the doctrine we have been considering. A. G. has another doctrine which fills an important place in his system: it is necessary to establish it.

Out of this necessity the doctrine that Old Testament saints did not have faith in Christ originated, A. G. is very anxious to show that there are now two classes of believers—one comprised of those who have faith in God, another of those who have “gone on to faith in Christ.”

He says, in immediate connection with what we have been looking at:

“May there not to-day be found faith in God in those *who yet are only on their way to Christ?*” (Italics mine).

A little further on in the same paragraph he says:

“Does Scripture teach that there is an invariable, instantaneous transition from being dead in sins to being in Christ; or does it on the other hand, evidence that God has left Himself free to quicken a soul before, and on the way to, trust in Christ?”

In the next paragraph we read:

“Man reckons the beginning of his own life from the moment of birth; but was all that preceded only death? Is there not a pre-natal condition involving the commencement of life—a condition from which the status of life is rightly withheld? Need we then be surprised if God has been pleased to deal in like manner with the beginning of spiritual life, if room be left in Scripture for what may conveniently be termed an *underground, vital work of God in the soul*; not yet life in its recognized status, but that which is nevertheless foreign to the dead condition of the mere child of Adam?”

Now here we have the doctrine clearly. He is distinguishing between quickening and birth. There is the “beginning of life enveloped in obscurity”—a “pre-natal” life, which is “an underground, vital work of God in the soul.” This is quickening. Old Testament saints were thus quickened, and there is a class of believers to-day who are in the same condition. There is also a “status of life”—a condition which those who only believe in God have not

reached, though they are on the way to it and will get it when they believe in Christ. This "recognized status" of life is new birth, or at all events is the possession of those who are born again. Then the Old Testament saints were not born again. They were only quickened. They had pre-natal life, but the "status of life" is "rightly withheld" from them. What they had, and what a class to-day have, is just the beginning of life.

Reader, is this your doctrine? Is it the doctrine you have been taught? Is it the doctrine of Mr. Darby, Mr. Kelly and many others whose names we all revere as men taught of God? It has a strange sound, has it not? It does not sound like Scripture. It is simply the doctrine of A. G.

We shall expect him to consistently maintain it. We have tried honestly to fairly represent the doctrine. We do not think we have misrepresented it or exaggerated it. We have given it a straightforward interpretation. But how surprised we are to find that A. G. does not consistently maintain it! In the very next paragraph on page 20, he writes:

"We know that the Old Testament saints were born again; nevertheless, in so far as the writer knows, Scripture nowhere speaks of them as having had life, which, in its recognized status, awaited as a fitting honor the coming of the Son of God, the revealed object of faith and accomplisher of redemption."

So, then, there is some mystery about it after all that has not been fully explained. A. G.'s carefully drawn statement needs some modification; at least enough to allow the Old Testament saints to have had something more than the mere beginning of life—pre-natal life. But the modification must not permit us to say they had "life in its recognized status."

*That* could not be until "the coming of the Son of God and the accomplishment of redemption." Is there, then, three conditions of life—pre-natal life, new birth, and life in its recognized status? Or is there some confusion in A. G's. teaching? When he says, "We know the Old Testament saints were born again," was it a slip of the pen? Was it the result of a life-long habit? Either supposition will explain the confusion, but if it is not permitted us to thus account for it our only alternative is to charge inconsistency.

But further, we have seen that he says, "May there not to-day be found faith in God in those who yet are only on their way to Christ?" Well, what kind of life do they have? Just the mere beginning of life—simple pre-natal life? He says the Old Testament saints had faith in God and that they were born again. Consistently, then, these (the saints of to-day who only have faith in God) must be admitted to be born again. Still we must believe that even so they are in a condition of life "from which the status of life is rightly withheld." A new-born babe not in the status of life! Our answer is, This is not the truth in connection with natural life, and we lack scripture for believing it true in spiritual life. But whatever way you put it there is confusion.

But perhaps A. G. will straighten it out for us. Let the reader turn to page 19 to find the following:

"In chap. vi. 53, of John's Gospel, we have the Lord's deeply affecting statement, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.' The disciples, who probably heard these words, did not understand them; and could not then so eat and drink. Who in-

deed was there that had appropriated a Saviour *who had passed through death and judgment?* Was the Lord *the alone living one* in a scene of universal death? On the contrary, there were the eleven and doubtless other disciples; and in all probability numbers of other quickened souls, within or without the land, still on Old Testament ground; Christ not yet having been presented or preached to them. Did the Lord intend to deny the work of God existing in those souls? Surely not. Yet the language is strongly exclusive—*‘ye have no life in you.’*”

Here we are told that the Lord was not the only living one in the scene of death. What kind of life did He have? He does not tell us. We are not informed whether it was “life in its recognized status” or not. But there were others who had life if He was not the only living one—the eleven and numbers of others. Was their life the same kind as His? It surely must have been if He was not alone in having life, yet they could not have had life in its “recognized status.” It was too early for that. Well they were “still on Old Testament ground.” Then their life was pre-natal life—or perhaps they had new birth. At any rate he thinks they had life in some sense, and that the Lord did not intend to deny it. Then he proceeds to make the Lord say, “Ye have *no* life in you.” Reader can you fit his statements together? There is here wretched confusion. Had he been consistent he would have put into the Lord’s mouth the words, “no recognized status of life.” He does not do this, but makes the Lord say they have no life at all. Somehow, Scripture does not lend itself to wrong doctrine. Men who bring doctrines of their own, which they have not learned from God have to wrest the Scriptures.

But let us examine further his teaching in this passage. He says the disciples “could not *then* so

eat and drink." And further on he tells us very solemnly that we need to know "the divine thought" in order to understand "the divine utterance." We will ask him to give us the divine thought. His answer is as follows:

"The Lord is bringing life and incorruptibility to light. It is life out of death, His own anticipated sacrificial death, and its nature, which He is revealing. *When* the mighty work of redemption *should be accomplished, when* 'the Lord of life in death had lain,' *then* would it be possible for the disciples and other quickened souls to eat His flesh and drink His blood. *When, in the exercise of this determinative function, the life should be evidenced, it would be owned.*" (The italics are mine.)

This, then, is "the divine thought," according to A. G.; and "the divine utterance," therefore, is that the Old Testament saints, not only, but even the eleven and the numbers of quickened souls of the days of our Lord's life, could not eat His flesh and drink His blood. We are supposed to have this chapter fully illuminated now! But have all the difficulties been satisfactorily cleared up? Does the wonderful light that now shines on this chapter clear away all the mist and explain all the mystery? Let us see. In ver. 47 of this same chapter (Jno. vi.) our Lord says, "He that believeth on Me *hath* everlasting life." This we suppose must be "life in its recognized status." Believers had it *then*. Ver. 64 confirms this: "But there are *some of you* that believe not." Evidently there were two classes then, believers and unbelievers. The believers had everlasting life. But A. G.'s doctrine is that the Lord is teaching that they did not have it: and more, that they could not possibly have it until after His sacrificial death. Somehow there is darkness in our

light! It does not clear up the chapter. There is mist still. Perhaps the Lord did not say, "Except ye eat," but "Until ye eat." Or, perhaps the Spirit, whose office is to bring to remembrance all things whatsoever the Lord said, in this one instance forgot just what He did say. But we are not prepared to admit either of these suggestions. Are we forced, then, to accept the light offered us, even if it does not accredit itself as truth? No; by that fact, we know it has not the stamp of divine authority. It is a doctrine of man, and not of God.

He says, "Who indeed was there that had appropriated a Saviour *who had passed through death and judgment?*" By the italics it is plain that we are expected to regard this as an unanswerable argument! But there is a defect in it fatal to its value. Because none had appropriated a Saviour who *had* passed through death and judgment, *it is assumed* none had appropriated a Saviour who *would* pass through death and judgment. But the assumption is contrary to Scripture. We have already seen that Abel did so. Numerous other cases might be cited; but I pass on to another point.

"Alongside of this solemnly divisive scripture may be placed a kindred passage from John's Epistle, namely, 'He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.' Again the Spirit of God fixes our attention on the broad distinction between the two fully contrasted classes of the living and the dead. To introduce here *what is merely transitional* would only detract from the force and impressiveness of the Spirit's style. Instruction upon that point belongs to another line of ministry, and must be looked for elsewhere in Scripture" (page 20).

Where elsewhere? We are not told. If there is a special line of ministry in Scripture on "what is

merely transitional" between the classes of the living and the dead, it ought to be easily pointed out. Let us see if we can find it. According to Scripture, mere natural men are in a condition, belong to the class, of the dead. In Eph. ii. 4, 5, we read, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even *when we were dead* in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." There is no place in Eph. ii. for A. G.'s "transitional" things—no place for pre-natal life, or new birth; for we suppose he holds that quickening with Christ is "life in its recognized status." Pre-natal life and even new birth are "foreign to the dead condition of the mere child of Adam," but there is no room for them here. Or, are we to suppose that one who has these transitional things is still dead, is still in the condition of death in trespasses in sins? We are not sure whether A. G. thinks so or not: but in vers. 2 and 3 of this same chapter we find this condition described, and we are told who are in it. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Is this a description of a condition in which we have what is "foreign to the dead condition of a mere child of Adam"? Has a child of wrath pre-natal life? Is one born again a child of wrath? It is when we were children of wrath—in the condition of death—that we were "quickened with Christ." Does not this show that quickening, new birth, and



quickenings with Christ, now are identical? It also shows that Scripture *does* teach "that there is an invariable transition" (I will not say with A. G. "instantaneous" transition, because quickening is a moral and spiritual process) "from being dead in sins to being in Christ, forgiven and justified." In this connection, Col. ii. 13 may be quoted: "And you, *being* dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, *having forgiven* you all trespasses."

A. G. undertook to show that "quickenings can be apart from faith in Christ." He has not done so. Nowhere in all the scriptures to which he has referred us has such a doctrine appeared. It is on the supposition that quickening is apart from faith in Christ that he bases his charge that "the connection of justification with quickening, as an invariable present accompaniment," is false, and that it is "erroneous" to "include" with quickening "the being in Christ and forgiven." Failing to establish the foundation on which he was to rear his building, the structure which he purposed to erect never becomes an actuality; the "distinct issue" he has "raised" collapses.

C. CRAIN.

(*To be continued.*)

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## NOAH'S WINDOW.

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"A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above" (Gen. vi. 16).

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NOAH'S window has doubtless furnished great comfort to God's pilgrims in all ages, assuredly gathering that as Noah was compelled by the structure of what was carrying him safely through

the storm, to look for light to the one source of it, which was *above*, so the godly, in passing through circumstances of trial, have learned from that to look, not at the whelming floods through which they were at the moment passing, but at the One who was their sole source of light above. In that way, light would come, not directly upon the water-floods, but better still, upon what was bearing them safely through and above them.

Peter began to sink when he dropped his eye from the Lord to the surrounding waves (Matt. xiv. 30).

But our comfort in contemplating the passage at the beginning of this paper may be increased when we remember the real force of the word which is there translated "window;" it is never in any other instance translated window. The word is *tzoh-har*, and is used as a substantive twenty-four times; eleven times it is rendered "noon," as "where thou makest thy flock to rest at *noon*" (Cant. i. 7); ten times it is rendered "noonday," as "and thou shalt grope at *noonday*" (Deut. xxviii. 29); once it is "midday" (as 1 Ki. xviii. 29), and once (as in Jer. xx. 16) "noontide," the remaining instance being that under consideration.

The word comes from a verb signifying "to make oil," occurring but once (Job xxiv. 11).

It might be questioned if very much light could be expected naturally from a window of "a cubit" under any circumstances, particularly at such a time of storm and tempest, but as Noah cast his eye up at that single inlet to his ark, what would he see? "Noonday:" no other hour of day or of night did that little window speak of. It was never midnight there, nor four o'clock in the morning, always

"noon." Come rain or come sunshine, "noontide" could alone be seen up there.

Noah means "rest," and we can think of him as answering to his name, as shut in by the Lord Himself and passing through all that terrible flood which overwhelmed every living thing outside the ark, he lifted his eyes to that little window and saw "noon," stamped upon the one means of communication with what was outside.

Noah's passage between the old world and the new, may illustrate primarily, the passage of the godly remnant in the last days through the time of trouble coming upon the earth, and from their old status under the legal covenant, to their establishment in blessing under Messiah in the land; the root of their blessing being not the old covenant of the letter which kills, but of the Spirit which gives life.

How well then may we, who have the Spirit, and enter into the *spirit* of the new covenant, and thus ante-date all this blessing, apply in the fullest way what we have been speaking of in regard to this "window?" We are passing likewise between the old creation and the new, shut in *with* God and *by* Him; the storm buffets without, but within, as we cast the eye aloft upon our "window," we see only "noonday." We are "in the light as He is in the light"—not a question of *how* we are walking, but of *where* we are.

As we contemplate Him appearing "now in the presence of God for us," the glory of God radiating from His face, we too may find our "noon," and enjoy the "rest" which comes from letting Him have His blessed way with us.

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J. B. J.

## PORTION FOR THE MONTH.

## DANIEL AND 2 CORINTHIANS.

**D**ANIEL is not simply an interesting book which foretells coming events: it has a higher purpose. As the *fourth* of the "great" prophets, it does indeed unfold a panoramic view of political history down to the second coming of Christ. But is this to entertain, or to show merely that God can predict the future? Not at all! God has *His people* before His mind, and not human affairs.

The prophet's true subject is, *the relation of the people of God to human history—the world's politics and governments*. God reveals the course and character of things to His children. He forewarns and forearms; reviews all in the light of His eye; and teaches us to maintain toward governments an attitude which glorifies Him.

Daniel has two main divisions. The first (i.–vi.) pictures God's saints as faithful witnesses under the shadow of the Gentile empire. The second (vii.–xii.) shows that to the man of God the future stands revealed. The first division has six sections, the second has four.

1. **Separation from the political world** is the path for faith (i.). Daniel and his companions, of "the seed royal," typify God's children, Christian and Jewish, during the whole course of Gentile dominion. They respect the "powers that be" as "ordained of God." But they cannot have part with a "defiled" system which will not guide itself by the word of God. Daniel, as his name signifies, has "God's judgment" of things. He will not "defile himself" with the king's meat. What is the result for him and his companions? "God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom." Even the king realizes that in "every matter of wisdom and understanding" they are ten times better than his magicians

and enchanter. These men are our examples. Politics is unfit food for saints. Dispensationally viewed, the calling of the Assembly of Christ, as of the Jewish remnant to follow, is one of strict separation from the political powers of the earth.

2. **True interpretation of history** is only found with God's separated people (ii.). None but a Daniel could give God's thought concerning the Gentile empires (Nebuchadnezzar's image), or reveal the coming kingdom of Christ (the stone cut out of the mountain). Only God's people, in separation from evil, understand these things.

The metals of the image characterize the empires from a divine side. They represent, we believe, the nature of God's providence linked with each. His glory was connected with the head of gold, or Babylonish kingdom. Its work was to chastize the nation which had caused Jehovah's name to be blasphemed. Redemption is suggested by the silver of breast and arms, or Medo-Persian kingdom. It was the instrument of deliverance from Babylon, restoring a Jewish remnant to the land. God's word links with the brazen abdomen and thighs, or Grecian kingdom. This empire introduced a language suitable for New Testament revelation, and spread it far and wide, preparing for the work of evangelization. Strength and human weakness combine in the mingled iron and clay, or Roman empire. God's providence provides a full testing of Satan's power and man's folly in government. In this character Gentile empire will reach its limit of rebellion, and be put down by Christ.

3. **Disobedience to world-powers**, when they command disobedience to God, is the next lesson (iii.). All here is simple. No doubt we have a general type, covering the present dispensation and the one to follow. The general trend of all world-power is to seduce from God. This turns the world into a fiery furnace for God's saints! But the Son of God is with them in it, and the fire but

purifies, burning away their bonds. After the Assembly is taken to heaven, this type will be remarkably fulfilled (compare Rev. xiii.).

4. **Degradation of the Gentile power** is pictured in the tree cut down (iv.). The lesson of the literal fulfilment to Nebuchadnezzar is plain. Applying it as a type, we must remember that the Gentile empire has become identified with Christendom. Enlightened by God's word, how does it respond to this mercy? In pride, as did Nebuchadnezzar! Hence it will be shorn of its glory and delivered up to bestial instincts for "seven times." After the Assembly is taken to heaven, God's judgments, will come upon the so-called "Christian" kingdoms in horrible moral degradation, for seven years. Then the *roots* of Gentile power, the Gentile nations, will again be blessed; but the sceptre will have passed to Christ.

5. **Judgment of the religious world-system** follows (v.). Babylon here figures religious Christendom as distinct from political Christendom—a false church-system which has taken captive and defiled the vessels of God's temple (true saints). Feasting in fancied security, Babylon is suddenly smitten by a new political world-power. So will "Babylon the Great" be stricken by the ten-horned beast (Rev. xvii., xviii.).

6. **The "great tribulation"** is next typified (vi.). The smiter of Babylon casts Daniel into the lions' den. So will the spoiler of the false church oppress God's saints with Satan's power (Rev. xi.—xiii.). But Christ will deliver from the lion's mouth.

In the second division God unrolls the future to the eye of faith.

1. **The "four great beasts"** (vii.) picture the four Gentile empires, not as instruments of Providence, but in their own characters. As such, they are ferocious beasts. A *fifth* and eternal empire, that of Immanuel, the Ancient of Days and Son of Man, will judge and displace them.

The final form of the fourth empire in this vision, which "wears out the saints," is still future (*cf.* Rev. xvii. 8-14).

2. **The ram and he-goat** (viii.) symbolize the Persian and Grecian empires, the latter breaking up into the four kingdoms of the successors of Alexander the Great. The "little horn" out of one of them, foreshadowed in Antiochus Epiphanes, is still future. No doubt it is the prophetic "Assyrian," "king of the north," the rod of God's chastisement of Israel when regathered in the land.

3. **Israel's measured time** of chastisement in the land is revealed in response to Daniel's beautiful confession (ix.). Seventy weeks, or 490 years, are determined upon "city" and people, and to date from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem (Neh. ii.). From this event, seven weeks and sixty-two weeks, or 483 years, carry us to "the Messiah, the Prince." But He is "cut off." Christ's rejection interrupts the reckoning, and city and sanctuary are destroyed by the people of the coming prince, the Romans. Jerusalem has lain desolate for centuries, and will, until the prophetic Roman prince arrives—head of the ten-horned empire. When he confirms a covenant with the Jews in their land, the last seven years decreed upon Jerusalem will begin.

4. **Israel's chastening** is specially considered (x.-xii.). Daniel, in presence of Christ in glory, gets a glimpse of angelic conflict behind human history (x.). Prediction follows, with details of Syrian and Egyptian kings who affect Israel down to Antiochus Epiphanes (xi. 1-31). The latter (21-31) foreshadows the coming "Assyrian." "Exploits" are done, by "the Maccabees" and others (32). A general period of sword, flame and captivity follows (33-35). It runs on to-day, and will continue "to the time of the end" (35).

Thus, in ver. 36 the time of the end, or "last week," comes suddenly before us. "The king" (36-39) is "the antichrist" at Jerusalem. The "king of the south" (40)

is Egypt. The "king of the north," who overruns the land" (40-45), is "the Assyrian" of the last days. These persons contribute toward Israel's prophetic "time of trouble" (xii. 1; comp. Matt. xxiv. 15-22; Rev. xi.-xiii.). Christ's coming will happily terminate the anguish of this last half-week of horrors.

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2 Corinthians reveals a beautiful service which goes on under the grim shadow of Gentile empire—a ministry of grace to man through Christ's Assembly. There are seven sections.

1. **A sweet savor of Christ** characterizes the ministry of Christian saints (2 Cor. i., ii.). Tribulations fit for it, teaching us the practical sweetness of the grace we preach to others. If sentence of death comes upon ourselves, it leads to trust in God. What we preach is God's Son, the Amen of the promises; and for this we are anointed, sealed, and given the earnest of God's Spirit in our hearts. Even the grief of dealing with sin and the joy of forgiving one another fit for our service. The grand result is that God leads us in triumph in Christ, making us a sweet savor of His Son unto Him, whether men receive or reject our witness.

2. **The Assembly is Christ's epistle**, in contrast with Moses and the legal covenant (iii.). The law, carved on stone, demanding righteousness which sinners could not render, ministered death and condemnation. But in the Christian Assembly the Spirit of God has written an epistle of life and grace on tables of human hearts. This "new covenant" of grace we minister to others. Again, Moses had a veil upon his face, as the Jews had upon their hearts. But we, with unveiled face, gaze upon our Lord's glory, and reflect the light to men. If men receive the Christ we preach, the veil passes from their hearts.

3. **The treasure is in earthen vessels** (iv., v.) This treasure is the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ. Knowledge of God's glory is only found in the face of



Jesus Christ. But God has poured this light into our hearts, that from us it may shine forth to men. This treasure we have in earthen vessels—mortal bodies, afflicted and dying. Shall we mourn their decay and weakness? Nay; this but demonstrates that the divine life shining out is the “life of Jesus,” and that the excellency of the power is all of God. And do not our afflictions work an eternal weight of glory? And have we not a house in the heavens—a spiritual resurrection-body? Thus we continue undismayed. Knowing the Lord’s terror, we persuade men. Ourselves reconciled to God, a new creation in Christ, as ambassadors for Him we love, we carry His ministry of reconciliation to others.

4. **Sanctified servants** are required for such a ministry (vi., vii.). They must be blameless in all things, glorifying God amid afflictions. They must be wholly separate from fellowship with unbelievers. This applies to the whole Church, for every member of Christ is “a minister of the new covenant.” If evil comes in, we have the power of Christ to overcome it (vi i.2–16).

5. **Ministry one to another’s needs** is part of our service (viii., ix.). Our example is Christ, who impoverished Himself for us. Let us not sow sparingly of our carnal things. For this kind of service is a “proof” or test of “professed subjection to the gospel of Christ” (ix. 13).

6. **The grace which overcomes difficulties** is set forth in the practical example of Paul’s own case (x., xi.). Faith refuses fleshly weapons and principles, yet wages warfare to bring every thought into captivity to Christ, whether in self or others. Study the whole section in the light of this.

7. **A “man in Christ”** the Christian servant is, yet compassed with weakness, and buffeted by Satan (xii., xiii.). But the Lord’s grace is sufficient for all his circumstances. Yea, Christ’s strength is perfected in his weakness. Let him, then, glory in infirmities, which but serve to clothe him in the mantle of Christ’s power! Paul’s case is again before us, the example of one on whom Christ’s power abides (xii. 11 to end). Let us judge ourselves, and all pretension, in the light of it. And may God give us daily to realize the power required for a ministry so glorious!

F. A.

## GOD'S PORTION AND MAN'S.

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**God's  
Portion.**

**T**HE Lord's portion is His people: Jacob is the lot of His inheritance" (Deut. xxxii. 9). What a marvel that the Most High should choose His inheritance in crooked Jacob! What condescending grace that His satisfying portion is ever in His people, weak and wayward as they have ever been.

**Man's  
Portion.**

In fullest harmony with this, is the utterance of the perfect Man, "The Lord is the portion of Mine inheritance and of My cup" (Psa. xvi. 5). In this choice of a portion, there should be no wonder, for He goes on to say most truly, "The lines are fallen unto Me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."

**God's  
Thoughts.** How blessed and perfect are God's thoughts and ways! He craves not man's substance, or allegiance, merely: He desires the man *himself*; as is well expressed in the following lines from Quarles:—

"Gold is Caesar's treasure; man is God's.

Thy gold hath Caesar's image, and thou hast God's;

Give, therefore, those things unto Caesar which are Caesar's,

And unto God which are God's."

**Man's  
Thoughts.** When we turn to look at man's thoughts and ways, however, how poor and mean they are! "Men of the world have their portion in this life," and their "god is their belly." The solemn consequence of this course is an eternal portion in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone. Even God's people fail sadly to yield themselves to God, or to find that joy in Him which is the divine plan.

**The Practical  
Question.** But it may be asked, "How can we give ourselves to God and find our portion all in Him

when we have to work for a living, bear the burdens of life, and be occupied with many things of a secular nature? God knows our circumstances; He does not expect impossibilities of us, but has graciously given us principles which show us what He *does* expect.

**Two Principles.** Of these principles, two are distinctly seen all through Scripture, and are of such general application as to affect every Christian in a most practical way, each day of his life.

**God claims the FIRST.** One of these principles is that God must have His portion *first*. This is strikingly shown by the words of Elisha to the widow of Zarephath: "Go and do as thou hast said; but make me thereof a little cake *first*, and *after* make for thee and for thy son" (1 Kings xvii. 13). It cost much for those starving souls to dispense part of their last meagre meal to God's prophet, and that, before their own craving had been appeased; but it was the necessary condition of blessing, and nothing less would be accepted. But we are not left to types to know God's mind in this matter. Jehovah had redeemed Israel out of bondage, and His claim upon them is emphatically expressed in Exodus xiii. 2. "Sanctify unto Me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast: it is mine." Thus God will accept no second place from His people. He takes the first-born for His portion, and in this way shows His claim upon the whole. The same claim is extended to cover all of Israel's possessions. God required the first-fruits of their oil and wine and wheat, the first-fruits of their ground and trees, and of all their increase; nothing escaped the tithe which was the acknowledgment

that all belonged to God. This might be thought to be simply a Jewish law, but divine *principles* never change, and Christ is witness to God's claims on us to-day: "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." Listen to the Master's answer to one who said, "Suffer me *first* to go and bury my father." It has no uncertain sound as to who is first: Jesus said, "*Follow Me* ; and let the dead bury their dead."

**God claims the BEST.** The other principle insisted on throughout Scripture, is, that God must have the *best* ; anything else is contemptible in His sight. "Ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick ; thus ye brought an offering : should I accept this of your hand ? saith the Lord. But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing : for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and My name is dreadful among the heathen" (Mal. i. 13, 14).

To be accepted by God, the offering needed to be without spot or blemish. The choice of the flock or herd was what God claimed.

In Scripture the fat signifies the best and most satisfying portion (Psa. lxiii. 5), and this was all for God (Lev. iii. 16). Whoever ate of the fat of an offering was to be cut off from His people (Lev. vii. 25).

**Our lives are tested.** Dear fellow-Christian, is it not plain from the scriptures cited, what God expects of you and me ? He wants our hearts, ourselves : and if He has this in reality, not in profession merely, He will have the *first* and *best* of our time, our money, our substance, our energies, our minds and our affections.

It will not do, brethren, to get our breakfast and see the morning newspaper regularly, and find no time to feed and meditate on God's precious Word before the duties of the day begin. God's care and blessing will not rest upon such a course. "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you" (Matt. vi. 30).

It will not do to visit our friends in the evening, and then find it so late that a few moments of hurried and ineffectual prayer are all that is given to God. "Them that honor Me I will honor, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed" (1 Sam. ii. 30.)

It is not right, nor acceptable to God, to buy our goods first, and if any money is left, to spare a little for the Lord's cause. "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine" (Prov. iii. 9, 10).

Someone may say, "This is legal, and we are under grace: why make much of what we give to God?" True, brother, we are not under law, and should not measure out a meagre tithe to satisfy God's claims. He is rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold; the earth and its fulness belong to Him and He needs not our substance; but if our practise in tangible and material things is not an index to the state of our souls, what is? "Faith if it hath not works is dead, being alone" (Jas. ii. 17).

**God's Example.** What a blessed example we have of God's desires in His own great gift. He sent His *only* begotten Son, His *Well*-beloved, and gave Him up for

us all! Let it melt our eyes to tears and fill our souls with praise; and let us render the first and best of our substance and *ourselves* as a glad thank-offering to our God. May it be our joy, in this way, to own that we are His, redeemed by Christ's precious blood.

**God's Portion.** "Praise the Saviour ye who know Him,  
Who can tell how much we owe Him?  
Gladly let us render to Him  
All we have and are.

**Man's Portion.** "Jesus, my Saviour! Thou art mine,  
The Father's gift of love divine;  
All Thou hast done, and all Thou art,  
Are now the portion of my heart."

A. S. L.

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## SEPARATION.

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**I**N the very nature of the case, if there is to be real progress in spiritual things, and a real possession of the truths of Scripture, there must be, first, a separation from a fellowship where continued carelessness and the usual habit of loose thought and expression about the word of God and the person and work of Christ exist; and, second, there must also be fellowship with those who are accustomed, from reverence for the word of God and the person and work of Christ, to properly guard their expression, and who habitually conform their conversation to the teachings of Scripture. In brief, there must be separation from any fellowship where the word of God and the person and work of Christ are not the sole objective of the fellowship. A fellowship must be found where those things are in every way supreme.

F. H. J.

# QUICKENING, NEW BIRTH, AND ETERNAL LIFE.

*A Reply to the Doctrine of A. G.'s Paper,*

“THE GROUNDS OF THE MONTREAL DIVISION  
RECONSIDERED.”

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(Continued from page 218.)

**I** TURN now to another doctrine. On page 21, he writes:

“In this chapter (John vi.) the Lord publishes the Father’s will ‘that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have eternal life.’ Almighty power undertakes to overcome the inveterate opposition of man’s will in connection with new birth; for ‘they shall be all taught of God’—an expression of which the significance may be seen from Isa. liv. 13 and Jer. xxxi. 33; with which Ezek. xxxvi. 25–27 may be compared. For ‘except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ The natural man is incapable of receiving such divine instruction; as is indicated in ‘It is written in the Prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto Me.’ John i. 13 shows, in a historical way, that only born-again ones so come to the Saviour.”

There is just enough truth about this to make it dangerous. I want to connect with this another paragraph which begins on page 26.

“It is as essential to the maintenance of the divine holiness and majesty, as it is to the purifying of the sinner’s conscience, that confession should *precede* forgiveness and justification. This divine order is shown in the assurance that ‘if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ But where, in Mr. Grant’s doctrine, is there room for such confession, preceding forgiveness? *Before* ‘the first moment of quickening’? Then is it the dead work of one without faith, who, strange to say, nevertheless, pleases God; for surely, ‘I have sinned’ is grateful to the inclined ear of the Saviour-God!

*After 'the first moment of quickening'?* Then, according to Mr. Grant, we have the strange spectacle of one who is already in Christ, forgiven and justified, now, for the first time, confessing his sins and sinnership! One horn of the dilemma affords no more relief to Mr. Grant than the other."

But Scripture does not require us to take either horn. The error underlying all this reasoning is, alas, too common. There are certain minds who make Scripture responsible for their own misapprehension of it. They triumphantly quote, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." They say, to repent, to believe, to come to Jesus and much more is to please God, therefore a sinner must be born again before he can repent, or believe, or come to Jesus. When they have accepted this teaching, then they begin to quarrel over which comes first, faith or repentance; some giving faith the first place, others repentance. Then new birth is made to be a sudden infusion of life by the power of God apart from the gospel or the word of God, and thus we have all the elements of the doctrine of A. G. "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," is quoted as being supposed to teach the above dogmas. But it is a perversion of these scriptures.

Men, natural men, are commanded to repent (Acts xvii. 30). Why tell them they cannot repent until God gives them life, and thus hinder their repentance? *Sinners* are told to believe. Why tell them it is an impossibility until God effects the new birth in them—and thus set them to wondering why God does not give them new birth? It is to *sinners* Jesus



says, "Come to Me." Why hinder their hearing His voice by telling them they cannot come to Him until He quickens them? These views distort the gospel. Scripture teaches that life is by believing (John xx. 30, 31). Does not the Lord complain of the Jews because they will not come to Him? Does He not imply that if they only would come they would get life? Peter assures us that new birth is by the word of God through the gospel preached (1 Pet. i. 23-25). Nowhere in Scripture is new birth spoken of as by the power of God apart from the word of God in the gospel. Nowhere are we taught that faith is a distinct and subsequent event to new birth. Life, faith and repentance are each the fruit of the word of God in the gospel impregnating the soul. These puzzles are never found in the word of God. They are the results of the reasoning of the human mind apart from Scripture. Scripture never occupies us with such questions; and if we would let our minds run in the channel of Scripture we would not be standing in the way of the blessing of souls, and of our own light.

People who hold these harmful views are great adepts at reading them into the Scriptures. A. G. says, "John i. 13 shows, in a historical way, that only born-again ones so come to the Saviour;" i. e., first, there was new birth, and then came being taught of the Father, resulting in the reception of Christ. But the passage itself very carefully avoids saying, "Which were born before, or, "Which were already born." It was in receiving Him that they believed on His name and were born anew. These were not three distinct events; but one event is spoken of in three different ways. They received

the testimony concerning Him; it impregnated their souls; faith was there, life was there, but neither the one nor the other apart from the reception of the testimony.

Three other scriptures are thought to support this theory. On pages 22 and 23, the reader will find this:

“In 1 Peter i. 2, we have brought before us:

1. Sanctification of the Spirit, unto
2. Obedience, and
3. Sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Similarly, in the commission given by the Lord Jesus to His servant, the apostle Paul, he was sent (Acts xxvi. 18),

1. To open their eyes, that
2. They may turn to God, that
3. They may receive remission of sins, by faith in Christ Jesus.

Taking the two together we have brought before us in the foregoing portions of the word of God:

1. The initial act of the Spirit, new birth.
2. The resulting changed attitude towards God.
3. The receiving of part with Christ Jesus, by *faith in Him*.

But is it the purpose of the Spirit in these scriptures to tell us what is the chronological order of the work of God in the soul—to develop for us the subjective stages of that work? Is it not rather that the family of God is comprised of those whom the word of God has laid hold of by the power of the Spirit, so that now, whatever they have been before, there is a real, vital, internal connection with Christ, stamping thus His own character upon them and marking them as those to whom the sprinkling of His blood applies. Is not this the force of “through sanctification of the Spirit”? that is, by the power of the Spirit the word of God had impregnated their

souls, and as thus impregnated they had been put into a new position before the eye of God, where He saw them in a vital, spiritual link with Christ, sharing in His own perfect character and partaking of the full value of His sprinkled blood. Is not this true equally of all whose souls the gospel has reached by the power of the Spirit of God?

As to the second passage, turning to God and receiving the forgiveness of sins are the necessary accompaniment of having the eyes opened. It was through faith in the message Paul brought that they were turned to light from darkness, without any transitional stages. It was by the power of the gospel he preached that they were turned from Satan to God; and being thus turned to God, by the light he brought them, at once forgiveness of sins was theirs and they had a title to inherit with the sanctified. There is nothing here on the subject of the "historical order" in which souls come to the Saviour. The question is not at all one concerning the progress of the subjective work in the soul.

Again, he says:

"In Rom. viii. 30, we have mention of successive links in a golden chain of divine blessing: for 'whom He did predestinate,

1. Them He also called; and whom He called,
2. Them He also justified; and whom He justified,
3. Them He also glorified.' "

He comments thus:

"The call is beyond question the effectual, life-giving call of the Spirit, which involves new birth. It is, *as a separate and subsequent divine act*, marked off from predestination which *preceded* (before time began) by the phrase 'them He also,' in the same way that being glorified (*in the eternity to come*) is separated and marked off from being justified. Exactly the same divisive and distinguishing phrase comes between the call of the Spirit (involving new

birth), and the succeeding divine act of justification. "Whom He called, *them He also justified.*"

This is a new interpretation indeed! The chronological order of the work of God in the soul! The apostle is speaking of the purpose of God. The purpose of God embraces our calling, our justification and our glorification. It is God's side altogether the apostle is occupied with here, and the subjective work in us is not in question. It is not the work of the Spirit in the soul,—the stages of that work, the order in which the soul progresses,—but the purpose of God which cannot be thwarted, whatever befalls us. All things but further the blessing of those who are embraced in this purpose. A. G.'s use of this passage illustrates the result of the effort to make everything subjective.

The paragraph on the parable of the prodigal son, on pages 24, 25, and 26, is too long to quote. When A. G. says, "The exercise so touchingly depicted in the case of the prodigal is distinctly an individual thing. Why, then, cannot the precious activities of the happy God (1 Tim. i. 11), indicated in the father's running to meet, embracing and robing the repentant one, be accepted as having their delightful exercise towards each individual believer." I answer, I agree; but for this very reason I *cannot* agree when he says, "In this lovely parable the Lord Jesus is generally understood to have portrayed *a progressive, divine activity in grace towards the individual soul.*" Or again, "In the father's running to meet the prodigal, embracing him and bestowing the best robe, the Lord Jesus seems unquestionably to present to our adoring gaze corresponding precious, delightful, divine activities towards the repentant one; *which*

*actually occur in the very sequence and order shown."* (italics in the last two quotations are mine.) I make one more quotation from this paragraph: "But we have here, have we not? *present divine activities meeting at the suited moment, and thus responding to progressive exercise in one quickened some time before.*"

Against all this one must protest. A. G. spoils the parable. He says, "It was not the commencement, but the conclusion of *the long, toilsome journey* which furnished the occasion for the father's gracious reception, which doubtless encouraged the repentant one *to proceed to his confession.*" Now there are two errors in this statement. We read, "But when he was *yet a great way off*, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." There is no room here for a "long, toilsome journey" before the occasion arises for the father to show the gracious activities of his heart towards him. This condemns A. G.'s conception of the parable. But again, we read that his confession was in connection with his coming to himself. He did not need to be encouraged to confess to his father. It is true when his father met him he said, "Father I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son;" but I ask, when we shall find ourselves in our eternal home enjoying its blessedness, will we not still say, Father we are not worthy of it? Will not "worthy is the Lamb" in our lips mean that then? Will we need encouragement to say it? No more did the prodigal need the father's gracious activity to encourage him to confess what he had already confessed when he came to himself. What he found was that he had not fully measured his father's gracious activity. What re-

pening sinner does? The parable, then, does not support the doctrine that there may be to-day some in whom there is faith towards God, but lack faith in Christ—some who have only believed the testimony of God concerning Himself and need to go on to believe the testimony of God concerning His Son—having “pre-natal life” and new birth, but not “life in its recognized status.” How manifest this last expression is a purely human invention—a term not born of the truth of God, but specially devised to further the interests of a theory. What a convenient term it is! How well it serves the purpose for which it is invented! But, alas, how it shows an animus in opposition to the simple truth of Scripture!

On page 27 the case of Cornelius is referred to, and on page 22 allusion is made to the disciples at Ephesus; mentioned in Acts xix. These cases are supposed to present “insurmountable difficulties.” If the difficulties supposed are imaginary, there will be no need of surmounting them. The remedy is, not to let the imagination work where it ought not to work. The difficulties imported into these cases all arise from inattention to the facts. It is forgotten that these cases all occurred during a transitional period between two dispensations. When the dispensation of the Spirit was being introduced, there were Jewish believers, Samaritan believers, Gentile believers, and believers on the ground of John the Baptist—distinct and separate companies. Now it was necessary that the unity of believers under the dispensation of the Spirit should be clearly demonstrated. The book of Acts does this, and thus we have these various companies successively brought

on to the new ground, and in a suited manner in each case. Now, neither the Epistle to the Galatians nor that to the Romans was written in this transitional period. When the dispensation of the Spirit has been introduced and established, the believers of these various companies brought together, and all believers, are thus on common ground; there no more existed such companies of believers—none could be found in these various conditions. The Epistles to the Galatians and Romans fully establish this. In Gal. iv. 1-5, we learn that under law God treated His children *there* as infants or minors, but under the dispensation of the Spirit He puts them in the dignity and place of sons. In ver. 6, the apostle turns to the Gentiles. In the Acts, as we have seen, God has put the Gentile believers there too, and to this fact the apostle appeals to assure them that they have the Spirit. Romans is usually thought to have been written still later than the Galatians. In the eighth chapter, ver. 9, we read, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." The gospel preached by the Spirit sent down from heaven does not form different companies of believers. All who now are born of God by the gospel are participators in the place of sons, which is the characteristic blessing under the dispensation of the Spirit. Where, then, are the insurmountable difficulties? Every expression used in the Acts of these various companies of believers is perfectly intelligible when looked at in the light of the truth. They are difficult and unexplainable only when the light, by which it is sought to explain them, is darkness.

C. CRAIN.

(To be continued.)

## THE SABBATH:

THE SEVENTH DAY SET APART AS THE SABBATH FOR AN  
EARTHLY PEOPLE IN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

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I WOULD offer a few thoughts on the above subject, which are new to myself, but received by me in meditation on the word of God, avoiding reference to human authority.

It is very clear that the inspired Word speaks of an earthly people, and a heavenly people. When God took up the Israelites as a nation, and brought them into relationship with Himself, their calling was earthly, and they were to be blessed with all temporal blessings in earthly places on condition of obedience to the law. The same Word treats of a heavenly people,—of a people who are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, and they are to walk worthy of this calling. Unless this distinction is seen there must be confusion as to the sabbath, as well as to some other subjects.

It is plain also that Adam and Eve as they came from the hand of their Creator, though innocent, and in relationship with Him, yet their calling was earthly. "The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed;" and the man was "to dress it; and to keep it." And when the woman was created and brought unto the man, she had her place with him in the earthly paradise. Thus their calling, like the nation of Israel, was earthly, not heavenly; and as such the seventh day was sanctified or set apart as a sabbath for them. It is written, "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work" (Gen. ii. 3). We cannot



suppose that God sanctified a sabbath for Himself, or for the angels, but for "man" whom He had formed, and given dominion on the earth. And doubtless if a seventh day passed after it was sanctified, and the man and his wife remained unfallen, he did not "dress" the "garden" on that day. He and his "help meet" rested in happy obedience to God.

Alas, by man, so favored, sin came into the world. His relationship to God was broken. Paradise was lost. Creation was under the curse. Death reigned. God's rest was interrupted. He had to go to work again, though in a new way. To this the Lord doubtless referred when He said to those who charged Him with breaking the sabbath, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." God cannot rest in a scene like this. As soon as the fall had taken place, He, in grace, opened a door of hope, by announcing that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head: and those who took their true place as sinners, and in faith recognized the truth that "without the shedding of blood is no remission," as did Abel, were divinely accounted righteous. But their calling was not earthly; no "garden of delights" was "planted" for them here;—their calling was heavenly. Though Enoch walked with God 300 years, yet He did not open a "garden eastward in Eden" to him, but translated him to the heavenly paradise. Of others who lived sometime later, it is said, "They desire a better country, that is a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city."

Not only did God thus at once announce grace and act upon it, accounting those righteous who took re-

fuge in its provision; but they were under grace as to their walk. In its power Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and others lived holy lives. It is clear that "from Adam to Moses" there was no *law*. And during that interval of over 2,000 years, the sacred record, covering that interval, gives no history of the sabbath nor even mentions it.

But as soon as Israel as a nation is brought into relationship as God's *earthly* people, the sabbath comes up again (Ex. xvi. 23, 26); and when the law was given at Sinai the keeping of the sabbath was enjoined (Ex. xx. 8-11). After this the mentioning of the sabbath is of frequent occurrence in the books of the Old Testament. And when the people got away from God, He raised up prophets and others to warn them, charging them among other things with profaning the sabbath, and recalling them to obedience (Isa. lvi. 2-6; lviii. 13, 14; Amos viii. 4-6; Neh. xiii. 15-22).

But as soon as Christianity was fully introduced, and Israel as a nation was manifestly set aside for the time being, believers in Jesus came to the front as God's heavenly people. Of Jewish believers it was affirmed that they were "partakers of the heavenly calling" (Heb. iii. 1). And Gentile believers were addressed as seated "in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 6). This being their calling, they were "not under the law, but under grace," (Rom. vi. 14) and were taught to walk worthy of the new position into which grace had just brought them. In the apostolic epistles, Christians are not once exhorted to keep the sabbath. In the Acts of the apostles we have no mention made of the Church coming together on that day for worship. The

apostles would go into a Jewish synagogue on that day, so as to have an opportunity to preach Christ (Acts xiii. 14-52; xviii. 4-6). That is a work which can be done on any day, or in any place. The only day specified in the Acts "when the disciples came together to break bread," was "upon the *first* day of the week" (Acts xx. 7).

It may be noticed that in the epistles to the seven churches of Asia, though they are nearly all charged with departure from God, and some of them with introducing positive evil, yet none of them are reminded of the sabbath, or charged with breaking it, as certainly they would have been if the law of the sabbath had been divinely in force. The way the Lord spoke to these backsliding Christians is very different from the way He spoke to backsliding Israel.

But when the present interval is past,—when the Church-period is over, and the heavenly people are gone to meet the Lord, and to the Father's house, God will take up Israel, and will, in the riches of His grace, bring them into relationship with Himself as His earthly people; or as Isaiah expresses it, "The Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people" (Isa. xi. 11). And when this occurs the sabbath will apply, and be observed. The "great tribulation" (Matt. xxiv. 21) is *after* the Lord has come into the "air" to gather His heavenly saints to Him, and *before* He comes "in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." And the sabbath will be in force with His earthly people even during that interval. The Lord referring to that time said, "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day."

The sabbath is to be in force, and be kept during the Millennial age when Israel will be God's first-born, that is having the first place in earthly blessing. It is written, "They shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations to My holy mountain Jerusalem, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord. And I will also take of them for priests, and for Levites, saith the Lord. For as the new heavens, and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord" (Isa. lxvi. 20-23). The following, found in the same prophecy, will be fulfilled in that day, as never of old in Israel, "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. lviii. 13, 14).

In completing this simple outline on the sabbath, it should be added, that as Adam "is the figure of Him that was to come, so God resting "on the seventh day from all His work"—all being finished, and very good—was doubtless "a figure" or type of His rest when the new creation is finished, and all things are according to His mind. This is the sab-

bath at which He has ever been aiming, and "work-eth hitherto" to bring in, and will work till His blessed purpose is fully carried out. Then He will cease from His work. In the new creation there will be no sin, therefore His holiness can rest; there will be no sorrow, therefore His love can rest. And His rest, His sabbath, will be forever: and all that are His will enter that rest—"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." The Greek word here rendered "rest" is *sabbatismos*, given in the margin, "keeping a sabbath." The Revised renders it "a sabbath-rest." Thus more than intimating that God resting on the seventh day was a figure of His eternal sabbath-rest when all things are made new, and "the former things are passed away." So when the Millennial age is over, having accomplished its purpose, and the new creation is fully come in, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," (Matt. xiii. 43) "and they shall reign forever and ever" (Rev. xxii. 5). Nothing can ever mar that sabbatic rest.

As Christians we are strangers here, and are on our way to a heavenly clime; and not being under the law, we have nothing to do with the sabbath, which was for a nation whose calling was earthly; but we have something more suited to a calling which is heavenly,—we have "the first day of the week,"—"the Lord's day,"—the day of the week on which the Lord arose from the dead. In observing this day we are reminded, not of the finishing of the old creation, but the beginning of the new, He, as risen, being that beginning, and a sure pledge of its completion, when all things will be made new, and God be all in all, and His people enjoy an endless sabbath-

rest. Of course, "the first day" is to be observed in a manner worthy of the risen Lord, ceasing from ordinary work as far as possible, and coming together as the first Christians did, and for the same purpose (Acts xx. 7). Beside this, we are not limited to "a sabbath day's journey," but may journey in the Lord's work as far as we like; that is to preach His Word, or give out tracts, or to visit some sick or lonely ones, to administer spiritual help. In thus doing, we are imitators of the Father and the Son,—  
 "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

R. H.

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"WE MAY NOT BE HERE LONG."

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"**W**E may not be here long," said the wife gently to her husband.

He had just been suggesting that they might venture to purchase certain little requisites for their humble abode; but, then, had they not been considering the advisability of leaving the place and of living in a distant city?

It was this which called forth her reply. There seemed small wisdom in buying new household goods if such might have to be sold off at half price very shortly. Their stay in the town was uncertain, and this made them hesitate to lay out money on things which soon they might have to leave behind them.

"We may not be here long!" How my wife's words to me kept ringing through my soul all that day, lifting up my thoughts to a far higher plane than that whereon the most serious of mundane

affairs are considered, and causing my heart to burn and beat with expectant desire to take part in that glorious transformation scene, when things mutable and temporary below shall give place to things changless and eternal above.

“The Lord is near.” How near! Even now the quickened and anointed ear can almost hear His hastening and long looked for footfall. In patience, then, let us possess our souls, and increasingly feel the uncertainty of our tenure of occupation down here. Thus we shall not be eager to feather our nest and add to our stock of earthly belongings, knowing that “We may not be here long.”

Lord, whether we be here for a day, a month, or a year, may we be here for Thee: looking for Thee, living for Thee, ready in the twinkling of an eye to strike the tent and to roll up the cord, and enter the Father's house, our fair and long-loved home.

S. J. B. C.

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## PORTION FOR THE MONTH.

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### ZECHARIAH AND REVELATION.

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**L**IKE Daniel, fourth of the “greater” prophets, the “minor” prophets of the fourth group, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, view God's people under Gentile rule. Their special point of view is that of a remnant, brought back from Babylonish captivity, yet still under Gentile kings, awaiting, in humiliation, the coming of their own King.

A false Christendom answers to “Babylon;” and in our day God has delivered a Christian remnant from her thralldom. A fragment of the true Church has been recalled to principles of truth, according to God's Word

and name, while awaiting His Son from heaven. The Jewish remnant which returned to Jerusalem to await the Messiah is thus a type of us.

But the Jews scattered through Christendom may also be regarded as captives of "Babylon the Great." A remnant of these will soon return to Jerusalem, the true Church having been glorified, and will pass through "great tribulation," while awaiting the coming of Christ and His saints. Thus the first Jewish remnant is also a type of a second, to whom Christ will appear, fulfilling the Prophets.

Like Daniel and Revelation, Zechariah throws much light upon the Jewish remnant of the last days, and it is this interpretation which we here follow, noting the seven divisions of the book.

1. **The return** is the subject of the first division (i. 1-6). Jehovah addresses a people that have come back to the land of their fathers. But is it for blessing or for curse—a mere return to the land, or a return to God? If they turn to God, He will turn to them; but if, like their fathers, they disregard His Word, its woes will smite them.

2. **A way of deliverance** for those who turn to God is unfolded (i. 7-vi.). This long division has a number of important sections.

(1) The Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires are symbolized by red, speckled and white horses (i. 7-17). Providential instruments of Israel's chastisement, they have acted in self-will, and are about to be judged, while Israel will be exalted. A controlling Power, exercised throughout the "times" of Gentile empire, is seen in the man on a red horse among the myrtle trees. It is the Messiah, the myrtle trees figuring His saints.

(2) Babylon is joined with the other empires under the symbol of four "horns," while four "carpenters" figure the providential agencies which destroy these empires (i.



18-21). The horns may also figure special enemies of the last days.

(3) Jerusalem having been taken into favor, Jehovah becomes her wall of fire and the glory in her midst (ii.). Let the God-fearing of the earth now look to her, for she is to be exalted, and her foes cast down. Israel is now the vessel of grace, the Church having been taken to heaven.

(4) But how can a righteous God exalt sinful Israel? Through the advocacy of her High Priest (iii.)! The removal of "the iniquity of that land in one day" (iii. 9) is the point—the fulfillment of the type of the scape-goat. Israel's Advocate and her adversary appear before God, the Advocate assuming responsibility for the "filthy garments" of the nation He represents. But, lo, the accuser is rebuked, and the Advocate clothed and crowned—Israel's true Aaron, before God for her in His "garments of glory and beauty." Thus Israel is seen "in Christ," her Representative's glory being the measure of her own standing before God. But how is it that her "iniquity" passes from her Advocate the moment He takes up her case? Because He is Joshua, (Jesus), "Jehovah the Saviour," son of Jozadak, "Jehovah the righteous." Joshua here is the type of "Jesus Christ the righteous," "our" Advocate become Israel's, Himself the Propitiation for her sins (1 John ii. 1, 2)! He can assume responsibility like the scape-goat, and yet stand acquitted. Has He not been to the cross for Israel? How the Jewish heart will melt when it views Christ thus, seated among His "fellows," the "men of wonder" (ver. 8)! And then will God bring Him forth as the Branch in whom Israel takes root again, the Stone on which she is established.

(5) A Jewish remnant which thus stands "in Christ" in heaven, is a suited vessel for the Spirit's use on earth, and a Jewish candlestick of testimony succeeds the re-

moved candlesticks of a false church (iv.). Zerubbabel displaces Babylon. Zerubbabel and the olive-trees, or "sons of oil," figure Christ, whose coming and power will fully establish His testimony to the earth through Israel. But even the testimony of the Jewish remnant in humiliation, during the throes of the "tribulation," is regarded in Rev. xi. 4 as a preliminary fulfilment of this type.

(6) But, alas, many are still rebels, and the book of prophetic woes must discharge its curse upon the land, purging out the false from the true (v. 1-4). This will be the application to Israel of "the hour of trial" which will test all (Rev. iii. 10, *Gr.*).

(7) The ephah (v. 5-11) seems to represent the measure of iniquity, the woman, wickedness, in the midst. The covering of lead may symbolize the punishment of judicial blindness, out of which two women emerge (perhaps Christendom under its final head, in alliance with Judah under Antichrist). The house they build is Babylon again—open apostasy.

(8) This evil is judged by providential agencies which issue from between the mountains of brass (vi. 1-8)—the foretold woes of the law and the prophets.

(9) The wickedness of the first man being swept away, God's counsels are established in the Second Man, the enduring Branch, Builder of the temple, Bearer of glory, Ruler on the throne, and throned Priest. A remnant, brought out of man's evil, are also crowned, with the silver of redemption and the gold of glory, but bring this silver and gold to be made into crowns for Him (ver. 11, 14).

3. **Israel's sanctification** is the theme of the third division (vii., viii.). (1) The pretended separation to God of past times was a religious mockery (vii. 1-8). (2) They had rejected the Word, bringing wrath upon themselves (vii. 9-14). (3) But jealousy for Zion had led God to

return to Jerusalem, and He comforts and instructs the remnant (viii. 1-17). (4) Israel's fasts, or separation from the world, will now be joyful feasts, and the nations will sanctify themselves with her (vers. 18-23).

4. **The advent of the King** is the next theme (ix.-xi. 3). He will smite rebellious peoples, yet even in glory comes to serve, lowly upon an ass, bringing salvation to Jerusalem and peace to the nations,—though He will use His saints as a sword against their enemies (ix.). He brings showers to the parched earth, and gladdens the heart of Judah and Joseph, but purges out goats and false shepherds from the sheep (x., xi. 3).

5. **God's ways in government** are rehearsed (xi. 4-17). When Israel was the prey of false shepherds, God sent the Good Shepherd to feed them. The Shepherd came with two staves, Graciousness and Union, to establish the people in God's favor, and gather them together in one. But they would not have Grace, and that staff was broken. And they sold their Shepherd for thirty pieces of silver, breaking the staff Union. Instead of becoming one flock under one Shepherd, they were scattered among the nations. Returning to their land, at last, they still reject the true Shepherd, and receive one who comes in his own name, "the man of sin," most ruthless of all their false shepherds.

6. **Triumph over the evil** is the next subject (xii.-xiii.). Jerusalem, besieged and oppressed, becomes the means of the judgment of the nations (xii. 1-9). Israel's hard heart is conquered by the Spirit of grace and supplications: she weeps over Him she has pierced (vers. 10-14). She finds the fountain for sin and uncleanness, and truth displaces falsehood (xiii. 1-6). The foundation of the blessing is seen—the fact that the stroke of judgment smote God's Fellow (vers. 7-9). This led to the scattering of the sheep, and the purging out of two-thirds who

were really goats; but a third is brought through the fire of affliction into blessing.

7. **The day of the Lord** follows man's day (xiv.). The nations gather against Jerusalem and chastise the wicked Jews. But Christ appears in behalf of His own, and smites the nations. Judgment over, healing waters flow outward from Jerusalem, and the Lord becomes the earth's King. An age of peace and righteousness lifts sin's curse, and as the nations make their annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to keep the feast of tabernacles and worship the King, the very bells of the horses ring out HOLINESS TO THE LORD!

We have dwelt upon Zechariah, Revelation being more familiar, with many helps easily obtainable. The first three chapters of Revelation give a spiritual history of the present dispensation, as the rest of the book foretells "the things which shall be after these" (i. 19).

Chap. i. reveals the activity of heaven during the present dispensation—a glorified Man there, the Mediator between God and men, exercising priestly judgment among the assemblies, yet with His bosom of love girded for service. The instruments of present grace are in His right hand, seven stars, figuring the true Church, a heavenly thing like her Lord, made up of the Christian saints He has saved. The seven candlesticks speak of what the Church should be, a light to light the sons of men to the Man in glory, who is the way to God.

Chaps. ii. and iii. give the earthly aspect of the present dispensation—the history of Christendom. Ephesus figures the apostolic church, fallen from her first love even in Paul's day. In Smyrna we see the Church's "ten days" of persecution under the Roman empire. Pergamos the sad marriage of Church and world, from Constantine the Great to about 600 A. D. The "Dark Ages," under the spiritual curse of Rome, find expression in

Thyatira; while in Sardis we see the waning effect of the "Reformation" upon the state churches. Yet Christ in love delivers a remnant (Philadelphia) from the power of the evil, though upon the mass of Christian profession this grace is lost. A Laodicea of lukewarmness, Christ rejects Christendom as a whole, taking His true saints to heaven.

Chaps. iv. and v. characterize the activity of heaven during the coming dispensation. The Creator is upon His throne. On thrones around are Old Testament saints and the Church, in resurrection-bodies, symbolized by twenty-four elders. God's throne is about to speak to the earth in lightnings and thunders. The living creatures, a combination of cherubim and seraphim, symbolize the characters in which God will act. There will be the cherubic stroke of judgment, but also the seraphic purging of many a sinner, on the basis of Christ's sacrifice (*cf.* Ezek. i. and Isa. vi.).

But the coming age is to be put under man. Where is there a man worthy? Ah, there is One, in the very throne of God! It is the Lamb of God, who has bought the inheritance by His own blood; the Lion of the tribe of Judah, to whom the throne of David belongs! He takes the book of judgments, which usher in the coming age, and begins to open the seals, while the whole creation falls down adoringly before Him!

Chap. vi. to the end of Revelation are mainly occupied with the earthly history which follows, the beginning of which is surely very near our doors. No doubt the first six seals introduce preliminary judgments, while the opening of the seventh seal ushers in the full judgment of God—the seven trumpet blasts before which the Jericho of a world under Satan falls. The rest of the book gives details, or goes on to the Millennium, the post-millennial apostasy, the judgment of the dead, and the eternal state. But we must refer the reader to well-known helps in exploring this wonderful book.

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## “IS NOT THIS THE CARPENTER?”

(Mark vi. 3.)

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THESE words give expression to the unbelief of the men of Nazareth. Our Lord came “to His own country,” where He had been brought up and was well-known. Those thirty wondrous years of perfect human obedience to God had been a delight to His Father, but they evidently made no impression upon those who came daily in contact with Him, save, in some measure, His mother. In face of the divine witness of miracles, and teaching as never man taught when He entered upon His public ministry, they can remember but one thing—this is “the carpenter,” who toiled as one of themselves, and not a scribe who lived upon the toil of others.

“The carpenter” was thus a term of reproach, similar to that implied in the question, “Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?” “Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.” Men thought they were saying the last word about His mission when they gave Him the epithet, “A friend of publicans and sinners,” and later put the last mark of shame and mockery upon Him in the crown of thorns.

But faith worships where unbelief stumbles or mocks, and takes up each unbelieving cavil and finds in it fresh cause for wonder and love. True, the rulers and Pharisees did not believe on Him; to have done so would have been to renounce themselves. Without repentance, abiding and complete, on their part, it would have proven that our Lord was like themselves. No, it showed that He was from God

when the self-righteous, self-satisfied, who were bringing Cain's offering to God—a cultivated fallen nature—failed to believe on Him whose constant witness was to the solemn fact of the hopeless guilt, vileness and helplessness of man.

Again, "Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet," while a contradiction of the prophecy which told of the light that was to rise in "Galilee of the Gentiles," was in keeping with the pride that expected divine endorsement of the shams at Jerusalem. To be outside all that was but to be with the presence of God, which had also departed from the Temple (Ezek. xi. 23). It was also a suggestion of the lowly grace which was identifying itself with "the poor of the flock," with an outlook also toward the Gentiles.

As to "A friend of sinners," it is His boast; and how many sin-weary souls have found in it their title to fall into His open arms and weep out their grief on His bosom. The crown that now adorns Him is but the crown of thorns glorified through His suffering, a pledge that fruitless thorns like ourselves shall one day be a diadem of beauty upon His brow, to the praise of the glory of His grace.

Let us then take up this epithet, "the carpenter," and see what it has to give us in praise of Him whom men despised.

When the Pharisees reproached our Lord for performing a miracle on the sabbath, His reply was, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." Sin had marred God's rest in the first creation, and He was compelled, if we may use language to suit creature comprehension, to take up toil in connection with the world. As has been said, "Holiness could not, and love would not rest in the presence of sin."

If He had to inflict toil upon fallen man as a consequence of his sin, He also labored from the beginning, not merely as a witness of the ruin, but to bring in a divine remedy. So when our Lord came, it was in accord with this that He was laid in a manger, close to the toiling beasts, and spent His years of private life in association with and engaged in labor. There was no life of luxurious ease for Him; He had come with far different objects. How good, then, it is to think of "the Carpenter," and thus to be reminded that He, the Lord of glory, had come into the circumstances made necessary for sinful man by the fall, the first step, we might say, of that humiliation which led Him to say, "I love My wife and My children, I will not go out free." And so He became "A servant forever."

But let us look further at this term of reproach, and learn other glories of His person and character. The word "carpenter," in the original means a producer, one who brings forth, which is the opposite of evil. Satan and sin are destroyers. "He was a murderer from the beginning." He destroyed the peace and happiness of Eden, and ever since has been engaged in working havoc in individuals and the race at large. In blessed contrast with this, our Lord was, and is, the builder, the restorer of the ruin.

But who can estimate the labor of a work like this? If the work of the first creation could only be accomplished by divine power, the new creation needed even more than that—divine love and a sacrifice. The first creation was the work of the divine Architect and Builder. As we know, this was the Son: "All things were made by Him, and without Him



was not anything made that was made." As Creator, then, we get our first view of "the Carpenter." "He that built all things is God." Creation itself in a sense, is an expression of divine humiliation, for the distance between God and the creature is infinite. May we ever tread such holy ground with unshod feet and worshiping hearts, not daring to intrude into those things which we have not seen, but reverently receiving all that the word of God gives us. Thus, while "the heavens declare the glory of God," we are also told that He "humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and on the earth." To give thus expression to His thoughts by fashioning the wondrous fabric of the universe was infinite condescension. More, to fit this world as the abode of man was toil; so we read that God "rested on the seventh day from all His work." So we see the "Carpenter" in this first wondrous building.

As we have seen, sin introduced havoc and ruin into this first creation, and the divine Builder, has, as it were, to resume His labors. These were not to repair the ruined first creation, but with a view to something altogether new, though really that which was in the divine mind from the beginning. In type we see this even in Eden before the fall. The man was a figure of the "last Adam," "Him that was to come." A helpmeet for him was to be found, and this could not be in any of the creatures already formed. So with Christ. No bride could be found for Him in the fallen creation. Therefore a "deep sleep," of death, must fall upon Him, in order that from Him might be formed that new thing, the Church, to be His bride and companion forever—in the new creation, and of it. The word as to Eve is,

in the margin, “builded.” It is to this that He refers in Matt. xvi. 18; Peter had confessed Him as the Christ the Son of the living God, and He declares that this is the foundation—Christ the Son of the living God—upon which He will build His Church. It was at Pentecost, on the descent of the Holy Spirit, that this work of building began. All between the type in Eden and the beginning of the accomplishment at Pentecost was preparatory to this. The various dispensations were but stages in the work we may say of taking down the old building, removing the ruins, to give place to that new structure. God was proving the utter helplessness and worthlessness of the first man, that there should never be raised a question throughout the eternal ages as to the justice of his setting it aside.

In all this we see “the Carpenter.” Even now though marred to sight by human failure, the stately and beautiful proportions of this building can be seen, and the plan is laid down in the word of God, where we have it in all its perfectness of design.

“View the vast building, see it rise;  
The work how great! the plan how wise!  
Oh wondrous fabric! power unknown!  
That rears it on the “living Stone.”

What an answer is this building, as it will be displayed in eternal glory, to the poor reproach of His enemies! And how, with adoring hearts all the redeemed will take up that very question, and as the all-glorious Builder of His Church is seen in heaven, ask, “Is not this the Carpenter?”

As has been said, even upon earth the wondrous wisdom, divine skill and power are manifested in the building of the Church. “And are builded upon

the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. ii. 22). "In whom ye are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 23). What human thought could have devised such a plan, and what power could have executed it? We see the skill of "the Carpenter" here at every stage. He "shed forth" the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, to be the executor of His will; nothing was to be left to the natural man. Every member of this building was to be in Christ by the possession of life, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, so that all was on a divine and therefore eternal basis. Thus the material was prepared by "the Carpenter."

Then each member was placed in the building according to the will of the Builder. Nothing was left to the will of the flesh. Had it been otherwise all would have been marred and corrupted. We have only to look at the Kingdom of Heaven as left in the hands of men, to see this. "While men slept" the enemy has sowed tares; and even among the true children of God how the flesh is allowed, which for a time obscures the work of the Spirit. But in the day when that which is only the Lord's work appears all will be seen to be perfect, as it is now to the Spirit-taught mind.

We might dwell for a moment on this work in the individual: begun by the impartation of life, and carried on by the constant ministry of grace from our Lord; all is perfect, so far as His abiding work is concerned; "we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." As we have said, the flesh, when allowed, mars the appearance of the Lord's work; but this, by very contrast, will only

serve to manifest His, which is abiding and perfect.

Our resurrection bodies will be the result of His building—"We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

The work of the carpenter is sometimes that of repairing. We read in Israel's history, that when through neglect and departure from God the temple fell into decay, carpenters were employed to restore it. This was done in the days of those faithful men, Joash and Josiah. And when the house had been razed by Nebuchadnezzar, those restored from the captivity employed carpenters to rebuild the house. All this too is suggestive of "the Carpenter's" work both in the individual and the Church at large. When through man's carelessness the Church has been neglected, and so far as testimony is concerned, fallen into a state of decay—such for instance as that at Corinth—the faithful Builder removes the rubbish accumulated, whether of fleshly doctrine or practice, and rebuilds, edifies His own. "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten," He says; and where those rebukes are heard, how beautifully is the work of the Repairer seen.

The same is true in the case of the individual saint. Alas that this should be needed; but whenever the eye of faith is taken off Christ, and the heart opened to that which is not of Him, how soon does spiritual decay appear. There may be many things which usurp His place; there need not be gross moral declension (which is often the fruit of spiritual sloth) but some little things—pleasures, cares, above all self-occupation—are allowed a place, and

the injury is done. But here, blessed be His name of love, His work of repairing is seen: "He restor-eth my soul." By His word and Spirit He leads the believer to see the fleshly rubbish that has accumulated, and takes it away, bringing the soul back to its first love; then He builds up, comforts and strengthens the wanderer, who can now praise Him for His faithfulness.

We read that in the days of the repairing there was no reckoning made with the carpenters of the money put at their disposal, "because they dealt faithfully." How perfectly has our merciful and faithful Lord exemplified this. He has not made use of what *we* have given Him—poor indeed would be the repairing that came in that way—but He has taken of His own inexhaustible stores of wealth and lavished it upon His Church and His saints. Nothing is stinted, no labor spared. He sends His servants, bestows His blessings, waits with infinite patience, until He has secured that for which He labored. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." Blessed indeed is it to be in the hands of such a perfect Workman. No wonder that David said, "Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord."

We have already seen that this work of "the Carpenter" will be displayed in faultless beauty in glory. A connected thought is found in the scripture, "He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." We look again at the old creation—marvelous work as it is—and yet the taint of decay is upon it, for man's tool has been lifted up on it. This brings defilement. So the very heavens are as it were tainted by the presence of sin. See the best and greatest of man's

work,—when God is left out, a Babel tower which brings confusion, is the best he can do; and a world-empire at the close of his history, which is dominated by the "beast," and guided by the Antichrist, under the control of Satan. Or, look at Satan himself; he was the chief of God's creatures, "full of wisdom and perfect in beauty." He left the place of dependence, and untold misery throughout eternity is the result. Oh, what does all this teach? There is but one Builder, but One who can devise and carry out any work which can stand; it is the living Son of God, Christ, the blessed!

So at the end of all things, when man has been tested in every way and found utterly wanting, all things are made new, and "the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Here is the end; and if sight were all we had, the outlook for immortal creatures would be utter blackness. But when all is dark for nature, faith's lamp shines the more brightly, and discerns that which cannot be shaken, even the city of God. Thus Abraham, a lonely old man, to human eye, fed his soul and grew strong on the promises of God. He was content to let his fragile tent witness to the fact that *he* could be no builder, and patiently looked for "the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. That, he knew, would abide, founded upon the eternal Rock. Faith ever reckons the same, and bows to the word of God: "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

Have we not then a glorious answer to the unbelief of Nazareth? It is "the Carpenter," the only Builder, and we worship Him as such, and wait, by His grace, for the day when He and His work will

be displayed before an adoring universe. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created." S. R.

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## QUICKENING, NEW BIRTH, AND ETERNAL LIFE.

*A Reply to the Doctrine of A. G.'s Paper,*

"THE GROUNDS OF THE MONTREAL DIVISION  
RECONSIDERED."

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(Continued from page 238.)

**S**PEAKING on what the Old Testament saints had, A. G. very solemnly counsels us to observe the very "significant and impressive silence of Scripture." He warns us against "essaying to pass this barrier of divine reserve." See page 27. Well, how reserved is Scripture on this point? It may be well to let it speak for itself.

First, then, in Heb. xi. 3, it tells us that Abel "obtained witness that he was righteous." At least one Old Testament saint, however "dim his light," had justification, even if we have to accept the dictum that "justification cannot be apart from faith in Christ." Enoch, little as he knew, knew that "he pleased God." God gave him "this testimony." Was it not sufficient for him? Was his light so dim he was not sure of his blessing? We are told that Noah was an "heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Was that not a "righteousness which is of God?" Abraham "looked for a city." "Partial" as was his revelation, he certainly understood he had title to it, and that the title he had was not

vested in himself. Was not life—eternal life—and incorruptibility among the promises these worthies of this far back time “saw afar off”? Even if “their nature” was yet to be fully brought to light, they “were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” The inspired apostle tells us that “they that say *such* things declare plainly that they seek a country,” and he adds, the country they seek is a heavenly one. In this connection I will mention Job. In the twilight under which he lived he knew he had a Redeemer—a living Redeemer. He knew, too, that he was going to die, yet his dim light told him that some day as a man in resurrection—in life and incorruptibility, he would see his living Redeemer. Job xix. 25–27 does not look as though Scripture was silent about life and incorruptibility, does it? In Heb. xi. 35, we read of saints in Old Testament times who would not accept deliverance when it was offered them, content to be cruelly tortured to death rather than be unfaithful; the hope of a glorious resurrection to incorruptibility dwelling in power in their souls. As for the forgiveness of sins, Rom. iii. 25, explicitly declares they had it—that God passed them by or pretermitted them,—did not look on them, (though what covers them had not yet been provided) and that the cross *now* shows how righteous He was in doing so.

Reader need I quote further? Does it appear that Scripture has preserved a strange silence on this subject? If it is a question of “following the example of the Holy Spirit,” then plainly A. G.’s “barrier of divine reserve” is not there to bar us from giving them credit for believing something, and that



there was a hope in them subjectively realized. If they lived under the "dim light of a partial revelation" how bright faith in them shines! Does it not put us to shame? Does it befit us to boast of our superiority? With our fuller light are we better witnesses of the hope of the life to come? Again I say, how they shame us!

What A. G. gains by misquoting John xvii. 3, I am unable to make out. I can understand that the text as it stands does not suit him. It reads, "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, *the only true God*, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." A. G. gives it, "this is life eternal, that they might know Thee (*the Father*) and Jesus Christ *whom Thou hast sent*." Why change "the only true God" into "the Father?" Did not Old Testament saints know "the only true God?" Did not Abraham see the day of Jesus Christ? Our Lord said he did.

I give now his quotation of some words of Mr. Grant, page 28.

"'That they may all be one as Thou Father art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us.' This (says Mr. Grant) is a direct and-conclusive statement. It warrants, nay necessitates, our saying that as the Father is in the Son and the Son in the Father, so are we in the Father and in the Son." (And further, on page 11), "Community of life and nature, realized in dependence, and manifested in community of word and work. This is what the terms we have been looking at imply. They are the Lord's own words, moreover, as we have seen, which affirm their similar meaning, when applied to Himself and the Father, or to His people in the Son and in the Father; 'as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they may be one in Us.'"

A. G.'s remarks on this show how utterly incompetent he is to criticize. He has entirely misrepresented Mr. Grant's teaching; not intentionally, of

course, but through misunderstanding him. But this misunderstanding manifests also an incapacity to understand Scripture.

His comments are:

“‘A community of life and nature realized in dependence,’ as Mr. Grant expresses it. It might have been thought that the knowledge of *the divine glory* of the Son of God, as one with the Father, would have preserved Mr. Grant from the assumption that our being in Him is a parallel truth with His being in the Father, *with whom He is linked in the oneness of absolute Deity*, in which no creature can ever have part. *Is this oneness realized by the Son in dependence?* Are we one with the Father and in the Son in having part in the intrinsic, essential life of the Godhead?’”

But Mr. Grant never taught what is here attributed to him. Nor do I know of anyone else who has taught this. When the Lord says, “As Thou Father art in Me and I in Thee,” He is not speaking of Himself as Son in Deity, but as Son in manhood. As Son in manhood it was *given* to Him to have life in Himself (John v. 26), but it was not given to Him to have life in Himself as Son in Deity. To say this would, indeed, be “strange disparagement and dishonor.” But no one says it. The Son in manhood given to have life in Himself was thus as *man* one with the Father. It was as man that He was in the Father, and abode in the Father. It was thus as man that He had “community of life and nature” which was “realized in dependence and manifested in community of word and work.” Now then, just as life was thus in Him dependently and realized in dependence, just as *thus* in this dependent way the Father was in Him and He in the Father, so, too, life is dependently in us. It is thus that we are in them—in the Father and the Son. It is not His

oneness in Deity that is the pattern of our oneness in them, but it is His oneness as a man that gives the pattern and character of the oneness we have in them. There is no degradation of our Lord in this, no unholy exaltation of ourselves. To say this is not placing saints on the plane of Deity. It is merely stating the nature and character of our relationship to God, which is one of dependence—patterned after the dependent relationship of the Son in manhood.

On the top of page 30, A. G. says:

“The passage which Mr. Grant quotes from John xvii. refers, it is believed, to the unity of the Spirit.”

It is believed by whom? By Mr. Darby? No. At least he does not so teach in the Synopsis, where he speaks of it as being “communion with the Father and the Son” and refers to 1 John i. 3. This is precisely Mr. Grant’s view. But perhaps he means Mr. Kelly. Well, Mr. Kelly says, in his exposition of the Gospel of John, on page 365, “It is communion in virtue of the Father made known in the Son, and of the Son the object of the Father’s love and delight, into which we are brought by the Holy Ghost. With the Father we share the Son; with the Son we share the Father.” Another remark on the same page is, “The power of the Spirit baptized all the believers into one body, the Church. The unity here, however, though produced by the same Spirit in those who compose that body, is not that which fell to the apostle Paul to set out.” Thus again do we find the same “construction which Mr. Grant has put upon it.” Evidently A. G. does not understand what is believed. The statement, “The saints of old were, one and all of them, quickened by the Son

*with the life in Him,*" will not have to "be refused" as being unscriptural yet. Considering the company we are in, we will hold to it until it is proved to be unscriptural.

At the bottom of page 29, we are told:

"For God and for faith the flesh has been judicially terminated at the cross. Until this was accomplished, and the Lord had, through death and judgment, entered upon His full, mediatorial place, none could have life *'in the Son.'* Life *from* the Son they might have; for the Son is God; but that is another matter."

Will this distinction stand the test of Scripture? Of course, all life is from the Son. He is the Creator of every living thing. Plant life is from Him. The life of the mere animal is also from Him. Human life is from Him. But in Scripture there is a distinction between plant and mere animal life, and human life. It is never said that either plant or mere animal life is in God, but, in Acts xvii. 28, human life is explicitly said to be in God. "For in Him we live and move and have our being." All creature life is dependent life, but there are different kinds of dependent life. Plants and mere animals are not related to God in the same way that men are. Men are in the image and likeness of God; plants and mere animals are not. Man's kinship to God is by the life which God has given him, a life imparted to him by the inbreathing of God. God did not inbreathe plants and animals. They came in being by the simple word of His power, but in man's case, along with the word of power, there was the inbreathing, so that man lives in God. Now it cannot be maintained that there is a distinction between life in God and life in the Son. Life in God characterizes it as life in kinship with God. Life in the

Son expresses the source through which we have received life in God, while the Spirit, of course, is the divine Agent in the communication of it.

Now it cannot be maintained that those born again in Old Testament times were not in so close relationship to God as the mere natural man. If man as a mere creature has life in God, as Acts xvii. 28 says he has, then those born again have life in God in a still higher sense. To say they only have life from God is to put them in a position of relationship to God lower than that of the mere natural man. It is to reduce them to a position among plants and mere animals. Who is willing to do this? If men *as such* have life in God, then surely those born again stand in a relationship to Him that is of a higher order. A. G.'s distinction between "life from the Son" and "life in the Son" then is entirely unsupported by Scripture.

Beloved reader, it is refreshing to my spirit to turn from these reasonings on life by a mind that is uncontrolled by Scripture to Scripture itself. There I learn of the happy life of God before time began, of the blessed fellowship of the Father and the Son as they enjoyed together their wondrous counsels, their grand purposes, their magnificent plan for eternal delight. There I learn that as soon as sin came into the world the revelation of these counsels—this immeasurable fellowship of the Father and the Son began to be unfolded, the revelation gradually enlarging, "God speaking at sundry times and in divers manners to the fathers, by the prophets." There I learn that through the testimony of God, in which He has been gradually unfolding His eternal delights—the joys of the Father and the Son, men, as

believing the divine testimony, have found competency to walk with God and live before Him. Tell me this was not communion with God! My soul revolts from the thought. In Scripture I learn that this happiness of God—of the Father and the Son—before the world was made, has been completely manifested in a truly human life, the Son of God Himself becoming a man to live among men dependently upon God, bringing down here into human conditions the fellowship of the Father and Son—the fellowship of the eternal counsels, and dependently abiding in that fellowship. By this full manifestation of the eternal life that was with the Father—that the Father and the Son lived in happy communion together—those who have received competency to enter into communion with God have had their communion immeasurably enlarged. But, whether in the dim light of a partial revelation, the communion limited by it, or in the light of the complete display of the life in which the Father and Son lived, the communion being greatly enhanced, it is communion with God. It is participation, not “in the intrinsic essential life of the Godhead,” but in the activities and fellowship of the Godhead. And truly this knowledge of God—whether partial or complete—is eternal life.

There is one point more. There is a comment in A. G.’s “concluding remarks” which I cannot let pass unchallenged. Page 31 he says:

“Be it remembered that it was not for *holding* these views that Mr. Grant was put away. Saints were indeed deeply concerned, and not without just grounds, that a teacher of his gift and standing should hold such views. But the clash came through his per-

sistency in *teaching* them regardless of godly remonstrance; and forming a party around himself in so doing."

Now this raises the question of where authority is vested. Is the word of God—the truth from God, authority for teaching it? Or is it not? If it is vested in the Church, or, in a special class in the Church, I have not read Scripture aright. Jeremiah met with plenty of protest and remonstrance, and that too by those high up in the councils of the nation, but did their remonstrance invalidate the authority of Jeremiah? "He that *hath* My word, let him speak My word faithfully" (Jer. xxiii. 28), is very conclusive. It is an assumption to suppose that protests and remonstrances are necessarily godly. John says, "He that is not of God heareth not us." Any protest or remonstrance that is not the fruit of subjection to the word of God must not debar one who has the word of God from speaking it. If it was the truth Mr. Grant taught, then the protests and remonstrances were not of God, and it was opposition to God to hinder and stop his teaching it. This is the question to be first settled. Was his doctrine the truth of God? Did it have the authority of the word of God? A. G.'s paper, at all events, has not exposed it as not being of God.

I close now. I have written entirely free from any personal animosity. I do not know A. G.—have no remembrance of ever having met him. I did not even know who was represented in the initials until this present paper was well on towards completion. I have merely responded to an appeal to help the Lord's people in a clear judgment of the doctrines discussed. I could not refuse to respond to the appeal. My work is now in their hands, and

sent forth in the sense that mercy from God has been abundantly bestowed. It is commended to God. May He graciously deign to use it to establish in the truth and deliver from error where necessary.

C. CRAIN.

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## A CHANGED HYMN.

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“He hath put a new song in my mouth.”—Psa. xl. 3.

“The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him; He shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between His shoulders.”—Deut. xxxiii. 12.

“**J**ESUS lover of my soul”  
Bids me in His bosom stay,  
And though billows round me roll,  
I am safely hid away;  
For He holds me in His arms,  
Quite beyond the tempest's reach,  
And He whispers to my heart  
Words unknown to human speech.

“Other refuge have I none,  
He, my habitation is;  
Here no evil can befall,  
I am kept in perfect peace;  
I am covered all day long  
With the shadow of His wing,  
Dwell in safety through the night,  
Till the dawn of His coming.

“Thou, O Christ, art all I want,”  
Rests my helpless soul on Thee;  
Thou wilt never leave alone  
Nor forget to comfort me.  
Thou hast saved my soul from death,  
Thou hast scattered doubts and fears,  
And the sunshine of Thy face  
Sweetly drieth all my tears.



"Thou of life the fountain art,"  
 And hast washed me white as snow;  
 I'm content to dwell apart  
 From all else, Thy love to know;  
 Blessed Sun of Righteousness,  
 I now love to look on Thee,  
 And mine eyes are growing blind  
 To the things once dear to me.

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### "WORKERS TOGETHER."

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THE Levites were "given as a gift" to Aaron, to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. They were to serve under Aaron, the head of the priestly house. This teaches us a fine lesson, and one much needed by Christians at the present moment. We all want to bear in mind that service, to be intelligent and acceptable, must be rendered in subjection to priestly authority and guidance. All Christian service must be rendered in fellowship with our great High Priest, and in holy subjection to His authority. It is of no value otherwise.

But, on the other hand, the smallest act of service, the meanest work done under the eye of Christ, done with direct reference to Him, has its value in God's estimation, and shall, most assuredly, receive its due reward. This is truly encouraging, and consolatory to the heart of every earnest worker. The Levites had to work under Aaron. Christians have to work under Christ. We are responsible to Him. It is very well and very beautiful to walk in fellowship with our dear fellow-workmen, and to be subject one to another, in the fear of the Lord. Nothing is further from our thoughts than to foster or countenance a

spirit of haughty independence, or that temper of soul which would hinder our genial and hearty co-operation with our brethren in every good work. All the Levites were “joined unto Aaron,” in their work, and therefore they were joined one to another. Hence they had to work together. If a Levite had turned his back upon his brethren, he would have turned his back upon Aaron.

We may imagine a Levite taking offence at something or other in the conduct of his fellows, and saying to himself, “I cannot get on with my brethren. I must walk alone. I can serve God, and work under Aaron; but I must keep aloof from my brethren inasmuch as I find it impossible to agree with them as to the mode of working.” But we can easily see through the fallacy of all this. For a Levite to adopt such a line of action would have produced nothing but confusion. All were called to work together, howsoever varied their work might be.

Still, be it ever borne in mind, their work did not vary; and, moreover, each was called to work under Aaron. There was individual responsibility with the most harmonious corporate action. We certainly desire, in every possible way, to promote unity in action; but this must never be suffered to trench upon the domain of personal service, or to interfere with the direct reference of the individual workman to his Lord. The Church of God affords a very extensive platform to the Lord's workers. There is ample space thereon for all sorts of laborers. We must not attempt to reduce all to a dead level, or cramp the varied energies of Christ's servants by confining them to certain old ruts of our own formation. This will never do. We must, all of us,

diligently seek to combine the most cordial unanimity with the greatest possible variety in action. Both will be healthfully promoted by each and all remembering that we are called to serve together under Christ.

Here lies the grand secret—*Together, under Christ!* May we bear this in mind. It will help us to recognize and appreciate another's line of work, though it may differ from our own; and, on the other hand, it will preserve us from an overweening sense of our own department of service, inasmuch as we shall see that we are, one and all, but co-workers in the one wide field; and that the great object before the Master's heart can only be attained by each worker pursuing his own special line, and pursuing it in happy fellowship with all.

There is a pernicious tendency in some minds to depreciate every line of work save their own. This must be carefully guarded against. If all were to pursue the same line, where were that lovely variety which characterizes the Lord's work and workmen in the world? Nor is it merely a question of the line of work, but actually of the peculiar style of each workman. You may find two evangelists, each marked by an intense desire for the salvation of souls, each preaching, substantially, the same truth; and yet there may be the greatest possible variety in the mode in which each one seeks to gain the self-same object. We should be prepared for this. Indeed we should fully expect it. And the same holds good in reference to every other branch of Christian service. We should strongly suspect the ground occupied by a Christian Assembly if there were not ample space allowed for every branch and style of

Christian service—for every line of work capable of being taken up in individual responsibility to the great Head of the priestly house. We ought to do nothing which we cannot do under Christ, and in fellowship with Him. And all that can be done in fellowship with Christ can surely be done in fellowship with those who are walking with Him.

C. H. M.

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## PORTION FOR THE MONTH.

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1 SAMUEL AND 1, 2, and 3 JOHN.

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**F**IRST SAMUEL is the record of three men, Samuel, Saul, and David. They are typical characters, and set forth three great principles, which explain the entire history of God's kingdom on earth.

1. **God's grace in man's ruin** is figured in Samuel (i.-vii.). No doubt we have here a type of the dispensations from Adam to the giving of the law. The prophet, child of Hannah ("grace"), symbolizes the gracious working of God's Word and Spirit in a "barren" scene (i.-ii. 10). Sad are the conditions amid which Samuel ministers (ii. 11-36). Eli, a priest in the judge's seat, but without power for communion or for judging evil, represents man's failure in his created place of nearness to God and rulership over the earth. His children, apostate priests and sons of Belial, picture the world's religious history from Adam to Noah. Samuel warns of judgment to come (iii. 1-18), as the Spirit testified before the flood; Samuel also suggesting the work of grace in the remnant of that day (iii. 19-iv. 1).

The lesson of the Philistine triumph (iv.) is the lesson of the flood. Dagon-worshipers prevail, the ark, God's throne of grace, going into captivity. So did "the way of Cain" bring on the deluge, in which mercy seemed to

pass away. Natural religion, which pretends to offer God "good works" from a fallen creature, ends thus: it but reveals man's unfitness, earning wrath instead of grace. The flood cut off Adam's race, as the Philistine victory smote Eli's house; yet in one case Noah was spared, as in the other a grandson was born to Eli. Seeing simply a natural descendant of Adam or Eli, spared for a time, we can but call him Ichabod: man's race may be prolonged, but "the glory is departed." But viewing Noah and Ichabod as types of a "Second man," who rises out of the death and judgment of the first, there is a gleam of hope, a prophecy that the ark will return, and God again act in grace.

The ark in Philistine hands suggests the idolatrous period after the flood, as its return suggests the grace which took up Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (v.-vii. 1). Dagon's triumph is his overthrow. Does "natural religion" call down wrath? Thank God, for the stroke of judgment which sweeps away the "first man" in whom grace can establish nothing, to make room for the "Second man," through whom blessing comes! Abraham was blessed in grace, on the basis of promises *in Christ*. Thus the ark returned from captivity.

Twenty years of lamentation (vii. 2-4) recall Israel's discipline in Egypt, as Jehovah's defeat of the Philistines (vii. 5-17), delivering His people on the basis of the lamb of burnt-offering, and in the grace Samuel typifies, recalls the deliverance from Egyptian bondage.

2. **The blessing in fallen hands** is the lesson of Saul (viii.-xv.). It is a picture of the dispensation from Sinai to the Cross. God taught Israel a way of escape from judgment through the paschal lamb, delivered them at the Red Sea, led them by His word and Spirit, fed them with manna, and quenched their thirst; yet at Sinai they despised His grace, preferring a law under which they hoped to "earn" His blessing. This experiment, of the

religious "first man" under law, is pictured in Saul. Samuel's judgeship represents Jehovah's Word, ruling the people according to the principles of the throne of grace. But alas, they do not want this, but a religious system like that of the nations. Let God vacate His earthly throne, and place upon it the "first man" with his "good works"! This is the demand, and God accedes to it. He gives them a king "in His anger." If the "first man" can prove his title to rule, God will establish him upon the throne. Moreover, He gives His Word, as a guide. Israel had the law, as Saul has the word of the prophet. But the sad story is soon told: Israel broke the law, as Saul disobeys the prophet!

We must not pause over the various items of Saul's failure. Besides the many individual lessons of these chapters, there is a continuous type of Israel's history under law. It ends in Saul's utter failure to judge Agag, the Amalekite (xv.), who pictures the will of the flesh. Here Samuel, representing the energy of grace, comes forward and executes the enemy. It is a picture of the cross of Christ, which not alone "crucifies" the "first man" on account of his incorrigible wickedness (Agag), but also exposes the "impotence" of all man's religious pretence under law (Saul). As rejected grace, in the person of Samuel, steps in at last to smite the evil which wretched Saul had failed to overcome, so do we read that "what the law could not do, in that it was weak *through the flesh*, God, sending His own Son, in likeness of flesh of sin, and a Sin-offering," did—"condemned the sin in the flesh" (Rom. viii. 3).

3. **The blessing in the hands of the Second Man** is figured in David (xvi.-xxxi.). The acting of grace is a beautiful thing. Samuel, rejected, anointed Saul; as it was really grace that gave the law, in order to cure man of his delusion about himself. When Saul failed, Samuel anointed David, as grace provided the Saviour and the

Cross at the close of the legal dispensation. David, bringing bread, wine, and a kid to Saul, and banishing the evil spirit with his harp (xvi.), is a type of the ministry to Israel of Him who had power over demons, and brought the bread of God, the wine of the Spirit's joy, and the kid of His own sacrifice. The conquest of Goliath pictures the Cross which delivers from the power of Satan (xvii.).

The religious man, Saul, persecutes David, as the religious "first man," spite of his pretence of law-keeping, has ever been the rejector of the Cross, of the gospel, and of the grace of God, to the present day. Thus the rest of our book pictures the present dispensation, during which Christ is rejected,—rejected not alone by an unbelieving world, but also by the "religious" world, now seated upon the throne of power, as Saul was. Jonathan, who truly loved David, yet clung to the fortunes of Saul's house, symbolizes those true saints of God who remain entangled among the abominations of Christendom, without the courage to go forth unto Christ without the camp, bearing His reproach and sharing His rejection. But the outcasts who share Adullam's cave with David, the outcast king, become "heroes" through association with him, and represent the saints of God who have turned their backs upon mere "religion," to follow and serve our Lord Jesus Christ according to His Word. May His love constrain us to desire this place with Him, as we study the details of this most precious part of Scripture!

The three epistles of John give the practical sanctification of the truth, needed for our sojourn down here, where a system of false and heartless Christian profession surrounds us on every side. 1 John gives the positive side of the truth, in which we are to abide, while 2 John warns against the danger of laxity, on the one hand, as 3 John warns against Nicolaitanism and self-will on the other.

A grand fundamental of Christianity is the truth that God is light, and that this true light is now shining (1 John i.-ii. 11). This excludes the darkness, and its ways, whether it professes to be the light or not. All true Christians are in the light, even as God is. This does not mean that they have never sinned, or that they are without a sinful nature; quite the contrary; but it means that they confess the truth about their condition, and that a faithful and just God has therefore forgiven all their sins, on the basis of the death of His Son, the Saviour they are trusting. They are not to practice sin; but if they should fall into it, Christ remains their Advocate, the propitiation for their sins.

Christians grow, and are guarded from all errors and evil, by abiding in the truth, which God's Word reveals, and God's Spirit teaches (ii. 12-27).

The rest of 1 John is occupied with the practical manifestation, in righteousness and love, of the divine life and nature in those who are born of God, in contrast with that which is of the flesh and the devil. All this deserves our most careful study and meditation.

2 John warns us against a false charity, which masquerades under the guise of Christian love. Love, truly, is of God; but the unholy toleration of evil, out of a pretended love of brethren, is most foreign to His holy nature. Divine love is according to truth. Righteousness and truth are required of Christians; and if one professed to be a follower of Christ, yet brought not the doctrine of Christ, the elect lady was not to receive him into her house, nor even to greet him as a Christian. We also have here the important principle, that the least degree of fellowship with such a person, such even as the giving of a Christian greeting, makes one a partaker of his evil deeds. Holiness becomes God's house, and His children!

3 John warns against the opposite extreme, of pride



and self-will which, acting in the selfish determination to have the pre-eminence, may even go so far as to put down and reject godly Christians, thus destroying true Christian fellowship. Even the apostle was himself rejected by such pretension. In contrast with this evil, seen in Diotrephes, we have the beautiful example of Gaius, whose "love" was "borne witness of" before the church, while yet his brethren also testified of "the truth" that was in him, and of his walk in the truth! Beautiful balance of truth and affection, of light and of love! May this perfection of the divine character more and more be wrought in us! F. A.

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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QUE. 8.—Will you explain what seems like contradiction in Num. xxii.? In ver. 12 God answers Balaam, "Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people; for they are blessed." And yet in ver. 20 He says, "Go with them;" also in ver. 35, "The angel of the Lord said unto Balaam, Go with the men," etc.

I cannot understand why God should forbid Balaam's going at the beginning, and permit it afterward.

ANS.—The reason is not far away, and the lesson in it is most solemn: *Moses* was a prophet too, and yet Balak would never have thought of approaching him with what he approached Balaam. There must have been a vast difference therefore between those two prophets—a difference felt by men. Next, God's first answer to Balaam is clear and decisive: No indeed, he cannot go. Why is it, even, that such men are in his house?

But Balaam COVETS REWARD AND HONOR, and though afraid to disobey such a plain order, his heart, his will, follow after the men. Very well, says the Lord in all that follows, I will prevent your affecting My purposes of grace and love toward My people, but you can have what your heart wishes; go with them; go, and reap in the end the bitter fruit of it; and yet I will still warn you on your way to it, even by the voice of a brute. Balaam's end we all know. Such is all self-will, and all double-heartedness. And such is God's way of dealing with it.

## JONAH.

**W**HAT moral lessons we get in the book of Jonah. On man's side, depravity, idolatry, pride, and rebellion. On God's side absolute power, righteous government, and all used to ends of blessing in lovely grace.

Nineveh, that great city, has become so depraved that to bear longer with it could end in no good any more. They have cast off God, so now they give themselves up to all the passions of fallen nature, making themselves vile, and heaping reproach upon their Creator who made not man for such things.

The sailors on board ship when overpowered by the storm, cry each one to his god. They are religious, but their religion is the religion of idolatry. They too have cast off God, and they have put in His place gods of their own, manufactured by themselves, each suiting his taste of course.

Jonah, the prophet, who is no licentious man, nor an idolater, but knows the true God, is full of pride and rebellion. He cares more for his honor as a prophet than for the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. He knows God's character well, and therefore knows that if Nineveh repents they will be forgiven; but he is so selfish that while hoping Nineveh will not repent, and their threatened destruction carried out, he cannot bear the destruction of a gourd which shaded him from the heat of the sun. He is so rebellious in spirit that the crossing of his will, and the disappointing of his pride, make him desire to die. What an awful revelation of what man is! Is it a wonder proud men wish to cast discredit on this book of the Bible?

But on God's side, what a trinity of glory meets our gaze: *as Creator* He displays "His eternal power and Godhead:" He "prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. He "spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." He "prepared a gourd," He "prepared a worm" to smite the gourd. All the works of the Creator are miracles, and are spread out to view to make His greatness known. Therefore it is "the fool" who "hath said in his heart, There is no God.

*As Governor* He is perfectly righteous. No wrong can be passed by. No right can be overlooked. He is a righteous judge "who will render to every man according to his deeds." So disobedient Jonah must prove. Much as the sailors may in pity wish to spare him, the storm of offended justice will not abate till they cast him into the sea. Justice—true justice—is an awful thing. It sits with blindfolded eyes, a pair of balances in one hand, a sword in the other, and it knows nothing but its own demands—justice. Rebellious Jonah, the idolatrous sailors, the wicked Ninevites, all must learn the inexorable character of justice.

Were this all, what must become of us! But it is not all. It is in His character as *Redeemer* that the varied glories of God concentrate: justice satisfied, He uses His almighty power to command the sea into peace, and the sailors are saved, so that "the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows." Jonah cries "out of the belly of hell," and "the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land," so Jonah can sing, "I will sacrifice unto Thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that which

I have vowed. *Salvation is of the Lord.*" The Ninevites take warning, they fast, they humble themselves; their very king comes down from his throne to take the place of a suppliant, "and God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that He had said that He would do unto them; and He did it not."

But see now what we have beside these lessons: "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Our Lord, in these few words, throws a flood of light on this book, and gives it wonderful honor—it is all a figure of Himself, of His own death and resurrection. In His own humanity the glory of God as Creator is at its height. In His death, eternal justice has found its demands against sin so perfectly met that it can hold Him no more. So He rises, and risen He says, to His followers, "Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Accordingly they went, and they still go proclaiming, "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

Friends, is it a wonder this book of Jonah is despised and ridiculed by "the wise and prudent," by the "Higher Critics" and all their kind? Yet the voice of love would still appeal to them, "Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken

of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you" (Acts xiii. 40, 41).

P. J. L.

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## IMMORTALITY.

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**I**F the statements of Scripture concerning immortality were more carefully considered, there would not be so many rash statements made as there are. Inattention to what the word of God says has led to many utterances for which it is not responsible. Through such unscriptural expressions, often urged with a show of authority, the minds of many have become confused and there is great uncertainty as to what is really the truth.

With a desire to help souls out of perplexity and aid them in forming convictions of what is the truth of God, I seek in the present article to fix attention on a few passages, the right understanding of which is of the first importance, in order to know what is the truth in regard to this subject of so great moment to all. I ask that these passages be weighed; that instead of interpreting them in the light of preconceived and current views, there be an attempt first to ascertain their true force.

First, then, I look at 1 Tim. vi. 16, "Who only hath immortality." It should be plain that this is said of God. God, before whom Timothy is charged, and who, in its proper season, will make visible the manifestation of Jesus Christ, He only hath immortality. He is the living God. He lives from everlasting to everlasting. Life is essentially His. In

Him it is intrinsic. He therefore cannot die. But He is the only being who has life in this essential and intrinsic sense. Essential immortality belongs to Him, and to Him alone.

Now while we give our unhesitating consent to this, does it involve our holding that there are no other immortal beings besides God? Are we necessarily bound to believe that there is no other way of having immortality but the way in which God has it? If so we must then hold that the angels die. They are living beings surely—living spirits, but do they die? Are they mortal? Now our Lord answers this very explicitly in Luke xx. 35, 36. Speaking of those accounted worthy to attain to the resurrection from the dead, He says, they “neither marry nor are given in marriage, neither can they die any more: for they are equal to the angels.” Angels, then, do not die. They are beings who have immortality, then, in some sense. But in what sense? In the same in which God has it? Surely not. To say this would be to array scripture against scripture. In 1 Tim. vi. the apostle says, “God only hath immortality.” In Luke xx. our Lord says the angels do not die, and so declares they have immortality. How are the two assertions reconciled? Very simply. With God immortality is essential, intrinsic, and underived; with the angels it is derived and dependent. Thus the two statements are in perfect accord.

The attentive reader of Scripture will find that wherever it speaks of angels it is consistent with this view of the matter. And not only this, but in its utterances on the judgment of God upon sin we find some remarkable confirmations. For instance,

it says in Heb. ix. 27, "And as it is appointed unto *men* once to die, but after this the judgment." It does not say, It is appointed unto *angels* once to die; yet in Jude we read of angels who are reserved for judgment. In Romans vi. 23, the apostle says, "For the wages of sin is death." But he is speaking of sin among men, not angels. In these, and similar statements, we have incidentally the recognition of the doctrine of the immortality of the angels.

The voice of Scripture, then, is unmistakable. It affirms that the angels are immortal beings. Its utterances are uniform and consistent. If we bow to Scripture as the voice of God, we must maintain as truth that angels do not die.

And now does Scripture teach that men have immortality? How opposite are the answers different people give to this question. One might think that this shows the voice of Scripture is not clear on this subject. But is it true that the word of God is so equivocal in its utterances on such a vital question as the immortality of men that its teaching cannot be definitely ascertained? No one that bows to Scripture as the voice of God can possibly think so; and yet how fierce the controversy over the question whether man is mortal or immortal!

That man is mortal in some sense the word of God certainly declares. How formidable a list of passages might be quoted, were it necessary! But no one denies it. The most ardent advocate of the doctrine that man is an immortal being admits it. There is certainly a sense in which man is mortal. In what sense then? In the sense that the whole of his being is mortal, or only a part of it?

That man is not all body is distinctly declared by Scripture. "Your whole spirit and soul and body" of 1 Thess. v. 23 is sufficiently explicit as to this. Man is a composite being, part spirit, part soul, and part body. When the word of God speaks of man as mortal, does it apply mortality to all the parts of man's being, or only to one? Is it intended we should understand that it includes the spirit and the soul as well as the body? Now we have seen that the Lord affirms that angels do not die; and in saying this He teaches that spirits do not die, because angels are spirits. If, then, spirits do not die (and men have spirits) the spirits of men do not die. That men have spirits is made clear, as we have seen by 1 Thess. v. 23. It is also manifest in Gen. i. 26, 27 where man is spoken of as in the image and likeness of God. It is by his spirit, not his body, that he is in the image and likeness of God. By his body he is in connection with the sphere of material things; by his spirit with the sphere of immaterial things. As having an immaterial part, the spirit, he is like God—in His image. By his spirit, then, that part of him by which he is in kinship with angels and God, he has immortality, is an immortal being. But it must be remembered that it is not essential immortality. This, only God has, as we have already seen. With man as with angels, it is derived immortality—dependent, not intrinsic.

Now, if it is the doctrine of Scripture that spirits do not die, that by his spirit man has an immortal part, and is an immortal being, it should be plain that when it speaks of mortality it is speaking of the body. Not only does it call the body mortal, as in Rom. viii. 11, "He that raised up Christ from the



dead shall also quicken your *mortal* body," but always when mortality is mentioned it is in reference to the body. It is the body only that is mortal.

It is said, "The Bible never calls the spirit an immortal spirit." True, and there is no need that it should, because spirits do not die. For the same reason it never calls spirits mortal spirits. It is illogical to reason that because spirits are never called immortal, therefore they are mortal. Such reasoning is a plain contradiction of the Scripture teaching that spirits do not die. But again, the body is not called an immortal body, because it dies. It has in it the seeds of death. It is a mortal body. Besides, we never find the doctrine of the immortality of the spirit presented as a hope to be attained, while on the other hand the immortality of the body is. "This mortal shall put on immortality" (1 Cor. xv. 53). "Mortality" shall be "swallowed up of life" (2 Cor. v. 4) means the body shall be changed into an immortal body. Believers who already have the redemption, or salvation of the soul (1 Peter i. 9), are waiting for the redemption of the body (Rom. viii. 23). We are, then, immortal beings, having immortal souls and spirits, but we have mortal bodies which are to be made immortal.

And not only will the bodies of believers become immortal, but also the bodies of the wicked. Heb. ix. 27 tells us, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. Now this implies the resurrection of the body, because if the judgment is not *until after* death, it will not be as long as the body is in the death-condition. The bodies of the wicked then will be raised, as Scripture states in John v. 28, 29, and Rev. xx. 12, 13. True the body

will not be raised "in glory" nor fashioned after the "body of glory" of Christ, but it will be raised, and it will be a body that will not die any more. The wicked receiving their final sentence at the great white throne will go into the lake of fire as complete men—their spirits, their souls, and their bodies—to abide there forever. That they will go there Revelation xx. 11–15 declares, and that they will abide there forever, our Lord affirms in Mark ix. 44, 46, where He says, "Where *their* worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." What an awful doom! Thanks be to God for providing an escape from it.

But the teaching of Scripture on immortality is clear and explicit. God only has it intrinsically. Angels have it dependently, and so do men. In this present life, man's body is mortal. In the life to come it will also be immortal, though there will be a "fixed gulf" between the saved and the unsaved; the former shining in the image of Christ, the latter imprisoned in the unending blackness of darkness—the lake of fire.

C. CRAIN.

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## THE PERSON OF JESUS.

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NO words can express the gratitude we owe to Him who loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins: the *love* of Jesus is unutterably precious and worthy of daily praise. No songs can ever fitly celebrate the triumphs of that salvation which He wrought single-handed on our behalf: the *work* of Jesus is glorious beyond compare, and all the harps of heaven fall short of its worthy honor. Yet I do believe, and my heart prompts me to say it, that the highest praise of

every ransomed soul, and of the entire Church of God, should be offered to our adorable Lord for *Himself*—His own blessed *Person*. The love of His heart is excelled by the heart which gave forth that love, and the wonders of His hand are outdone by the hand itself, which wrought those miracles of grace. True, we bless Him for what He has done for us in the place of humble service, and for what He suffered for us as Substitute on the altar of sacrifice, and for what He is doing for us as Advocate in the place of highest honor at the right hand of God: but still, the best thing about Christ is Christ Himself. We prize what comes from Him, but we worship *Him*. His gifts are valued, but He Himself is adored.

While we contemplate, with mingled feelings of awe, admiration, and thankfulness, His atonement, His resurrection, His glory in heaven, and His second coming, His regal honors as Israel's Messiah in the world to come, still it is *Christ Himself*, stupendous in His dignity as the Son of God, and superbly beautiful as the Son of man, who sheds an incomparable charm on all those wonderful achievements, wherein His might and His merit, His goodness and His love and grace appear so conspicuous. For *Him* let our choicest spices be reserved, and to *Him* let our sweetest anthems be raised. Our choicest ointments must be poured upon His head, and for His own self alone our most costly alabaster boxes must be broken.

“He is altogether lovely.” I suppose at first we always begin to love Him because of what He has done for us, and even to the last His love to us in His gifts will always be the strongest motive of our

affection towards Him; still there ought to be added to this another reason less connected with ourselves, and more entirely arising out of His own superlative excellency: we ought to love Him because He *is* lovely and deserves to be loved. The time should come, and with some of us it has come, when we can heartily say, "We love Him because we cannot help it, for His all-conquering loveliness has ravished our hearts." Surely it is but an unripe fruit to love Him merely for the benefits which we have received at His hands. It is a fruit of grace, but it is not of the ripest flavor; at least, there are other fruits, both new and old, which we have laid up for Him, and some of them have a daintier taste.

There is a sweet and mellow fruit which can only be brought forth by the summer sun of fellowship—it is love to Him because of His intrinsic goodness and personal sweetness. Oh, that we might love our Lord for His own sake—love Him because He is so supremely beautiful—because a glimpse of Him has won our hearts—because He is dearer to our eyes than light. Jesus *Himself* is better than all He has done or given: and as *from Himself* all blessings flow, so back *to Himself* should all love return.

(*Selected.*)

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THE self-righteous man loves to recount his past. The Christian's delight is that his past is blotted out—to be spoken of no more. But what is it that blots it out? Ah, he knows well, and to look back to *that* fills his soul with singing. The glory of God is revealed in the Cross of Christ as truly as sin is covered by it.

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## GETHSEMANE.

'T'WAS eve in Juda's land!  
 Slowly the shadows had longer grown,  
 Till the last faint ray of the setting sun  
 Had faded and fled from the western sky;  
 Then on they came with a sweeping train,  
 Noiseless, yet sure and swift!  
 Down from the mountain and over the plain,  
 Flinging around their shroud of gloom  
 And locking in silence deep as the tomb  
 The daylight hum of man—and clouds arose,  
 Dark sombre clouds, in strange wild groups.  
 Now hiding from sight the moonbeam's light,  
 Then swiftly hurrying—struggling on.  
 E'en the lights in the city grew pale and dim  
 As the midnight hours grew near;  
 And only the sound of the watchman's round  
 Fell sharp and clear on the listening ear,  
 And echoing rose to the silent sky—

When, list, 'twas the voice of music!  
 A low sweet burst of song,  
 Coming floating through the midnight,  
 Borne by the winds along;  
 'Twas the sound of many voices,  
 And the strain was soft and deep,  
 For it came from hearts of sadness—  
 Strange mingling of praise and grief.  
 It ceased—and forth from an upper room  
 A band of watchers came.  
 Sadly they wound through the gloomy streets  
 Towards the city's eastern wall;  
 Passed through the gate, and o'er Kedron's brook,  
 Till they came to Olivet's hillside lone,  
 And the deep shade of Gethsemane.

In their midst there was ONE whose weary frame  
 Knew little of earth's repose—a lonely man—  
 Lone in His heart's deep sympathy,

Lone in His hour of agony ;  
Lone—and yet not alone, if human woe  
Or human want had need of Him—  
Then every wayside sufferer urged his claim,  
And none was e'er denied. Then, too,  
Thronging multitudes around Him prest—for  
Jesus *came* to heal, to seek, and to save the lost.  
No crowd was with Him now—but a lowly band  
Whom He had chosen out from humble life :  
Not earth's nobility, but sons of toil,  
They owed Him much—yet little gave  
Which met His soul's deep yearning.  
On them He lavished all His love,  
And in return got lukewarm, wavering faith.  
One day they knew Him and adored. The next  
Would ask again, "Who art Thou, Lord?"  
Once, as He told them of His hour of agony,  
And spoke of coming shame and death,  
They listened—heard—and heeded not; their hearts  
Were filled with other thoughts, with curious strife  
Disputing—who should be the greatest!  
And now they sorrow, scarcely knowing why,  
Save that His farewell words are sounding in their ears,  
And they see His heart is wrung.  
He chooses three among them, who of old  
Have known and loved Him best,  
And bids the others tarry there, while they move on.  
Deeper and deeper yet within the gloomy shade—  
All may not see the anguish of His heart,  
All in that sorrow may not bear a part.  
Then turning unto them He saith,  
"Tarry ye here awhile and watch :  
My soul is sorrowful exceedingly,  
Yea, e'en to death!" He leaves them there  
And passes on.  
Ah! earth and sky, what saw ye then?  
And you, ye angel hosts before the throne,  
In that dread hour what witnessed ye?  
Bowed down to earth heaven's highest Majesty,  
Fulness of Godhead, the Eternal One,

Firstborn of all creation! He, Jehovah's Son  
 Arrayed in human garb, and bending low  
 In untold agony!

Ah! words—poor human words,  
 Vainly ye seek to tell of grief like this:  
 Ye may not—One alone has known it,  
 One whose agony of love no floods could drown,  
 And He, the One who knows it, tells it not!  
 But thou, O ransom'd soul, with unvailed sight  
 Gaze on that mystery—  
 Gaze, and, with rapture filled,  
 Bow down and worship Him, who died for thee!

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## THE LANGUAGE OF NATURE.

THE SCALE INSECT.—Psa. xxii. 6.

Day unto day uttereth speech.—Psa. xix. 2.

ONE of the most blessed characteristics of the Lord Jesus was His stedfast self-sacrificing devotion to the Father in carrying out His purposes of blessing (Isa. xlii. 4) through the Cross. We find this expressed in ver. 6 of Psa. xxii. which gives us the details of that awful scene. The words "I am a worm" are luminous when we look at what the "worm" is. We have been in the habit of interpreting this as humble or despised, as in the next verse, and looking no further we have missed much.

"The word *tolaath* applies especially to the coccus from which the scarlet dye of the tabernacle was obtained, of course by its death; in that way how significant of the One before us!" (*Num. Bible*, notes on Psa. xxii.) A concordance shows that in Heb. ix. 19 the word *scarlet* is in Greek *kokkinos*; hence our word coccus—the family name, in Natural History, for all the scale insects; hence also the Spanish name

"cochineal" of the Mexican variety. The Arabian name "kermes" is from "krim"—a worm; hence our words "crimson" and "carmine." See Webster's Dictionary.

The common varieties are a terror to all florists and fruit farmers, and have been specially destructive in Florida and California. We find them often on palms and begonias in our homes and gardens.

If, with a pin, you lift up the edge of one of these scales, sometime in the Spring before the young are hatched, a common magnifying glass will show underneath a mass of a 100 or more yellowish eggs; a little later the active little insects may be found running about. Within a few hours after hatching (in some varieties only a few minutes) the young escape from under the dead mother, and, selecting a fresh spot in the bark of the same or some neighboring plant, push their bills into it to drink the sap, and settle there for life—never to move again. Their upper surface secretes a waxy substance, their shape changes, flattening out like a little tent, while the legs become useless except to hold on with. If the bill should be withdrawn they are unable to pierce the bark again, and soon perish. After several moultings, the eggs are deposited; then the mother dies and her dead body forms a shelter for the young, by whom the story is repeated.

These phenomena may be briefly described as *immovable or steadfast self-sacrifice even unto death, to provide a shelter for the children*. It seems as if God had given the insect strict orders:—Immediately after your birth you are to select a place on the bark, put in your bill, and as soon as your eggs are deposited, die, and so provide a shelter for your young;



pay attention to nothing else, and on no account whatever may you move from that spot on the bark; if you do, you shall die.

Turning now to Scripture for the spiritual counterpart of all this, it is impossible not to recognize the unique features of the Lord Jesus who came with this steadfast purpose, to lay down His life for those whom God had given Him (Heb. ii. 13)—a devotion even unto death. He had received this commandment from His Father (John x. 18), and held it before Him from His earliest childhood to the cross. The first we hear of Him after His birth was at twelve years of age. Luke ii. 49 shows this was not the beginning of His obedience; He was already settled down to His life's work with a steadfastness of purpose from which neither the importunity of friends nor the threats of enemies could move Him (Mark viii. 31-33; John xi. 8; Luke xiii. 31-33). His parents should have known from His whole life at home that He could only be about His Father's business.

Activity is a prominent trait of insects in general, therefore a phenomenon like this serves to attract attention and admirably describes this character of our Lord—it is a living "working model of it." The *dead* body of the scale covers the eggs and young, and seems to be identified with them. Just so in His death the Lord has identified us and all our interests with Himself (John xiv. 19). His is not the interest of a hireling; the laying down of His life was the measure of His devotedness.

The shelter of the young under the dead body of the parent is the shelter of *concealment*, and so from the enemy. So is the "hiding place" of Psa. xxxii. 7

and of John x. 28, 29 "none shall pluck them out of My hand." Our life and all our interests for time and eternity bound in a bundle with His and safely hidden beyond reach of the enemy in the secret place of the Most High. The whole of Psa. xci., with John x. 28, 29 and Psa. xxxii. 7, breathe the concealment of this sheltering scale.

#### THE TEST OF STEDFASTNESS.

"I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men and despised of the people." "Men will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself," and so His disciples said, "Pity Thyself Lord, this shall not be unto Thee" (Matt. xvi. 22, margin). Here was one with more than twelve legions of angels at His command, able and willing to deliver Him, who did not take advantage of it in His extremity. Men despise such an one; so they went on insulting Him, wagging their heads and saying, "Save Thyself." At such a time all but the true "worm" would have *moved*—would have failed in *stedfastness*. "Therefore doth My Father love Me because I lay down My life that I might take it again." No wonder it is without a parallel!

This stedfastness should characterize the Lord's people. Once settled in the grace of God in Christ, we are to be "stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. xv. 58); we are to be in our Lord's business as the Lord was in His Father's. Only let us not forget that as in the path of self-sacrificing obedience, with blessing for others as its object, stedfastness is a divine virtue, so in the path of disobedience and self-will it is *stubbornness*, and "is as iniquity and idolatry" (1 Sam. xv. 23).

## CRIMSON DYE.

The blood of the kermes insect was for many centuries practically the only source of red dye. Since the discovery of America, the Mexican variety (cochineal, which is a better and brighter color) has superseded it. Both are very persistent—the most difficult of all colors to remove (Isa. i. 18). Both are very intense—a very little makes a large quantity of dye. This suggests—

“Dear dying Lamb Thy precious blood  
Shall never lose its power  
Till all the ransomed saints of God  
Be saved to sin no more.”

Such is the value of the blood of Christ that it is able to dye, so to speak, all the sinners in the world, so that the eye of God would detect it wherever applied, and thus perfectly satisfy Him: “When I see the blood I will pass over you.” “His blood avails for me.” How blessed to know that it will *never fade*—never can be *washed away*.

This insect provided the red in the tabernacle. Thus in the sanctuary it presents the value of the blood of Christ in the character we have had before us—not in that of the lamb or of the bullock sprinkled on the mercy-seat—it is not repetition.

## WHERE IT THRIVES.

The desert is the ideal place where the cochineal lives. It feeds only on the cactus, whose Natural History name is *coccus cacti*: it is the characteristic plant of the desert, bearing beautiful flowers (suggestive of “the pleasures of sin for a season”) but bearing thorns that wound, instead of fruit. Thorns are the result of the curse.

It is as beautifully fitting, then, that the cactus should be the food of the cochineal as that thorns crowned the Saviour's brow. You cannot have cochineal without the cactus, and it is sin that necessitated a Saviour.

#### KERMES.

But then, what about the *kermes*? It does not live in the desert, nor on the cactus, but on a scrub oak that grows all along the Mediterranean sea including Palestine, the land of the Jews. It is the *Old World* variety; and since the discovery of the *New World* the cochineal has superseded it just because it is a better and brighter color and has a bloom which the other lacks.

May not the kermes point to the blood under Judaism, and the cochineal the blood under Christianity? If so I can see a perfect fitness in all these details—no confusion, but all is consistent. The blood under Judaism did shelter. Israel was a protected nation while they abode under Jehovah. But the blood under Christianity has superseded it, and has indeed a bloom which the other lacks (Heb. ix.). The kermes would thus represent the *old* dispensation and the cochineal the *new*. It is business folly to cultivate kermes, now that cochineal has been discovered; but a greater folly to cultivate Judaism now that Christ has come.

Under Judaism the world is not a desert. It is under Christianity. Israel was placed by Jehovah in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the kermes lives in fertile lands; Christ and the Church find but a desert in this world, even as the cochineal on the cactus.

Is it not remarkable that (1) there should be only two valuable varieties? (2) that they should feed on different plants? (3) that while the injurious varieties are notoriously omniverous, these should be conspicuous exceptions? (4) that they are *natives* of different continents? (5) *separated* by an ocean, and thus suggesting the immense difference between Judaism and Christianity? and (6) that the native of the *new* country should supersede the other? The above analogies are striking. If they are intended to be types of what is above suggested (and "the spiritual meaning governs everything") then all is plain; if not, then they are most remarkable coincidences.

#### UNKNOWN, YET KNOWN.

The strange appearance of the insect is another phenomenon to be noticed. It is so unusual that from all accounts no one suspected that kermes or cochineal were insects until about A. D. 1675, and only in 1715 the suspicion proved correct. This is borne out by the Greek name *kokkos* (a berry) because they thought it was the fruit of the scrub oak on which it lived. It is dark brown and about the size and shape of a small lady bird. Yet the Arabian name *kermes* (a worm), would indicate that they, at least, knew it to be an insect.

Thus the world knew not Christ, and none of the princes of this world knew Him or they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Even John must have it revealed to him (John i. 33). And no one knows Christ as a shelter unless he has been taught of God. Flesh and blood cannot reveal it (John vi. 45, 46; Isa. liii. 1-3). What could be so foolish to the natural mind as to expect shelter from a man

hanging on a tree, who, to the human eye, could not shelter even himself from his enemies? How then could He shelter others? The dying thief, alone, taught of God, recognized Him, to his eternal blessing. Wisdom is justified of her children.

#### THE INJURIOUS VARIETIES.

Those which secrete a waxy covering above the insect, but which is separate and distinct from it, are called armored scales; those which do not have it are called unarmored. They all agree in this: Their BLOOD is of *no value*—it is not RED. The family trait of sheltering their young is preserved as in the cochineal; otherwise they would be another family, and so not associated in our minds with it; but taken together they easily suggest a counterfeit. A counterfeit always looks like the genuine, in its resemblance to the true. The waxy scale is a covering over the sheltering insect—the concealment of *dishonesty*. This is a prominent feature of almost all false religions.

The *unarmored* scales would be as false religions, without concealment or dishonesty—making no pretensions: for instance, devil worshipers, who openly acknowledge and worship Satan as their god.

Under further and closer scrutiny these varieties may yield types of many of the false religions of the world—Spiritualism, Mormonism, Theosophy, Higher Criticism etc. The BLOOD must be the final test—the BLOOD without which there is *no remission* of sins, and no real shelter.

THEO. MEADE.

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## PORTION FOR THE MONTH.

2 SAMUEL AND 1 AND 2 PET. R.

**W**E noticed last month that first Samuel is a continuous type of the history of God's kingdom on earth, from Adam's fall to the end of the present dispensation. We found that Saul's reign, to the anointing of David, pictures Israel's history from the giving of the law to the anointing of Jesus. Saul failed to judge Amalek, as Israel under law failed to subdue "the will of the flesh;" and Samuel had to hew Agag in pieces "in Gilgal," as God, by His Son's cross, "crucified" the "old man."

Saul does not figure merely the Jew's failure to glorify God in earthly government, but represents "the first man," and thus also the Gentile. When Christ came, not Israel and Judah alone, but Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome had all been tested upon Jehovah's earthly throne, and had all been weighed in the balance and found wanting.

This explains the type of the present dispensation found in the latter part of first Samuel, from the anointing of David to Saul's death. There were two rival kings, both anointed of God. Saul, tested and condemned, yet permitted to occupy the throne of outward power, seemed to be successful, and drew the multitudes after him. David, approved by God, yet rejected and persecuted by man, had as followers only a little band of men of faith, who had been taught of God. Like Saul, the "powers that be" are "ordained of God," yet serve their own will instead of His who has anointed them with the power they possess. The son of Jesse, on the other hand, pictures Him whom God has raised from the dead and made "both Lord and Christ," but who for 1900 years has been

treated by the kingdoms of this world as Saul treated David.

Just as the Saul who persecuted David was the same Saul who rejected Samuel, so have the world-powers since Calvary fully proved their kinship with Israel, Judah, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome, whose sceptre they have inherited. Saul had the light of David's ways, experienced David's mercy, acknowledged David's title to the throne, and sometimes made a truce—which he soon broke. So have the world-powers had the light of Christ for nearly 2000 years, as they have held their thrones through His long-suffering; but while some have professed to be "Christian," and have made temporary covenants of peace, as in the times of Constantine and the Reformation, yet their heart has remained the murderous heart of Saul, and their mind, like Saul's, has continued to be "enmity against God." As Saul turned to familiar spirits, and perished at the hands of the Philistine, so will the "Christian" powers soon embrace the "doctrines of demons," and fall into the snare set by the "Synagogue of Satan." Alas! human history makes the type only too clear!

This much in review may help us to understand second Samuel, which is a type of the brief but awful dispensation which will follow the present one. In both books we see David's failure, side by side with his faith; but we must remember that David typifies *the people in whom Christ dwells*, as well as Christ Himself. The perfections speak of Christ; the failures belong to His people.

1. **The reign in Hebron** (2 Sam. i.—iv.) pictures the dawn of a new dispensation. The mourning over the fall of Saul and Jonathan (i.) suggests the sadness which already is upon us, who now see the "Christian" powers, and the world-church in which Christians are entangled, rapidly declining into apostasy and ruin. David mourns, even though Saul's fall is the signal for his own triumph.



But at once the word to him and to his men is to “go *up* unto Hebron” (ii. 1-7)—that Hebron, “built seven years before Zoan in Egypt,” which symbolizes our place and joy in heaven! We have here a figure of the rapture of the saints, which will immediately follow the spiritual fall of Christendom when, as Laodicea, she is spued out of Christ’s mouth. David’s anointing in Hebron, by the “men of Judah” (“praise”), suggests Rev. iv. and v., where the Lion of the tribe of Judah, amid the praises of His glorified saints, takes the book of God’s counsels into His hand for execution.

The seven and a half years of David’s reign in Hebron may suggest the heavenly aspect of the coming scene. Heaven will acknowledge its King throughout that period; but on earth there will be tumult and rebellion. This earthly aspect, of the *gradual* establishment of the kingdom, comes before us in the rest of second Samuel. The kingdom of Ishbosheth and Abner, Saul’s successors, and its collapse (ii. 8-iv.), remind us of Rev. vi., where the rise of an imperial power is symbolized, as is its fall (we believe), in the concluding verses of the same chapter.

2. **David’s return to Jerusalem** (v.-ix.) after the tribes of Israel come to him at Hebron, figures, we doubt not, the setting up again of Jehovah’s earthly throne amidst a repentant Jewish remnant in the last days. Only a part of Jerusalem is wrested from the Jebusite, as only a portion of the Jews will turn to Christ; yet the Philistines are defeated, as an apostate Christendom will be witnessed against by regenerated Jews. There is confusion and delay in bringing up the ark; yet at last it comes—Christ tabernacling in Jewish hearts! Can we wonder that “David” dances and shouts?

David’s desire to build a house to Jehovah may reflect the hopes of the Jewish remnant, as the first temple is erected after their return to their land. But this will not abide; their faith must be purified; after which Jehovah

will build for them, and not they for Him. The wars of David, in this section, no doubt picture the spiritual triumphs of the Jewish remnant during the first half of the last "week" of years of which Daniel speaks. David's kindness to the house of Saul reminds us that the grace of Christ in that day will extend to a "great multitude" from the Gentile nations, as well as to a remnant out of every Israelitish tribe (compare Rev. vii.).

3. **David's sin** (x.-xii.) is in no sense typical of Christ, but may figure the sin of the Jewish nation, brought home to the conscience of the remnant in the last days. Can we not interpret the parable? Bathsheba, "daughter of the oath," whose father was Eliam, "God of the people," may well represent the inheritance which Israel's God had sworn to give to Israel. The Jews, coveting the blessing but hating the Blessor, murdered Him to whom it really belonged, as David had Uriah slain. Uriah, "Light of Jah," the Hittite, "Terror,"—the "Terror" which made them afraid,—thus figures Christ as the faithful Heir whom wicked husbandmen slew in order to seize the inheritance.

When the Jewish remnant is brought back, in the last days, the Spirit of God will press home their sin in its full bitterness, even as Nathan says to David, "Thou art the man!" Nor will they at first inherit, but will be chastened and scattered again, and made to realize that a hope conceived in sin must fail, even as the firstborn of David and Bathsheba perishes. Only when they come back, fully self-judged and forgiven, can "the daughter of the oath" become theirs, and Solomon, the offspring of their better hopes, establish their glory forever!

4. **Absalom's rebellion** (xiii.-xx.) pictures the events of the last half of Daniel's "week." But first we have the sad story of Tamar, Amnon, and Absalom which is another parable of the last days, though we may be able to interpret it only in a general way. If Tamar, the

king's daughter, represents Jerusalem, her humiliation at the hands of her own brother may picture the shame and corruption which the grieved remnant will see wrought in the city by their own kinsmen, the Jews. Absalom represents the hand of blood and violence which makes the disorders an excuse for its own cruelty. Absalom flees, but soon returns and steals the heart of the people. So will the influence of the godly remnant wane at Jerusalem, until at last Antichrist leads the nation into complete apostasy. It is this which will occupy the final three and a half years of Daniel's last seven, and in the picture before us it is represented by the open revolt of Absalom and Ahithophel.

5. **The three years' famine** (xxi. 1-14) pictures the same period from another stand-point. Men will lack the word and grace of Christ: gross darkness will cover the people. The execution of Saul's seven sons and grandsons suggests the judgment of the seven-horned beast. Their burial out of sight lifts the curse from the land.

6. **Complete victory** (xxi. 15-xxiv.) follows, as the judgment of various other nations will follow that of the beast and false prophet. David's ode of triumph can then burst forth, while the roll of his mighty heroes is called. How glorious will be the fulfilment of this picture! The numbering of the people, as a *type*, we interpret as a picture of the grace of Christ in identifying Himself with His people. To "number" them was to bring into view all their sin and failure, as individuals and as a nation. Yet the remnant will realize that the true David has done this, yet only in order to bear their curse Himself—purchasing the threshing-floor of the "Jebusite" with His own blood, and offering there burnt-offerings and peace-offerings which present His people to God in the fragrance of an eternal "odor of rest"!

1 **Peter** sets forth the divine relationships of the Chris-

tian, and their power to carry him through a hostile world. (1) We are God's elect, set apart to obedience and to the sprinkling of the blood of Christ,—the Father's begotten ones, with a living hope, a heavenly inheritance, and God's present preserving power (i. 1-21). Therefore we can endure fiery trial, and rejoice. Have we not that which prophets longed for and angels wonder over? Let us, then, gird up our loins, be holy like our Father, and reverence His governing hand and will. (2) We are born of God's word, are nourished by it as the babe by its mother's milk, have been builded into God's spiritual house, are a holy priesthood to praise Him, and a royal priesthood to show His praises to others (i. 22-ii. 10). (3) In all our ways, therefore, let us *practically prove* that we are a holy people, set apart to God (ii. 11-iii. 9). (4) And let us arm ourselves with the mind of Christ, and be prepared to suffer, in a world of evil-doers, for righteousness' sake and for Christ's sake, only taking care not to suffer as evil-doers ourselves (iii. 10-iv. 6). (5) This practical godliness is all-important, because the testing and judgment of all things is at hand, and that which first of all will be tested and judged by God is that which professes to be His house and to be "Christian" in character (iv. 7-v.).

**2 Peter** emphasizes the truths of the first epistle,—the fact that Divine Power has given us "*all things*" pertaining to life and godliness, making us partakers of the divine nature; that we should therefore walk in godliness and in love, making our calling and election sure; and that to this end we should keep the bright hope of a coming glory before our souls, taking heed also to the prophetic word which points toward it (i.). We next see the reason for this emphasis: the growth of a great system of false teaching and false profession, which is not really delivered from the world's pollutions, but is going on to partake of the world's doom (ii.). This chapter is

an awful arraignment of "Christendom" as we now know it. But more (iii.): the entire present age and cosmos, moral and physical, is doomed to destruction while we, as Christians, are really called to inherit what is beyond this—a new heavens and a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness! Heirs of such a scene, how spotless, how blameless we should keep ourselves, during our present sojourn here!

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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QUES. 9.—1 Sam. xvi. 14–23, speaks to us of an evil spirit from God. 1st. In what way was this evil spirit from God? 2nd. To-day, if we disobey Him in our weakness, does His guiding Holy Spirit leave us? 3rd. How are we to know what is His holy will concerning us?

ANS.—An evil spirit from God is a judgment upon a man for a course which dishonors the favors and responsibilities God has put upon him. It is not that an evil spirit has its existence from God, but it is used of God for discipline. In this case it seems to be more a result of Saul's evil and jealous temper which is allowed to torment him, than a separate spirit, or demon.

2nd. All believers in this dispensation are sealed with the Holy Spirit "unto the day of redemption" (Eph. iv. 30); that is, unto that day when the Lord shall return to claim them and take them to heaven. The Spirit therefore never leaves them. They are warned in that same scripture, however, *not to grieve Him* by whom they are thus sealed. If they do, how can they look for His guidance? He is there, dwelling in them, but He is grieved; and until they have repented of what gives Him grief, they cannot look for the comfort and guidance He loves to give.

3rd. There is no way to know that but by acquaintance with God through His Word, and communion with Him. The state of our souls lies at the root of it, and apart from that there is no knowing the will of God.

"How to know the will of the Father" is an excellent little paper on the subject, which may be had of Loizeaux Brothers, (3 cents postpaid).

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## THE TWO ARKS.

*Notes of an address by P. J. L. on Gen. vi. 13, 14;  
and Heb. ix. 1-5.*

THESE scriptures set before us the two Arks, one built by Noah, and the other by Moses, but both alike under the plan of God Himself. When things are to foreshadow as much as does each of these Arks, none but God Himself could plan them, and none but the Spirit of God could give men sufficient understanding to execute the plan with the needful accuracy.

There is a vast difference, beloved friends, between these two Arks, though, as in all else in Scripture, they are intimately related.

Noah's Ark was made to carry people through the judgment which was about to fall upon the earth. It is the figure of the salvation for which God sent His beloved Son Jesus Christ into this world, that He should obtain it for us. This He did we know, and at what cost we know, though the full extent of that cost we may never know. Who can measure what sin is to God? And who then can measure the full extent of what our blessed Lord suffered on that cross to put it away? Which among us who have fled into the Ark for refuge has not felt the pangs of conviction of sin? It was but a ray of the light which issues from the throne of God that was penetrating our soul, to drive us at the Saviour's feet with the confession of our sins. What must have been the full blaze of that light turned upon our adorable Saviour when "the iniquity of us all" was "laid on Him!"

It is good, brethren, not to urge souls beyond their

moral state. Not to urge them to a shaky peace before they have felt the burden of sin. A man despises water. Let him travel under a burning sun for a while. Let him thirst till he hears the sound of a cool spring flowing out of the rock. It will be music to him such as he never heard in his life. It is thus we learn to sing:

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds  
In a believer's ear.”

But we are liable to limit salvation to the soul. It is no wonder when we think of the eternal issues—of the worm that dieth not and the fire that is not quenched. But God's thoughts are above man's as the heavens are above the earth. The salvation which Christ has obtained by the shedding of His precious blood, includes our bodies as well. If by sin we have lost everything, Christ by His great redemption has recovered to us far, far more than we have lost. Instead of an earthly body we are going to have a heavenly one, such as will fit us for the paradise of God in heaven, for the golden streets of the new Jerusalem, for the glory of God in His own house. We shall be like His beloved Son.

Then the Ark contained more than men. Creatures were there of every kind. So, beloved, not only are we going to our glorious home in heaven, not only are Israel and the nations of the earth going to prove that the reign over them of the Jesus they now despise is, like every purpose of God, the fullness of blessing, but creation itself which “groans and travails in pain together until now, “shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”

And then between the two—between the salvation of our soul and the glory awaiting us, do we not need to be saved out of a multitude of circumstances? Do we not need to be washed when we have defiled ourselves by sin? Do we not need sympathy when we are in suffering? Brethren, we may love each other as we ought. We may sympathize deeply with the sorrowing; we may minister to each other in all the fulness of our measure—oh may God give us grace for this!—but there is a depth in our needs which none but our Saviour can reach.

In Detroit lately I met a soul who said to me, All I can say is that I am miserable, but just what ails me I do not know. I replied, How good it is, is it not, that not only Christ our Advocate and Priest is able to attend to all our needs, but also understands all our needs before we can express them, save “with groanings which cannot be uttered?” What a mercy, in our perplexity, to have such a bosom to lean upon, and into which we may empty our own even if only by sighs and tears.

One thing more. It is well known among us that the word translated “pitch” is the word for “atone-ment.” The Ark was to be pitched “within and without with pitch.” God will not suffer us to think of our salvation, and of all our coming bliss, apart from the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let all self-satisfied people praise their goodness, and learn too late forever “the terror of the Lord,” we will glory only in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus blessed with such a salvation, our hearts are kept above the corroding cares and trials of this life, and we patiently wait for the end; while to His



promise, "Behold I come quickly," our hearts earnestly respond "even so come Lord Jesus."

The Ark of Moses was very different. It was not to carry people through, but *to be carried* by the people of God on their shoulders, all through their wilderness journey.

It is Christ still, but Christ having gone through all the sufferings, now risen, glorified, and all that is true of Him seen now in the light of the glory into which He has entered, and of the way in which it has glorified God. All is gold about that Ark therefore. The wood (Christ's humanity) is there as much as ever, but covered with gold within and without. Humanity is glorified. The Manna (Christ's humiliation) is still there too, but in a pot of gold. We understand now the glory of that humiliation, do we not brethren? It makes us ashamed to ever have been ashamed of it, or to have shrunk from the fullest identification with it, does it not? The tables of the law are there too, but they frighten us no more, do they? for the penalty they imposed upon us has been borne by Aaron's rod which lies there by them—that Rod which was dead, but is alive again, and upon which we, the fruit of the travail of His soul, hang in living clusters all around.

All this, and vastly more, which we have learned concerning our dear Saviour and Master is, beloved brethren, what God has not only blessed our souls with, but also laid upon our shoulders to keep and carry for Him. He does not want us to take what we like of the truth and drop the rest because, perhaps, it brings too much reproach or trouble. No, the truth, the whole truth is laid upon us to hold up

high on our shoulder every step of the way. Oh what a sacred trust from the God of heaven is committed to us! Shall we refuse it and seek our ease?

And what are we that such honor should be placed upon us? Well, in ourselves we are only poor sinful creatures not only unfit for heaven, but even cast out by earth, for it is evident our sins have cut us off from our stay upon it. But even if poor Jacobs, God has enabled us to sing, "Unto Him that loves us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us a kingdom, priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

We love the Ark therefore; we surround it on all sides; we guard it; we carry it; we follow it; all our steps are with it. Sorrows deep and dreadful may be, have been ours because of it, for God cannot deny what He is, and we cannot bring Him down to our ways. They, however, who will patiently submit to His discipline, will surely, like and with David, leap and dance before the Lord as the Ark enters the glorious City with them that carry it.

One word more, beloved: The Ark—the Truth—has a path of its own. The path in which it is found is the one in which it is kept—the path of holiness, of separation to God, of death to sin, to the world and all that is of it. In the measure in which we leave that path, we give up the power to hold that fast which we have, and to discern concerning the truth that which is good from that which is evil.

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## THE SILVER TRUMPET.

THE Bridegroom soon is coming—  
 The joyful truth proclaim:  
 Sound, sound the silver trumpet  
 O'er hill, and dale, and plain;  
 That trump which hath been telling,  
 Throughout the darksome night,  
 Salvation's blessed story  
 Of peace, and joy, and light!

O blessed, blessed Jesus!  
 We know those joyful sounds:  
 They tell of sins forgiven—  
 They tell how grace abounds;  
 And now in Thee rejoicing,  
 We wait the coming morn;  
 With longing heart we're looking,  
 To see the glory dawn.

Sound, sound the silver trumpet,  
 Let it be loudly blown,  
 Through every tribe and nation,  
 Till it be fully known—  
 Till all Thy slumb'ring virgins,  
 Roused by the midnight cry,  
 Re-echo wide the tidings,  
 "THE BRIDEGROOM DRAWETH NIGH.

Arise from sloth and slumber,  
 Hark! 'tis the Bridegroom's voice:  
 "Come, come with Me, My loved one,  
 Come with Me and rejoice;  
 We soon shall be united,  
 Ah, never more to part!  
 Then come with Me, My fair one,  
 Yea, give Me *all* thy heart.

"For thee I left the glory,  
 For thee to bleed and die,  
 Was bruised, afflicted, smitten,  
 God's throne to glorify.

Rejoice, then, My beloved!  
 I'll quickly, quickly come,  
 To bear My Bride to heaven,  
 To take My loved one home!

"I'll share with thee the glory  
 My Father gave to Me,  
 And all His wondrous fulness  
 I'll there unfold to thee.  
 Then, hark! My spouse, My fair one,  
 Now listen to My voice;  
 Yea, turn from all around thee,  
 And in My love rejoice!"

Yes, dearest Lord, we hear Thee;  
 Thy silver trumpet's sound  
 Thrills through our hearts with gladness,  
 And makes our songs resound.  
 Come quickly! oh, come quickly!  
 To bear Thy Bride away  
 To realms of light and glory—  
 To everlasting day!

There we shall fully know Thee,  
 As we are fully known,  
 And, perfected in beauty,  
 Shall share Thy glorious throne.  
 We'll then shout Hallelujahs  
 To God and to the Lamb:  
 Praise Father, Son, and Spirit,  
 The glorious, great I AM!

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"DIVERS WEIGHTS, DIVERS MEASURES."

Proverbs xx. 10, 23.

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TO those who are gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ alone—who have "gone forth unto Him without the camp" (Heb. xiii. 13)—the scripture "Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, forever" is familiar. We rightly own that

there must be separation from evil among those so gathered; who, though only a tiny part of that "holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. ii. 21), would seek to carry out the requirements, the principles, suited to such a privileged place as a habitation of God; for "the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands, as saith the prophet        what house will ye build Me saith Jehovah, or where is the place of My rest?" Yet to this very place of blessing and privilege He has called His Church, His temple! (1 Pet. ii. 5, 1 Cor. iii. 16). Now to this truth we hold tenaciously, and against all parleying with evil we are ever ready to quote the above scripture, "Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, forever." But if the Church is the temple of God, is the individual saint any less *really* the temple of the Holy Spirit? (1 Cor. vi. 19.) Do we quote this verse with equal zeal as to our *individual* responsibilities? We see saints who put us to shame in consecration, and yielding of their bodies to God as His (Rom. xii. 1), yet who know absolutely nothing of Church truth, and take no notice of it, or of God's will as to worship. Will their individual devotedness excuse them for passing over the equally plain scriptures as to separation from evil collectively? He that said the one said the other (see Jas. 11). We pity their ignorance of truth, but, on the other hand, will the fact of *our* seeking separation from evil ecclesiastically count with the Lord if we are not also seeking to "cleanse ourselves from every pollution of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God"? (2 Cor. vii. 1.) He says, "Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?" Though we may thus be "beguiling ourselves," a

"just weight and balance are the Lord's." There are saints ecclesiastically in confusion, who yet set Him apart in their hearts and practical ways; and there are saints ecclesiastically separated from evil, who can enjoy their newspapers, and "good" fictions, and jokes, and can talk at the same time of those who do not "see separation. *It is a delusion!*

It is this sort of deceitful balancing with which Satan deceives, and which eats away the vitals of spiritual life. Was it for the disciples only, or also for us that the Lord said "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees?" Satan allows others to be right individually, if he can keep them ecclesiastically leavened: as he will let us be right ecclesiastically, if he can deceive us by leavening our individual walk. In like manner he will let others be most loving, if they can be kept leavened with false doctrine as to Christ—we may be sound in doctrine for all Satan cares, so he can succeed in getting us to lose the balance as to love. Are we ignorant of his devices? Nothing but the *balance* of the truth will avail us. So throughout *all Scripture*, there is ever the balance. The sword of the Spirit is two-edged, *i.e.*, cuts this way and that not two-pointed as some would explain it—cutting the one who uses it as the one against whom it is used: this is not the figure, though it is true the one who uses it must first have felt its power, but it is *two-edged*.

Again, the Spirit's leading in the assembly (1 Cor. xii. 8, 11) is insisted on as all important, and rightly so; but does Scripture speak of His leading in the assembly any more *really* than individual believers are to be "led of the Spirit" in the daily path? Here is another instance of divers balances, yet

we look down on poor saints in "the systems of men" who own "one-man-ministry," etc., yet seek to follow the Spirit's leading in the daily path. So also as to the Lordship of Christ, which must be owned absolutely in the assembly if there is to be blessing; yet as soon as meeting is over, how many of us speak as though we might say with the wicked, "our lips are our own; who is Lord over us?" and how often is this so all through the week! Many of us deplore it in ourselves and others, and forget again, alas. How many more seem to play with the truth; but it is self-deception, and Satan is at the bottom of it. The Lord is near.

Is it not high time to awake to these things? for "divers weights are abomination to Jehovah." If this is so in business matters, how much more so in spiritual things? Shall we go on wondering why the meetings are cold, and why we are not used to deliver our brethren; deceiving ourselves as in the days of Judges—when idols could be allowed individually, and in a whole tribe, and *at the same time* pious phrases, long in use, *continued in*: "before Jehovah is your way" (Judges xviii. 6), yet "the whole tribe of Dan set up the graven image all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh:" for "there was no king in Israel," though Jehovah was King in Jeshurun. To faith, now, "ye are the living God's temple," and "holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, forever." But what gives all the value to the house is the One who dwells in it. Yet we hear sometimes more of the body than we do of the Head in these days, and the Church spoken of as "the mystery." Scripture speaks of *Christ and the Church* (Eph. v. 32)—"this mystery . . . which is *Christ in you*"

(Col. i. 27). *Christ* is all, and in all, "Insomuch as He who hath built the house hath more honor than the house!" (Heb. iii. 3; Matt. xvi. 18.) Some are so pre-occupied with the Church, that if they are asked the question "What is the mystery?" they at once answer, The Church! As well might they say that God's institution of union (Gen. ii., Eph. v. 32) was "Eve!" "He called *their* name Adam," and "so also is *Christ*" (1 Cor. xii. 12). It is most blessed and helpful to trace through the Word how the sword of the Spirit is two-edged; and how the like weight is in the balances. As has been often said, nearly all error is based on one side of truth. And first, the truth as to the Son of God. The truth of His person is God and Man. Leave out either, and fatal error as to our salvation is the result. So the Spirit and the Word: leave out either, and error again is the result. So above all as to God, and what He has revealed of His own being: "God is light,"—"God is love." To leave out either would be ignorance of God, and blinding error. So in the cross, "Mercy *and* Truth met together," and "righteousness *and* peace" also.

So in the epistle of John. Who reading there can separate the truth as to Christ's person, and love to the brethren? They are inseparably joined and perfectly balanced! So "grace *and* truth" in the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. As to our path how we need the balance! It is "watch *and* pray:" as one has said, one of these without the other is mockery on the one hand, or presumption on the other. "Trust in Jehovah *and* do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land." "I will put my trust in Him;" and "He learned obedience." One (recently called home)



once asked the following question, "Which is better, —to be ecclesiastically right and morally wrong; or to be morally right and ecclesiastically wrong?" The person he asked replied "Better to be ecclesiastically right!" What delusion! What deceitful balances! Few would *say* this (which turned the hearer aside), but the Scripture balance is "Take heed unto thyself *and* unto the doctrine." May the Lord stir up our spirits in His mercy (even now—as dawn is nearing) by His Spirit's power. \* \* \*

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### UNDER A CLOUD.

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**I**S your soul under a cloud? puzzled perhaps by the prevailing condition of things around you, as if God had given up the rule to whoever will take it? Are dark forebodings creeping in as if on board an abandoned ship tossed in the stormy night? Is that questioned to-day which yesterday was so honestly confessed?

Precious soul, "there is nothing new under the sun." John the Baptist, of whom Jesus said that "among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater," was once tossed and tried like you. He was in prison for righteousness' sake, he, the forerunner of the King of kings, and he could not understand how this should be, while he heard of the mighty power Jesus was displaying in the land. So he sends two of his disciples to Jesus with this question, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" (Matt. xi. 3).

How could he ask such a question after having said a little while before, "He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom

thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (John i. 32-34).

Does our dear Lord crush His poor servant for such inconsistent behavior? Nay, He knows that inconsistency is but the fruit of darkness and He gently draws His doubting servant out of that darkness: in effect He replies, Go and tell John again of My mighty deeds; but if, in My perfect wisdom, I see fit to leave him in prison and let him be beheaded there, he must be patient and suffer with Me to the end, even though he cannot understand why. Let him *trust* Me, and *at the end* he will understand it all (Matt. xi. 4-6).

Beloved, this is still the way the Lord chases our clouds away.

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"WE OWE IT TO OUR NEIGHBORS."

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WE were parting after such a season of Christian fellowship as could be born only of heaven. Some had traveled several hundred miles to get there. The chief part lived in the country roundabout. Some large tents had been set up and in one of them we had assembled three times a-day for prayer, for searching the Scriptures, and for preaching the gospel to the unsaved. Goodly numbers had attended from the country all around, and some had found blessing.

Those responsible for the arrangements had labored night and day during these meetings, untiringly ministering in the various services required at such times, ever watchful for the comfort and welfare of all.

The love and grace of God freshened in the soul by the ministry of His Word, and by its practical manifestation in the various services rendered, had deepened the bond of unity in all, and we were thankful. In this mind, one of those about to leave said to another who had borne a large share of the burden, The Lord will remember your work of faith and labor of love, brother. To this he quietly replied, We owe it to our neighbors. Since God has made known to us the riches of His grace, we should do all in our power to make it known to them too.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ—that spirit of grace which led Him to the toils of His journey through this world, was indeed, we thought, being reproduced in this dear man and his associates. In the midst of a scene where “all seek their own, not the things of our Lord Jesus Christ,” how encouraging and refreshing are such exceptions to the rule, and, thank God, they are yet to be found.

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## THE OCCUPATION OF THE PLACE OF SERVICE.

### 3. THE KOHATHITE CHARACTER.

(Num. iii. 29.)

**I**N this verse of the third chapter of Numbers we have presented the position in relation to the tabernacle which is occupied by Kohath. “The families of the children of Kohath shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle *southward*.” Our attention is here called to the south and those hostile influences of this world of which this direction speaks. The word used for south means to be on the right hand of a people. Thus we are always looked at as facing

eastward, the place of the sunrise, typical of God's glory, so that the south is always from this point of view on the right hand, hence this meaning of the word in the original. And we must remember that in Scripture, to be on the right hand is always to be in the place of favor and acceptance. There is also a word used for the south which means "to be parched," from the extreme heat and consequent drought in that direction. Hence the same word is used for Egypt. We easily gather from this that the south presents to us the favor of the world, to be on its right hand and in the place of acceptance with it. But it is just these very influences which destroy all spiritual vigor, and dry up all the sap of the spiritual life. The result of subservience to such power is simply that to have the friendship of the world is to be at enmity with God, and "whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James iv. 4).

The one who faces south and confronts this side of the world's influence is Kohath. In him we shall find the manner becoming to us in occupying the place of service in relation to this side of the world's power. His name means "Assembly." If we consider the burdens it is his lot to bear, we shall find the thought of the assembly strongly enforced. First of all (ver. 31) the ark, type of the throne of God. It is in the assembly, distinctively, that this is established and owned by God's people. If it is the "house of God," it is that because He is there established in fullest power and authority, His throne is set up in it. Thus among those who compose the assembly, God is in the exalted place, His power and authority is acknowledged by them with joy, their

relationship is a glorious one, while in the world He is disowned and His supremacy hated by it in its alienation. This answers exactly to Kohath's first son, Amram, "people of the exalted One." It expresses not only the relationship we are in toward God as the One now enthroned and glorified by Christ's work by which also we are now His people, but also our position, which is an exalted one since we are His people.

Then we have the table,—type of communion which can only be enjoyed in the presence of God, for the bread on the table is literally "the presence bread." This again is realized in the full extent of its blessing in assembly character where, as gathered together with the Lord in the midst and the Spirit to direct and guide in all activity, fellowship with God and Christ is entered into. The Spirit can alone take of the things of Christ and minister them in communion, whether in collective or individual aspect. In accord with this the second son is Izehar, "oil," type of the Spirit.

In the third place we have the lampstand—type of Christ in the glory of resurrection. Upon its seven branches are placed the lamps from which the light is thrown upon the lampstand itself. These lamps give us a picture of the saints united to Christ, and borne up by Him in resurrection glory before God, just as these lamps are made part of and are supported by the lampstand. It is in the assembly this truth is fully developed, for it is the body of Christ of which He is the Head, and all the children of God the members of it. And so the third son is Hebron, "union,"—the union of Christ and His members in one body.

Fourthly, the altars,—that of the burnt-offering, and the golden incense altar,—which speak to us of the sweet odor of that perfect sacrifice in which we are accepted of God, and of the sweet odor of praise and thanksgiving which is accepted from us by God. It is the assembly as constituted a holy priesthood which stands in the double blessing of this position. In accord with this the fourth son is Uzziel “the power of God,” and in this His power is fully displayed, first of all in the accomplishment of a work by which the perfect acceptance of the sinner is accomplished, the work typified in the burnt-offering; and secondly by the indwelling of the individual with the Spirit and the union of all in one body, so that God’s power is displayed in the blessed activity of the Spirit in the offering of the sacrifice of praise and worship of which the golden altar speaks.

In the fifth place we have the veil which was used to cover the ark. It speaks to us of Christ in His humanity, since it is composed of the same materials as the beautiful curtains; but with the cherubim it has the added thought of all government being in His hand. So the Father “hath committed all judgment (the direct work of government in its exercise) unto the Son” (John v. 22). It is Christ as thus presented through whom alone the holiest of all, the presence of God, can be entered. This is the essential truth of assembly position, as being linked with Christ in the one body, in which every believer has his place, giving liberty of access in the presence of God. For this, of course, we know the veil must be rent, speaking to us of Christ crucified.

The ministry connected with these precious things belongs rightly to our priestly character, but Kohath

bears them about with him in the wilderness march; that is the Levitical side of these sanctuary, priestly truths. We are to bear about with us the assembly character and its blessed truth. It is not simply a meeting which is called by this name. It is not something the form of which we go through on Lord's day morning and that is all till another such occasion comes. But it is that in connection with which we have been placed by God, and in the realized sense of which, continuously maintained, we are to live, having our lives moulded according to this all-controlling truth. This done, the world's favor, or desire to be at its right hand, in friendship with it, will have no charm, no power over us. In this we have what gives the victory to faith over it, and enables for the occupation of the place of service in the right way as confronting southern influences and their power.

In the assembly we stand in the most exalted and privileged place of all people, in special favor and nearness to God. With the truth of it maintained and carried with us, what place will there be for the offers of the world's favor and acceptance? What is the attitude of it to Him in whose special favor we stand through Christ? In view of the answer which must be given to this, what countenance can we give to its courtship and proffered place at its right hand? In the assembly we are united to and under the headship of Christ whom the world crucified. He now is the exalted One and glorified at the right hand of the Majesty on high, cast out by the world, received up into glory by God. His position and relation, therefore, determine ours since we are linked with Him in the wondrous way to which assembly

truth testifies. If He <sup>4</sup>then is rejected, that is our place too; the servant is not greater than his Lord; but then the eye of faith can turn to where He now is and know that there also is our place, the home and delight of our hearts filled with its light and love and joy, and the Father's love-feast spread for us to partake of.

How these precious things should thrill our hearts. *The love of Christ*, how dare I requite it by such base ingratitude as to court the friendship and favor of that system which hated and despised Him, the proof of whose love to my poor sin cursed soul was the enduring of my just judgment and God's forsaking, that His favor and love might be poured out upon me to the full. Shall I then seek the right hand of the world in its distance and separation from God into whose favor I have now been brought at such a cost? May our hearts answer, as welling up with gratitude to our blessed Lord, "not of this world even as Thou art not of it." He had not where to lay His head, shall we find more in this sad, restless world? Satan would lull us to sleep, if he could, by the vain music of its proffered favor and false love and the present advantages this might bring with it. Let us choose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb. xi. 25). Thus shall we "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called"—of which we see Kohath plainly speaks. Southward, then, beloved, by God's grace we shall be Kohathites, shall we not?

J. B. JR.

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## SOUL AND BODY.

THE soul of the believer is so perfectly redeemed that if he is called away by death, he is "absent from the body and present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 6).

His body, however, is still unredeemed. It is still the same as before his soul was saved—liable as before to pain, disease, old age, and death. Sin also remains in it as before, and he has to "keep it under" to be able to use it for the Lord.

Its day of redemption is at the return of the Lord Jesus from heaven. Then "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we (the living) shall be changed" (1 Cor. xv. 52).

Then, and only then, shall the people of God possess the full redemption which His grace has provided for them. And God has in His Word kept a perfectly unobstructed view between our souls and that blessed hour. Not a single event of prophecy is put by Him between us and that hope. At any moment of the day or the night it may come. Let us not spiritually sleep, but watch. Depend upon it, everything that would be put between us and that "blessed hope" which would make us say, Some time must yet occur before our Lord's return, is intended by the enemy of our souls to make us go to sleep.

"Bride of the Lamb, awake! awake!

Why sleep for sorrow now?

The hope of glory, Christ is thine—

A child of glory thou."

## BAPTISM.

**N**O one walking with God, in subjection to His Word, will think or speak lightly of baptism.

If the Lord has chosen to use it as an ordinance of His house, none can dismiss or despise it and suffer no hurt. Nor will it help matters to say that it is the baptism of the Spirit which is the important thing now. The spiritual man counts subjection to the Lord in all matters the important thing at all times.

Equally hurtful, and manifest proof of carnality is it to be found harping on the subject of baptism. None prove their ignorance of its true nature and import more than those who, because they have found the true form of baptism, make of that form baptism itself, as if plunging a man under the water were of more importance than the name of the blessed One used in the ordinance and by it put upon the person baptised.

It will be found that in the measure in which men press baptism, and make this or that form of it, or this or that application of it, a matter to affect the fellowship of saints, in that measure they lose sight of Christ Himself, and their spiritual condition and teaching, therefore, will have a Jewish, legal character. Instead of Christ enthroned in the heart, moulding the man, it is this thing demanded or that thing forbidden.

The gracious Lord enable His beloved people to be humbly subject to Him in *all* things, and to enjoy *Him* at all times.

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## TWO THINGS THAT JESUS DOES FOR “HIS OWN.”

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THERE are two things that Jesus does for “His own” which have been very precious to my own soul, and I pass them on to you, dear brethren, for your comfort and joy likewise. He “*saves to the uttermost*” and He “*loves to the end.*” What a blessed and precious thought! As the Great High Priest who has passed through the heavens (Heb. iv. 14)—who has an everlasting and unchanging priesthood (chap. vii. 24), He is able to “*save them to the uttermost* that approach unto God by Him” (ver. 25). It is not sinners coming to the Saviour for salvation, but saints who *approach* God as worshipers; it is the same word as “draw near” in chap. x. 22. It *became* God that Christ should come *down* and be perfected as the Captain of our salvation (chap. ii. 10). It *became* us that He should *go up* as our High Priest (chap. vii. 26) in order to succor us—minister to us in our infirmities, sustain us in our weakness—in a word “save us to the uttermost,” and this He is and does, blessed be His peerless Name.

Then along with that He “loves to the end” (John xiii. 1). All the warmth and love of His blessed loving heart goes along with the *strength* of His all-powerful hand. Spite of all the difficulties against us—the weakness and wickedness within us—the defilements around us—His eternal, unchanging, untiring love keeps Him occupied with us and makes Him still our Servant, to remove whatever would hinder the enjoyment of His presence and love, and our consequent blessing. If He is there as our Great High Priest to save to the uttermost—He is there

also as the everlasting lover of our souls, 'occupied still with "His own that are in the world," that all the strength and warmth of His affection may be known and realized through all the weakness and defilements that beset us in this changing scene till we see His face. He served us on the cross—He serves us still while in weakness and need here—He will serve us forever when He takes us home on high (Luke xii. 37). Matchless, precious, peerless Saviour! Thou art surely enough. What need we more?

Affectionately yours in Christ,

W EASTON.

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A CORRESPONDENT asks the origin of the words, "We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort."

It imports little, as far as we are concerned, who said them, but it was of mighty import to him who uttered them; and to every one who at any time between the eternity behind us and the eternity before us, does in truth in his heart utter them, they are of more worth than all the gold of all the earth. They are not a human theory. They have Christ's atoning sufferings on the cross for their foundation. There, eternal Justice is fully satisfied against sin, and God declares that because of this, all who believe in Christ are by Him accounted righteous.

So different is this from all *human* religions that all, without exception, oppose and hate it, and per-

secute it.' It dethrones the pride of man, for it gives to Christ alone the glory for our salvation. It is a revelation from God, and they who possess it in their souls have had to do with God Himself, and are "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. i. 12).

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### STILLNESS.

"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him."

**W**HY lesson art thou learning, O tried and weary soul?  
His ways art thou discerning, who works to make thee whole?

In the haven of submission art thou satisfied and still?  
Art thou clinging to the Father 'neath the shadow of His will? [best;

Now, while His arms enfold thee, think well, He loveth  
Be still, and He shall mould thee for His heritage of rest.

The vessel must be shapen for the joys of Paradise,  
The soul must have her training for the home beyond the  
And if the great Refiner, in furnaces of pain [skies.  
Would do His work more truly, count all His dealings gain.  
For He, Himself, hath told thee of tribulation here:  
Be still, and let Him mould thee for Himself in glory there.

From vintages of sorrow are deepest joys distilled,  
And the cup outstretched for healing is oft at Marah filled.  
God leads to joy through weeping, to quietness through  
strife, [life.

Through yielding into conquest, through death to glorious  
Be still, He hath enrolled thee for the Kingdom and the  
crown;

Be silent, let Him mould thee who calleth thee His own.

Such silence is communion, such stillness is a shrine,  
The "fellowship of suffering" an ordinance divine;  
And the secrets of "abiding" most fully are declared  
To those who with the Master, Gethsemane have shared.  
Then trust Him to uphold thee 'mid the shadows and the  
gloom; [for home.

Be still, and He shall mould thee for His presence and

## PORTION FOR THE MONTH.

## PROVERBS.

THE main divisions of the book of Proverbs are clearly marked out by titles or division headings in the text.

1. **The walk with wisdom** is the general subject of chaps. i.-ix. It may be helpful to point out the subdivisions and sections of this most instructive division.

Subdivision 1 (i.-iii.) gives the governmental consequence of harkening to wisdom, or of despising her voice.

Section 1 (i.) sets forth first principles. We see why these "proverbs," figures or similes, as the word means, are given (i. 1-6). The reader may well ponder the rich fruits of studying the book which are here held out. Is it not worth while? Next we have the brief but fundamental principle that "the fear of the Lord" is the beginning of knowledge, and that those who despise it are fools (i. 7). To sons, who find in God's Word the instruction of a Father and the law of a mother, (for are they not born both of God and of the Word) wisdom is an ornament of grace (i. 8, 9). Separation from sinners is the path for such (i. 10-19). But those who harken not to Wisdom will find no mercy in the day of judgment (i. 20-33).

Section 2 declares that to receive the word of wisdom is to find the knowledge of God and understanding of His ways, being delivered from the way of evil, and from the "strange woman" (a world away from God), and brought into the way of the righteous (ii.).

Section 3 gives a cluster of the ripe fruits of the walk with Wisdom (iii. 1-10).

Section 4 bids us take heart, even though we find the Lord's chastening and reproof in the path of wisdom. Such dealings only prove that we are special objects of

the Lord's love and the Father's delight; and they are but a small price to pay for priceless Wisdom, who comes to us with every blessing in her hand, even as she herself is that by which God Himself has wrought His wonders (iii. 11-20).

Section 5 summarizes the gain of Wisdom, and declares that Wisdom's righteous ways are to be practiced by us in all our dealings with our fellow-men (iii. 21-35).

Subdivision 2 emphasizes the necessity of consistency and whole-heartedness, cleaving unto Divine Wisdom and separating from worldly evil (iv.-vi. 19). If we cleave to Wisdom and exalt her, she will exalt and beautify us (iv. 1-9). We may think of the true Solomon here as the one who sets Himself forth as the example of a Son taught of the Father. The two paths, of the wicked and of the righteous, are contrasted (iv. 10-19). Wisdom should be embraced by our innermost heart, out of which are the issues of life, the ways of mouth, eyes and feet being consistent (iv. 20-27). The peril of fornication with the "strange woman" is contrasted with faithfulness to the wife of one's youth (v.). This is a parable for "sons." The strange woman is a seducing world, away from God. Our "own cistern," out of which we are to drink, and the wife of "our youth," whose breasts should always satisfy us, is the divine word of wisdom. Another summary follows as a fifth section, the becoming surety for one's neighbor, probably figuring entangling alliances, while we are specifically warned concerning the sluggard, the man of iniquity, and the seven things which are an abomination to the Lord.

Subdivision 3 calls for full sanctification, complete separation from the strange woman, the worth and identity of Wisdom being here fully unveiled (vi. 20-ix.). The warning against adultery (vi. 20-35) is, for the wise, a warning also against spiritual adultery—friendship with the world (compare James iv. 4). The seductions of the

strange woman are pictured at length, prefaced and concluded by the appeal and warning of Wisdom (vii.). The stranger seducer is the world, whose house is the way to Sheol. But, blessed be God, Wisdom also stands forth, seeking to allure men, though her lips speak only truth and righteousness (viii. 1-11). Wisdom, moreover, has much to offer (viii. 12-21). And at last the mystery of Wisdom's yearning over men is revealed: she is a figure of the eternal Son of God, whose delights were, anticipatively, with the sons of men ere man himself had being (viii. 22-36). The sixth section contrasts the seven-pillared house of Wisdom with the house of the "foolish woman," whose guests are in the depths of Sheol (ix.).

2. **Precepts for the way** comprise the next division (x.-xxii. 16), which is marked off from the preceding one by the heading, "The proverbs of Solomon" (x. 1). These proverbs are linked in couplets, somewhat disconnected as to theme, although we believe that a numerical grouping can be recognized. In general it may be said that seven couplets make a section, and seven sections make a subdivision, of which there are eight. But the second sections of the first and second subdivisions contain only six couplets (x. 8-13 and xi. 24-29). This is also true of the seventh section of the fourth subdivision (xvi. 4-9). The eighth subdivision is likewise exceptional in that it contains five sections (of seven couplets each) instead of seven sections.

3. **Wisdom for the heart** seems to be the theme of the next division (xxii. 17-xxiv. 34). The introduction of the division is worthy of the most careful consideration (xxii. 17-21). Heart-application is urged, and the keeping of what is learning "within thee," that right things may be established on the lips. Trust in the Lord will be the fruit of this, with possession of "the certainty of the words of truth," and ability to "carry back words of truth." Careful study will show the application of this



to the precepts which follow, many of them directions for practical conduct, and others addressed to the state of our heart, but all calculated to afford a light for self-judgment, and all urging the practice of self-restraint.

4. **Wisdom for the walk through the world** may describe the special character of the fourth division (xxv.—xxix.), which is made up of “Proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out” (xxv. 1). We must leave it to the reader to investigate these more closely. He has a rich and profitable field for study.

5. **A summary of the case**, though in a form somewhat enigmatical, may be found in “The sayings of Agur” (xxx.). The substance of Agur’s wisdom is that man, as fallen, is nothing; yet having the tried Word, which is Wisdom, he can take hold of God, like the little things upon the earth which are exceeding wise.

6. **Triumph over self and the world** is still more briefly summed up in “The words of king Lemuel—the prophecy that his mother taught him” (xxx. 1–9). It is a brief epitome of wisdom in practical conduct.

7. **The virtuous woman** surely pictures the full fruit of Wisdom, as that which, fully laid hold of, has been wrought into the very character of the creature. The virtuous woman is that which Wisdom makes of the Bride of Christ, as also of each individual soul who has been espoused to Him. Blessed consummation! F. A.

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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QUE. 10.—There seems a contradiction between the statements in John vii. 7, xv. 19 and xvii. 14. Will you kindly explain through “Help and Food”?

ANS.—The only cause of difficulty in these passages lies in overlooking chap. vii. 5. “His brethren” in vii. 7, are His brothers according to the flesh—the children of Joseph and Mary—who were then unconverted and therefore of the world. In Acts i. 14 they have been converted and therefore become His brethren in the Spirit, the kind addressed in xv. 19 and xvii. 14. All therefore is in perfect harmony.